CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE

CASSELL'S

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CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

DALEGROVE COURT.

AS I approached the house by the carriage-drive from the park, I caught sight of Miss Sylvester coming through the shrubbery by the private path from the church, which lies, I may tell you, not half a stone's-throw from Dalegrove Court.

She was a little person, this Miss Sylvester, although she gave you the impression of being quite up to the average height of women because she was slight, carried her small head loftily, had a thin, long face with delicate features, and hands to match.

She had not perceived me; so I stopped short to have a good look at her, as an artist would pause before his favourite picture, or a gardener beside his cherished flower, and with the critical eye of one whose judgment is in dispute. It is part of a lawyer's business to form a just estimate of character; and I had lately parted from a young gentleman who had listened to my warm praises of Miss Sylvester with the subdued, sceptical smile of one who is too well-bred to dispute the claims of a lady to the esteem of her attorney.

"Can crafty design or sordid consideration have a place in that young soul?" I asked myself, pushing my spectacles a little closer to my eyes. But my sight was not long enough to detect any justification of such suspicion in her face. All I noticed was that she walked with lassitude, and that her figure was a little bent with fatigue.

"She's been fagging herself to death to give somebody pleasure, I warrant," said I, abandoning the very thought of ill. "She's pale and worn, I can see that. I wish to goodness she would grow a little stouter."

At that moment she spied me, and her cheek flushing, her lips parting with a cry of pleasure, she came quickly to me; our friendship was not of a one-sided sort. I noticed that she wore a plain cotton dress of dark blue with white spots, gathered in at the waist with a ribbon. Her hair had tumbled down and had been put up loosely in a knot—and very pretty the soft brown mass looked against her white brow, with a stray curl or two catching the reddish tint of autumn leaves. She carried a basket in one hand and a cheap straw hat in the other; dropping both at her feet, she slipped off her loose garden gloves, and impulsively put her two soft, slender hands in mine, murmuring a welcome. She looked into my face as if she would like me to kiss her, and so I took that pleasant privilege of an old man.

"It does one good to see an old friend," said she.

"Why, certainly you look better now than when I first caught sight of you."

"Oh, I was tired—to-morrow is our harvest Sunday, and I have been at work in the church all day—I'm not a bit now," said she, plucking up the things she had let fall as I stooped for that purpose. "And when I am tired all my courage goes, and I'm nothing but a stupid little coward:" saying this, with a frown at her own weakness, she crushed her hat up and crammed it, with her gloves, in the basket; then, slipping her hand under my arm, she added, with a confiding smile, "Do you know, just before I saw you I was trying to invent some matter of business to bring you over here next week."

"Ha, ha! you thought that if you did not make business an excuse for my coming, I might make it my excuse for staying away."

"Oh, I knew you would come if I only told you what was the matter with me; but I was ashamed to admit it."

"Have you the courage to acknowledge it now?" I asked.

"Yes; it's simply this. I have not had a chat with any one for a week, and I'm wretched. The rain has

driven all the visitors away; Miss Winter has gone home to her friends—I am all alone——"

I interrupted her: "Miss Winter is a paid companion," I said sharply. "Why on earth does Miss Winter want to go away at this very time?"

"Because it's just at this very time she doesn't want to stay, I suppose," replied my little friend. "I couldn't refuse to let her go when she told me her mother was ill."

"Her mother's dead and buried," said I.

"Well, I feel sure she'll write next week to say her mother's condition prevents her returning."

"Good gracious me!" said I. "Do you mean to say you are all alone in this great, ghostly house?" We were now standing in the hall. She nodded, pulling up her skirt and rubbing off the wet gravel from the edge of her little shoe on the mat.

"Where's the vicar?" said I, rubbing my feet impatiently.

"In the vicarage—so is Mrs. Mildmay. They left all the decoration of the church in my hands because I do it so nicely. They came in once to say how nicely I was getting on. Wonder they didn't bring me a bun. We ought to be good friends; but we're not. It's my fault, of course, that we don't get on. Our rubicon is the weather; we never go beyond it. Mr. Mildmay is so *dreadfully* sweet-tempered; he agrees with everything you say; one can't even quarrel with a man of that sort, and you hate him the more because you can't. Mrs. Mildmay writes, you know; tries to get down to my level; but it's a failure. When I venture to speak of literature, she puts me down with a superior smile, and asks if she shall send me *The Fashionable World* to read—about two years old, you know."

"I know the sort of woman," said I, "and I hate 'em."

We were still rubbing our shoes on the mat, and we went on rubbing them unconsciously a few seconds more in silence, both occupied with our own thoughts; then, laying her hand on my arm, and looking into my face with her deep, earnest eyes, she said—

"Tell me I ought to be ashamed of myself."

"And welcome, my dear, if you will show me why."

"For having so little self-command," said she; "for breaking down just when I ought to stand up firmly. It was pleasant enough all the summer, while friends were coming, and the village was full of visitors; but now, when I have done my morning's duties, and sit down tired, I can't even fix my attention on a book, but must look at the leaves outside falling—falling with not a sound—till I get frightened, and think I am in a dying world; and, oh! I would give anything if only my dog could say a word to me." The tears gathered in her eye.

"My child!" said I, in a tone of expostulation.

"I am not a child," she said, "I am four-and-twenty. That is why it is so humiliating to feel that one is childish. If I am not a woman now, I never shall be."

"You are a woman, my dear, and that is why you cannot endure this solitude. Woman was no more intended to live alone than man is. No man would stand it a week—anyhow *I* wouldn't. I knew how it would be, and only last night I said to myself, "That little lady must not be left there alone."

"And that is why you have come ten miles to see me?" she said, her face aglow with gratitude, as she laid her hands on my shoulders.

"Not altogether, my dear," and I gave her another kiss—I've known her since she wore pinafores—"there's a matter of business to be discussed after tea."

"Yes, after tea—not one word before. Oh, we'll have such a long evening! I won't be five minutes changing my dress;" and she ran upstairs, pausing half-way to ask if I had left my trap in the village, and then again, a little further on, asking me to ring the bell and order tea to be made; and I own that for me this childlike excitement over such a trifle as the visit of an old man was pathetic in its signification.

Redlands Court—or, as it is now called, Dalegrove Court—stands on the brow of a gently-rising hill, from which a noble park sweeps down to the quaint village of Loecliff. From the lawn you may see the little harbour, in which nestles a fleet of fishing-boats under the lee of a pier, with a diminutive lighthouse at the end, curving outward into a lunette of dark blue sea. A lovelier site could not have been chosen for the habitation of man, and I doubt if man could have chosen a more hideous habitation for the site—a great square stone building, "embellished," as they doubtless said at the time it was built, with a row of Doric columns, apparently placed there to support nothing, and for no earthly useful purpose. A house stood there in the sixteenth century, as I know by the title-deeds in my keeping; and a fine specimen of English domestic architecture it must have been, to judge by a wing abutting upon the old church, which was thought good enough to leave standing to serve for stables and outer offices; but the main building was pulled down and replaced with the present structure, which stands as a monument to the execrable taste of the last century. There are forty or fifty rooms in it, and some of them cover sufficient space to serve for an ordinary modern villa-residence. All that side of the house on the east of the great entrance-hall was unused; the doors were locked, and no one had been in the rooms for years past; only eight or nine rooms on the west side were in use. One of these was divided by the late proprietor with a partition, one part serving as a study and library, the other as a living-room; and here alone you might forget what a great, ugly, chill barracks of a place the Court was.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

TEN MINUTES' RECOLLECTIONS.

I TOLD the maid to set the tea-things in the living-room, and, strolling into the library, threw myself in the easiest chair, and closed my eyes, thinking about Miss Sylvester and this ugly house she lived in—naturally enough. My little friend says she found me asleep there when she came in; but that could

not be, for I have a distinct recollection of putting the history of the Court and its owners into a form—

"—— judicious, clear, succinct,
The language plain, and incidents well linked,"

which I could not have done had I been even sleepy. I can even now run over the details as they occurred to me, and perhaps there will be no better place in my story than this to do so. "An ugly house, with an ugly history," thought I; "if it had only been a little more picturesque, what a capital story one of these clever novelists might have made with it! Might have got a ghost in if those old gables had been left; but how could a ghost associate with those detestable Doric columns?"

1828—fifty years ago—a long way to go back! Never mind, we can get over fifty years in fifty seconds, perhaps; for I shan't spin my story out as if it were a bill of costs, or make it tedious with attempted fine writing. For you need not expect an old lawyer in his moments of ease to be severely correct, as if he were talking with a ticklish client on formal business. We lawyers unbend like other men, and drop into colloquial phrases easily enough with folks whom we neither fear nor dislike. I have no reason to fear or dislike you, my dear reader, so away we go without restraint.

Fifty years ago this house and the country for miles around belonged to the Redlands family; there are the arms sculptured in that marble chimney-piece (I remember opening my eyes and glaring at it). Loecliff at that time was a collection of miserable huts, tenanted by not less miserable fishermen and their wretched families; the farmers on the estate were scarcely better off. The Redlands were always in want of money, and their steward had to grind it out of the tenants somehow. It was not a bad family; they had, and still have, some of the best qualities, but their extravagance and improvidence made them bad landlords, and must have been a source of perpetual discomfort to themselves. They lived beyond their income, and did nothing whatever to improve their estate; they never thought of retrenching, and, as the property deteriorated every year in value, they got into debt, and sank pretty deep in it. When things were about as bad as they could be, Gordon, Lord Redlands, took to himself a wife. That was characteristic. As soon as he came home from the honeymoon, he found he must borrow ten thousand pounds from some one to pay off the swarm of minor creditors who threatened to destroy the peace of his young wife's new home. He applied to his friends. There was one who had already displayed unusual generosity. That friend was Robert Sylvester. Robert Sylvester was about the same age as Lord Redlands; he had married at twenty-five; his wife died after the birth of a son. Three years afterwards he and his friend Lord Redlands fell simultaneously in love with the beautiful daughter of Sir Andrew Peyton. She rejected Sylvester and accepted Lord Redlands. But this did not shake the devotion of Sylvester to his friend; and when, as I say, Lord Redlands made known his pecuniary embarrassment, Sylvester at once came forward, offering to supply him with the money on his note-of-hand. The offer was accepted, and Sylvester drew the money from his banker, and posted over with the hard cash in his pocket from Bath, where he was then staying. It is possible that his intention got known through the indiscretion of some one in the bank; anyhow, it is a fact that between Bath and Barnstaple he was attacked by a couple of highwaymen. He was armed, and, succeeding in beating off the rascals, he reached Barnstaple. He rested there that night, and the next day arrived at Redlands Court. It was the first time he had seen Lady Redlands since she rejected him, but nothing in his manner betrayed that he begrudged his friend the happiness he himself had failed to win. The two friends sat up late, for Sylvester was obliged to return to Bath the next day. Before they parted, he handed over to Lord Redlands the money he had brought, and received from him acknowledgment in the form of a note-of-hand. Early the next morning the servants found that the house had been broken into during the night, and, going to Lord Redlands' room, they found him lying dead in his bed beneath the pillow with which he had been suffocated; the box in which he kept some private papers and had placed the money received from Sylvester was gone. There were marks of heavy footsteps in a flower-bed beneath the window through which the entrance had been made; a couple of horsemen had been seen early in the morning on the outskirts of Coneyford; indeed, there was sufficient evidence to prove that the men who took Lord Redlands' life and his money were the same scoundrels who had attacked Sylvester on the Barnstaple Road.

Robert Sylvester was overcome with grief and dismay when the terrible fate of his friend was made known to him; but, summoning fortitude, he did all that a man should and could do in such circumstances. He called together the friends and relatives of Lord and Lady Redlands to come and console the unhappy young widow, whilst he himself, animated by that thirst for vengeance which was considerably stronger fifty years ago than it is at present, raised the country in pursuit of the malefactors. There was no telegraph then, and the police system was altogether defective; the culprits got clear off, and no trace of them could be found beyond Coneyford, where it is supposed they got a fishing-boat to carry them off to Wales. Sylvester stayed in the neighbourhood until his friend was buried; then he went away. He left a note for Lady Redlands: when she opened it she found her late husband's note-of-hand to Sylvester for ten thousand pounds, torn in half. "The last service I can offer my dear friend," was written on the paper that enclosed the torn acknowledgment.

No one could deny that Robert Sylvester had behaved throughout like a devoted friend, and this last act of generosity was worthy of such friendship. Unfortunately it did not discharge Lord Redlands' debts to other creditors, and it was found necessary to sell part of the estate. Lady Redlands had no longer any desire to live at the Court, and that part of the estate including the Court, the park,

and the village of Loecliff was publicly offered for sale. There were not many offers; but the highest was outbid by Robert Sylvester, and it was knocked down to him at a price considerably beyond its actual value. Three months had passed by since the death of her husband, and Lady Redlands was somewhat recovered from the terrible shock. With the title-deeds in his hand, Robert Sylvester presented himself, and prayed the widow to take them back and be his wife. She refused, telling him that she had resolved never to marry again. Perhaps there was little in his appearance at that time to tempt the young widow to a second marriage. The loss of his friend had produced an effect upon him which testified to the extraordinary affection he bore to Lord Redlands: the young and genial man had suddenly become old and morose—avoiding society, shunning every kind of amusement. It was said that he never slept, and at times was not master of his reason. He was told by the doctor to whom he applied for opiates to procure sleep and forgetfulness, that the only permanent relief was to be found in an entire change of surroundings. This advice, seconding his disinclination to mingle with former friends, he accepted; and, leaving his child in good hands, he became a traveller, and was no more seen in England.

Now we come to Richard Sylvester, the son of Robert, whose history I have been talking about. The lad was brought up under the care of a wise and kindly old parson in Staffordshire, who taught him the simple duties of a Christian and a gentleman. In due course the lad went to Eton, and thence to Oxford. He was twenty-one when his father, Robert Sylvester, divided his property, reserving enough for his own requirements, and handing the rest over to his son. With this Richard bought a commission in the army; he went to India, where he distinguished himself, rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and five years after obtained his colonelcy. In 1863 he married, in '64 his daughter Marian was born. Soon after this, he laid down his commission and came to England with his wife, whose health was failing, and their daughter. The colonel was then a fairly rich man; but in '70 a commercial failure left him absolutely penniless, and he was compelled to write to his father for money. Robert Sylvester sent him a couple of hundred pounds for his present necessities, and told him that he was welcome to live at Redlands Court and make what he could out of the estate, but that he must not expect any further pecuniary assistance from him. The man must have lost all tenderness and sunk into the condition of a misanthrope. Writing from Athens, he said something to this effect (I was looking at the letter only last week):—"I have given you all that I can afford; I can give you no more without depriving myself of comforts that I regard as necessary. In this, I consider that I have discharged my parental duties, and see no necessity to do more. The Loecliff estate has scarcely paid expenses since it became mine. No tenant has been found for the Court, and the rent collected from the villagers hardly covers the expenses of repairing their houses. It may be that the man who has charge of the property is dishonest. Get the advice of a decent lawyer who knows the country; with that, and careful management, you may be able to make a living. I hope you will; at any rate there is a roof to shelter you and your family until you see some way out of your present difficulties; but, in any case, do not bother me with your affairs. I do not wish ever again to write the name of that place or hear one word about it. Nor need you trouble to answer this letter; I would rather you did not; but, if you do, pray try to avoid all expression of sentiment. We have not seen each other for thirty-three years; then you were too young to know me from any other person. Why should we care more for each other now than then? As a rational being, you, I hope, are proof against the hallucination of false sentiment; and I beg you to believe that I am."

One piece of advice in this precious letter the colonel acted upon immediately—he asked in Coneyford for a respectable lawyer, and was directed to try me. He laid his case before me, showed me the letter from his father, and asked if I would help him. I liked the man from the very first—a fearless, clear-speaking, straightforward man, with deep-set dark eyes, his sunburnt skin lightly lined with the wrinkles that come of mirth and kindliness—and I agreed to help him as best I could. We went over the estate together. Its condition was pretty nearly as bad as it could be. With thirty years of neglect and bad management, the farm lands had become worthless, and, but for ragged hedges that surrounded them, would have passed for common; not an acre was under cultivation, and the farm-houses were untenanted. Loecliff was a miserable collection of tumble-down hovels inhabited by a miserable and squalid community who lived Heaven only knows how. Every storm swept away a portion of the old pier, so that it scarcely afforded protection to the few fishing-boats left of the once respectable fleet.

To restore the place to prosperity, money must be spent upon it. To get money we must mortgage the property or cut down timber. I persuaded the colonel to let us write to his father and ask which he would prefer. In due course he sent the title-deeds of the estate, with a brief and characteristic letter saying that his son was at liberty to make what use he pleased of them; that, with regard to the timber, he was perfectly indifferent whether we left the trees standing or cut them down. We raised money on the title-deeds. The colonel spent it wisely and well. He made a few rooms in the Court habitable, and brought his wife there. His daughter he placed in a school at Coneyford, that she might have companions of her own age and condition. Then he repaired the old pier, had the cottages made clean and waterproof, and began to put some of the land under cultivation. He had indomitable courage, and a hopeful, cheerful disposition; he needed all that in the first years of that uphill fight. His wife was a brave woman, too, accommodating herself cheerfully to the circumstances of her changed position—comforting her husband in

little difficulties, making the home sweet and cheerful, seconding his efforts with patient steadfastness—a true helpmate, as a wife should be. While he toiled to make the land fruitful and the village decent, she strove to make the fishermen and their wives and broods clean and decent, and bring them into a better and happier way of living. Difficult work it was; for when folks get deeply sunk in misery they lose hope, and with it the wish to rise again. The men only wanted to be left alone; the women resented the "prying ways" of those who sought to know their wants; the children wouldn't be washed if they could help it. But just as the colonel, by patient ploughing and harrowing, got the weeds out of the land, and made it yield potatoes in their place, so did his wife clean the hearts of those stubborn human creatures, and plant seed that brought forth good harvest in its season. It was refreshing to see them at work; and I never left the Court without feeling a greater respect and love for my fellow-creatures. It was a lesson in humanity.

Little by little—though slowly enough at first to try the patience of Job—the property rose in value. The villagers began to make money, and save it, which was the great thing. Instead of spending all in beer, they contrived to pay some for rent. One year was good for herrings, another was good for potatoes; tenants came into the estate instead of going out; and so every year showed a better result than the preceding one; but the great stroke of fortune came when the line of railway was opened to Coneyford. It brought visitors from London—pleasure-seekers, health-seekers, poets, painters—all sorts and conditions of men, who, astonished by the grandeur of the coast, the beauty of the country, the pure, bracing air that sweeps in from the Atlantic, the quaint picturesqueness of the old village, spread everywhere the praises of Loecliff, bringing year by year more visitors. With a generous hand, the colonel and his wife helped the villagers to furnish rooms in their cottages for the accommodation of these folks, raising them to a state of prosperity that they, or we, had

"HER LIPS PARTING WITH A CRY OF PLEASURE, SHE CAME QUICKLY TO ME." (*p.* 1).

never dreamed of. The rail also opened a fresh outlet for produce; and at length the colonel, after paying off his mortgage, found himself with money in hand. Another servant, a pony and trap to fetch his daughter from Coneyford on Saturday and take her back on Monday—these were the only additions the colonel made to his own expenses. All the surplus money was sunk in improving the property—in building a new pier, a school-house, new roads, &c. In '82 an end came to his happiness: his wife died. Marian, then eighteen, left school, and came home to comfort her father and be his right hand. Bravely she played her part, subduing her own grief to lessen her father's sorrow. The colonel's heart was broken. His health gave way, and slowly he sank and sank.

Marian undertook the duties of the household, and, in addition, charged herself with the management of the estate as her father became less and less capable of administering his affairs, making herself complete mistress of every detail of the complicated machinery. She astonished me. I never could have believed a young woman capable of such an undertaking. But though, towards the latter part of her father's lifetime, she controlled the estate in perfect independence of his help, I doubted if she would have the strength to continue it alone. I spoke to the colonel about it, representing that, in view of accidents, he ought to get his father to make some settlement of the property; for, as he had no legal claim to anything on the estate, he could bequeath nothing to his daughter, and she, at the caprice of her grandfather—who seemed to me little better than a madman—might be turned out of the Court absolutely destitute. "Write to my father, if you think it necessary," said he; and accordingly I did write by the very next post. The reply was brief: "As I am not likely to outlive my son—and don't wish to—the enclosed will may answer all purposes and relieve your minds of uneasiness." The will, signed and witnessed, was almost as brief: he left everything, real and personal, unconditionally to his granddaughter Marian.

Contrary to his inclination, the old man did outlive his son; for the colonel died in '86; Sylvester being still alive somewhere in Italy in this very autumn of '88.

"Tea has been ready quite ten minutes," said Miss Sylvester, leaning on the arm of the chair and looking down into my face as I happened to open my eyes.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE YOUNG LORD REDLANDS.

MY little friend's hair was no longer tumbled and loose, but smoothly brushed back from her white temples and twisted in a close, shining coil upon her head. She had changed her dress also, and now wore what I think is called a tea-gown, of a pretty dark material relieved with some white lace about the throat and wrists. I do not pretend to know anything about such matters, and could not for the life of me give you the particulars of that dress; but I can answer for it that it was made in accordance with the prevailing fashion, for in such affairs she was not superior to her sex, I am happy to say—those who pretend to be so being prigs in nine cases out of ten. We sat down to tea, and had a good long chat about trifles—the slight events that had occurred during the week amongst our small circle of acquaintances; how we got so much pleasant conversation out of such meagre material puzzles me. After all, there are but four strings to a violin; yet what infinite variety of sounds may be got out of them, and what delight they may afford if one only goes the right way to work!

However, when the pleasant meal came to an end, and I really would not take another cup, there was a short silence, and then Miss Sylvester, with her serious air, said—

"Now, I suppose, we had better begin to talk about business?"

"Yes," I replied, looking at my watch; "for I may have to get down to the post in time to send off a telegram. Well, my dear, in the first place, I must tell you that I brought over a client with me. I left him in the village, where he intended to dine, if he can get anything to eat at the inn."

"Why didn't you bring him here?"

"Because he didn't seem very anxious to come, for one thing, and because I thought we could discuss his affairs with less restraint if he kept away. My client is Lord Redlands."

(Here in parenthesis I must state that this young man was the grandson of that Lady Redlands to whom Robert Sylvester had offered his hand—a child having been born to her shortly after her husband's death.)

"Lord Redlands!" she exclaimed; and then, her surprise giving way to feminine curiosity, "Tell me what sort of a man he is." A man would have asked, "What has he come about?"

"He's a decent-looking young fellow," said I—"well set-up, good-looking, healthy—what I should call a clean man, who wouldn't soil his hands or his conscience for all the world."

"That's an equivocal compliment, isn't it?" said Miss Sylvester, with a smile.

"Perhaps it is; still it conveys my impression. In the matter of soiling his hands he may be too particular; but that's a fault that may be forgiven."

"Is he fair or dark?"

"Fair, but his eyes and hair are dark, so is his beard, and that's trimmed down to a point, and his moustache sweeps out just as his ancestor is represented in the church yonder—the Elizabethan Redlands with the ruffle, kneeling, with his two boys behind him."

"He must be handsome to resemble him."

"Oh, he is handsome. I was just about to start when he came up, looking as if he had that minute turned out of a club in Pall Mall, not a speck of dust on him. I'll be bound he travelled all the way in a Pullman, despite his debts. I guessed at once who it was, although I had never before seen him—partly by his

look, partly because Hanson, the family solicitor, wrote last week telling me he had advised my young lord to come down and look over the affairs of his estate. I told him I was about to drive over to Loecliff, and asked him if he would come with me, and talk about his affairs on the way. You see, my dear, I wished this young fellow to see what a deplorable condition his estate is in."

"Quite right," cried Miss Sylvester; "he ought to know what misery is due to neglect. Pardon me, I will not interrupt you again. Go on."

I proceeded to narrate all that had occurred as nearly as I could recollect.

"As soon as we were out of Coneyford I said—

"'Now, sir, tell me all you wish me to know.'

"'There is nothing I wish to conceal, Keene,' said Lord Redlands. 'My position is this: my income is between five and six hundred a year, and my expenses are seven or eight.'

"'That means that you are getting into debt,' said I.

"'Yes,' said he, 'I am in debt. My father left all his personal estate, and very properly, to my mother and sisters; I inherited his real estate—all that is left of the old Redlands property.'

"'And you want to know,' said I, 'if that estate can be made to yield eight hundred a year instead of six, and something over and above to pay your outstanding debts.'

"'That is exactly it,' said he.

"'Well, sir,' said I, 'it may be made to pay that; but money must be spent upon it—pretty freely too—and you will have to wait years for the result.'

"'Meanwhile,' said he, 'I am every year increasing my debt. What alternative can you suggest?'

"'That you should restrict your expenses and live within your income, my lord,' said I.

"'I don't know how that's to be done,' said he. 'Of course thousands of men do live upon six hundred a year; but I can't tell how they do it. I have no children nor wife—I'm not likely to have—no home, no horses; I do not drink, don't play—don't do anything—in excess.'

"It was on my tongue to tell him that he didn't look as if he did anything; but thinking it might seem out of place I held my tongue, and, being then come out of Prior's Wood, contented myself with pointing over the open country before us and saying—

"'There's where your estate begins, my lord."

"'I might have known it by its barrenness,' said he bitterly. 'Why, it's nothing but a heath.'

"'There's plenty of it,' said I; 'it stretches away to Loecliff—eight miles as the crow flies—and is just about as broad as it's long. Of course the shooting lets for a fair price.'

"'Is that the sole source of revenue?' he asked.

"'No,' said I, 'there are a few villages dotted over the estate. We are coming to one at the foot of this hollow.'

"I had purposely driven out of the way to go through Yesterham. When we had passed through the straggling row of hovels, stopping midway for a squalid woman to carry a bandy child out of the road, he said—

"'Are those places mine?'

"'Yes,' said I; 'there are eighteen cottages and three beer-shops. Your beer-shops pay well; you can't expect the others to yield much. Indeed, I don't see how the tenants could pay anything if we were strict about the game.'

"'They pay their rent by poaching on my own land?' said he.

"'Roughly speaking, they do,' said I; 'but I will say this for them: when they get the chance they poach on your neighbour's preserves.'

"He made no reply.

"I drove on till we came to the first road, and then, pulling up, I said—

"'There are two ways to Loecliff, my lord. That one takes us down through Black Rock Gap—another of your villages. It *was* a prosperous little village, especially in the herring seasons; but their breakwaters are washed away, there's no protection for the boats, and the fleet has dwindled down to a couple of crazy boats that ought never to be allowed to put out to sea. How the poor wretches there get a subsistence I can't tell. That's the short way——'

"'Then for goodness sake let us go the long way!' he cried. 'I feel as if I were responsible for the existence of this misery.'

"'So you are, morally,' said I. 'If you kept cattle in an unhealthy condition and let them stray into your neighbours' lands in search of food you would be punished.'

"'You are a plain speaker, Mr. Keene,' said he, with a flush of colour in his fair cheek.

"'One must be silent or speak the truth, and there's only one way of doing that,' said I.

"After that we went on in silence for a good way, still jogging along through the barren country. I wanted my words to sink into his mind. He was the first to break silence. Coming to cultivated land he said—

"'At last, there's something pleasant to look at. Look at that stubble—there must have been good crops here, Keene.'

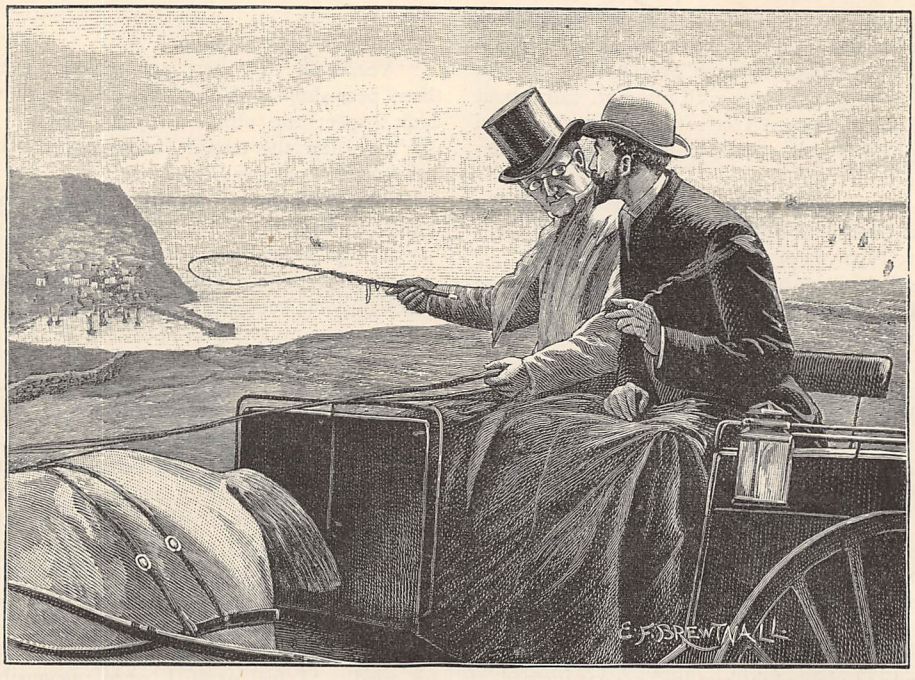
"'Excellent, my lord,' said I; 'couldn't be better. '*We've just passed the boundary of your estate.*'

"His countenance fell.

"'This was all Redlands at one time; but these lands were sold to Mr. Sylvester fifty years ago.'

"'All that was worth selling,' said he.

"'No; it was more valuable because the Court and park stood on it; but I am told the ground itself is not a bit richer than the rest. The ground you see now covered with good crops was as ragged a waste as the land beyond—twenty years ago. I know that from my own observation; but while this property has gone up in value by leaps and bounds, yours has gone steadily sinking back to savage waste. Look down there, my lord,' said I, pulling up at an opening whence we got a glimpse of the village. 'There lies Loecliff. That film of blue smoke hanging over it speaks of cheerful hearths and well-served tables,



"'LOOK DOWN THERE, MY LORD'" (*p.* 7).

the busy smacks in the harbour represent independence and prosperity. Well, twenty years ago that village was no better than Black Rock Gap, where your tenants are glad to feed on potatoes rejected here as unfit for pigs. The wealth of this estate, its growing prosperity, the contentment, independence, and happiness of all who live upon it, are due to the efforts of Colonel Sylvester. Now, my lord, you are no worse off than he was when he set his hand to this good work. You are less embarrassed, for you have no delicate wife and young child to consider; why in the name of reason and common sense should you not do as he did—live on your estate and regenerate the fallen fortunes of your house?'

"'Because,' said he, 'I am not Colonel Sylvester. He was a man of character, a man of decision and action, whilst I——' He shrugged his shoulders to signify that he had none of these qualities. I was about to remonstrate, for a man may form the mere habit of doing nothing—may cease to believe that he can do anything; but he interrupted me. 'No, Keene, you mistake my character; I could not endure a solitary life; I should hang myself at the end of a month. It requires a man of strong will and set purpose for such an undertaking.'

"'Pardon me,' said I, 'this estate has been managed by the colonel's daughter since his death, and has suffered nothing in consequence. She lives alone at the Court.'

"'I have not even the qualities of a strong-minded woman," said he, and a certain curve of his lip seemed to signify that he was rather glad he had not. 'Let those who are qualified for such work undertake it; I am not; there are plenty who are. You must sell the place, Keene.'

"'That won't give you eight hundred a year and clear your debts,' said I.

"'No matter,' said he sharply. 'Sell the place for what it will fetch—and at once. That story of the poor wretches who feed on diseased potatoes—I can think of nothing else, and I shall not while the place is mine.'

"'It's ruin,' said I—he turned his head impatiently. 'You will not get the honest value of it, if you sell now—unless Miss Sylvester chose to buy it.'

"'I do not wish to receive any favour from the Sylvesters,' he said quickly.

"'You are not likely to get a penny-piece more than the value of the land from her,' said I. 'If I propose it to my client, it is because I feel sure it will be a profitable investment, and because there is no one who could make such good use of the property.'"

"And now, my dear," said I—addressing Miss Sylvester, when I had come to the end of my story—"it is for you to say whether you will buy up the estate and help this young fellow out of his difficulties or not."

"Yes," said she quietly, with a very serious expression on her young face, as she drew together with her little fingers the crumbs under her hand.

"Of course, it will give you more work than ever," said I, after a minute or two.

"I'm not afraid of that; I should like it"—still collecting the crumbs.

"We could raise the money on your title-deeds—there would be no difficulty about payment."

"No; you could arrange all that for me," said she.

"Of course." Then there was another pause. She had a pretty good heap of crumbs by this time. "Perhaps," said I, "you do not feel more disposed to help this young man than he to receive your favour."

She scattered the heap of crumbs by a backward sweep of her little finger, rested her elbow on the table and her cheek on her hand, and said, raising her eyes to mine—

"I have no reason to dislike him."

"Nor he you," said I. "His family is indebted to your grandfather for a nice little gift of ten thousand pounds."

"I hope you did not tell him that. Pray don't," she added, as I shook my head; "he would hate me more than ever."

"How do you know he hates you, my dear?"

"By putting myself in his place. If I found I could not manage the estate, and had to give up all and go and get my living as a governess, do you think I should feel amiably disposed towards another who took my place and managed better? Do you think I could like that other? No; I should be the first to put ill constructions on his motives. Did you tell him how old I was?"

"No; I said you were a most estimable young woman, that's all."

She laughed, and said—

"I know exactly the sort of woman he pictures me: one of those clever managing women, gaunt and forty, with a wisp of hair sticking out behind, a scuttle bonnet, and spectacles, sharp features, and thinner even than I am; dressed eccentrically—one of those poor souls that *Punch* makes fun of. But," growing suddenly grave again, "I was not thinking of myself or that side of the question. I was thinking how unhappy this poor Lord Redlands must be, doing nothing, hoping for nothing, having no object in life but to kill time. And it seemed to me," she pursued, "such a pity that I should take this chance of happiness out of his hands, this possibility of getting back his fortune and winning contentment with it, and some higher kind of self-congratulation. It *is* a pity to see a man sink down like this. I don't know; we may laugh at these idle noble families and their follies, but the subject has a pathetic side all the same. The Redlands did well for their country once, and held a high place in the affection of their fellow-creatures, and it's sad to think they should die out and be forgotten."

"My dear, it is a law of nature that all useless creatures should die out."

"Yes, but it's against the law of nature that a man should be useless," she replied quickly, and with a bright flash of her fine, intelligent eyes.

"Only the phœnix rises from its ashes," said I; "and, believe me, Lord Redlands is not a phœnix, but only an ordinary idle gentleman."

I looked at my watch, and Miss Sylvester, taking the hint, changed her manner, and coming at once to the point in question, said—

"Of course I will take the estate if you see no practical objection."

"One objection only occurred to me," said I. "The sum you are about to invest is no trifle. Old Sylvester gave your father permission to do what he liked with the estate so long as he did not bother him with the details, and I have no doubt he would be as well pleased for you to spare him any trouble. Still, as this is a serious matter, and the first you have undertaken, I think it will be well to ask his permission."

"Yes, yes; by all means. I did not think of that; but it will cause delay."

"Not much. We will not weary the old gentleman with a long letter of explanation—a brief telegram will suit his taste better, he can read it at a glance and reply in one word. That is why I looked at my watch. If I start at once I may send the telegram to-night. Seven o'clock"—looking at my watch again as I rose—"it is not probable that we shall get an answer to-night; but on Monday morning you may expect it. Send on word to me when it arrives, and I will drive over at once and conclude arrangements with young Redlands."

With this, I hurriedly took leave of my little friend, and went down to the post office in Loecliff, where I was in time to send this message to old Sylvester, who was then at Amalfi, in Italy—

"Do you consent to Miss Sylvester purchasing the remainder of the Redlands estate for twelve thousand pounds, to be raised on the deeds now in her hands?"

Then I went to the Old Inn, where I found Lord Redlands trying to amuse himself with a county newspaper. I told him what I had done, and advised him to stay in Loecliff until we got the answer.

"I suppose I had better," he said, in a tone of resignation.

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRD.

PRESIDENTS AND PRESIDENT-MAKING.

A LITTLE more than a century ago the Constitution of the United States was decided on; and the term of office of the first President commenced in 1789, so that the successor to Mr. Cleveland will be the centennial President of that great country—greater now than when George Washington and John Adams were respectively President and Vice-President over a nation fewer in States, in population, and in all the material elements of national prosperity. The roll of the Presidents is one

not long (it includes only twenty-two names, re-elections having been not infrequent in the earlier years), but it is one which should be more known than it is in the Old Country. And in the time of the political unrest which centres in the "Tuesday next after the first Monday in November," when the elections of electors of President and Vice-President take place in all the States, it may be opportune to glance at Presidents and President-making in the great republic. There is a bead-roll of names—Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Quincy Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, Polk, Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland—nearly every one of which is associated with change, development, or solidification of the nation or the national life in the States. The names of the Vice-Presidents who have not become Presidents are less notable. Burr, Calhoun, Colfax, have notoriety or fame, but there are many whose names recall no memory. In the list of Presidents, however, the reader recalls the name of the "Father of his Country;" and the two Adamses, Jefferson, and Madison, early statesmen; of Andrew Jackson, whose triumphant "progress" had much to do with his re-election; of "Little Matty" van Buren; of Polk, satirised by Biglow:—

> "The side of our country must always be took,
> And President Polk, you know he is our country."

And in the same "Papers" there are caustic references to other Presidents and other candidates; whilst in the verse of Whittier and others there are suggestive reminders of Presidential campaigns, utterances, and acts.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, "born a subject of the Monarchy, adopted a citizen of the Republic," as he describes himself, has pictured the life of the President of the great American nation. He says that all the Presidents have been poor men, and three of them, to his own knowledge, left office "without means enough upon which to live respectably." In his period of office the President walks about "an ordinary citizen, wholly unattended;" but of every wielder of the great power of the President, the record of the shrewd observer we have named is, "They have all left office poor and pure."

The medium of choice of Presidents which has had this happy result is not that of a direct vote of the people, but of a reflected vote: an electoral assembly, in which each State "has as many votes as it has senators and representatives in Congress," and the vote of the States recorded by this electoral assembly decides for four years who shall rule the nation and command its army and navy. The election has been described as costly and exciting, but the last contest has been stated by an authority to have cost the national committees of all the parties only £120,000. The campaign is a long one, if it be counted only from the definition of the platforms of the parties and the choice of candidates; and the length of that campaign minimises its virulence, and renders it less a decision of the moment and more one which is thought out. From Midsummer to November the battle is waged on the platform, in the press, and occasionally in the pulpit.

The appointment of the President is, as has been said, by electors—States appointing a number of electors "equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress." (In the last Congress there were 325 members of the House of Representatives for the thirty-eight States, and the number of senators is fixed at two from each State.) Any person holding "an office of trust or profit under the United States" is debarred from becoming an elector. These electors "meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for two persons," and they make a list of persons voted for and the number of votes for each—the list to be sent to the "seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate." The latter opens each list, the votes are counted, and the person having the largest number of votes, "if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors, appointed." When, therefore, the election of "Presidential electors" has been decided early in November, as the opinions of each candidate have been declared, the choice of President is practically made. But the electors do not actually give their votes until the first Wednesday in December, and the lists sent in by each, showing the votes cast for President and Vice-President respectively, must be delivered before the first Wednesday in January.* Congress "shall be in session on the second Wednesday in February," and certificates are then opened, the votes counted, and the result is declared.

Taking the present contest as an example, the Presidential electors are chosen on Tuesday, November 6th; and there have been elections of the State officers and State legislatures in the various States for months previously—in the instance of Alabama the State officers having been chosen early in August, and Louisiana even earlier. Still, with most of the States the local elections are concurrent with those of the Presidential electors. There are between the choice of the candidates and the parties and the election of President and Vice-President in December, more than five months' time, and though the decision is practically effected when the electors are chosen, yet during those months the battle is waged, and the party papers endeavour to exhaust their vocabulary of praise and abuse. The nominating conventions are criticised for days together, but less attention seems to be paid to the "planks" of the "platform" by the press, and more to the election speeches, whilst the headings of the news-columns bear for months indications of the struggle. In one newspaper a heading declares the "Irishmen for Grover" (Cleveland being understood); the "Plumed Knight" is a not infrequent title for Mr. Blaine; whilst the nationalities, the professions, the trades, all are combining into "Cleveland and Thurman Clubs," and "Harrison and Morton Clubs." Text-books are provided by the national

* All authorities give this date; but a leading article in the *New York Herald*, in September last, says that the electors, under a *recently passed* Act, meet "on the second Monday in January."

committees of the parties, whilst new combinations and new nicknames are almost daily made.

Out of this hurly-burly of oratory and agitation, of declamation and occasional defamation, of wit carried at times beyond the bounds of good taste, and of excitement, the choice is made; but the acute observer we have quoted says that the election is "conducted with far less riot and disturbance than unfortunately characterises the appeal" to the English electorate. Less partial observers have in large degree confirmed this statement. The bubbles on the surface are only very slight indications of the strength of the current below. The author of "Greater Britain" believed that "a lifetime may see the abolition of the Presidency proposed, and carried by the vote of the whole nation;" and if this did not come to pass, then "the election will come to be made directly by the people without the intervention of the electoral college." Twenty years have passed away since that opinion was expressed, and there are as yet no signs of any such change. Later Presidents have had a burden which even the older (and to some the greater) had not. The land is larger, the population is many times multiplied, and there are the questions of trade and of tariff which split up old associations and divide those who were political friends, as well as furnishing problems needing the utmost care of the "platform" makers to steer by. The vast wealth of the States, the rapidity of the payment of its debt, the extent and character of its coinage, are all interwoven in Presidential choice, and hence the appropriateness of that epithet of Longfellow, the "Ship of State," for it has the shallows and rocks on many hands to avoid, and its captain, with many a predecessor great in power, has need of continual care.

THE ART OF DRAMATIC RECITATION.

WHAT TO AVOID.

FEW accomplishments give so much pleasure in the social circle as the art of dramatic recital. Music is its greatest rival; but that noble art can appeal only to those possessed of a musical ear, while for almost all, from the oldest to the youngest, there is interest in the dramatic.

The difficulty of excelling in the elocutionary art is shown by the small number of those who are really great in it. The galaxy of great singers and instrumentalists is considerable; but since Bellew's death, and since Leo Ross left the platform, there has hardly been before the British public an elocutionist of imperial reputation. To reach, however, such a standard of excellence as will enable one to afford pleasure in the social circle is within the reach of almost all who are possessed of a tolerably good voice and fair dramatic conception. The following hints will be found to prove serviceable to the amateur student of elocution.

Here, as in so many other cases, the only royal road to excellence is by the arduous way of practice. Let the aspirant take every opportunity offered him of giving a recitation, and consider no occasion too trivial to deserve careful preparation.

The first point lies in selection of a piece. As a rule, you will be asked for "something funny"; but as neither the taste which prompts this demand, nor the art that satisfies it, is of the highest, you should not always give in to it. Clever mimicry is lower than noble declamation, grotesque gesture than graceful movement, and incongruity of situation than elevated passion. But at first you will be more likely to succeed with humorous pieces, such as Mark Twain's "Humbugging a Guide," and David Macrae's "After Dinner Oratory," than Shakespeare's "Closet Scene from *Hamlet*," and Longfellow's "King Robert of Sicily." At all events, the humorous is in so great request that you will not find such readings come amiss.

Having chosen your piece, it were best to attend to pronunciation before learning by heart, and accustoming your ear to pronunciations afterwards to be corrected. In almost every piece there will be several words of more or less dubious pronunciation. Examine therefore each word about which there might be the slightest doubt, and be at the pains to consult a standard dictionary.

You may now get up "the book." So many things have to be attended to during the course of recitation, that if the memory effort be at all considerable the full effect cannot be rendered. Perfect familiarity with the words is therefore absolutely essential. Repeat them over so frequently that you shall be able to speak them as rapidly as your utterance will serve. Select the less easily remembered passages, and devote special attention to them.

Articulation must be early attended to. The final consonant of the conjunction "and," and the initial letter of the pronouns "him" and "her" are frequently omitted, with the result of diminished distinctness. The Scotch imagine that it is only their English neighbours who are guilty of the omission of aspirates; but from "John o' Groat's" to the Tweed you will hear con-

tinually the words "I told him" pronounced "I told 'im," and no distinction made between the two words "tell her" and the single word "teller." The rapid repetition of the following sentence will aid the articulation of aspirated dentals: "Theophilus Thistle sifted a sieve of unsifted thistles; if Theophilus Thistle, the thistle-sifter, sifted this sieve of unsifted thistles, where is the sieve of unsifted thistles that Theophilus Thistle, the thistle-sifter, sifted?"

Vocalisation falls next to be considered, and includes such matters as quality of tone, cadence or inflection, accentuation or emphasis, rate of utterance, &c.

The quality of tone depends, like these others, on the nature of the sentiment or thought expressed. The solemn and the grand require the deep-orotund, *i.e.*, the lowest register of the voice used with a full volume of air. The deep-orotund is a very pleasing and effective acquisition, and may be cultivated with surprising success. The great Bellew had naturally a light voice, yet he could command a powerful and resonant deep-orotund simply through assiduous exercise. For the practice of this, take full-sounding, long-rolling pas-

"THE MIRROR MUST BE BROUGHT INTO FREQUENT REQUISITION" (*p.* 14).

sages like Byron's "Address to the Ocean," Coleridge's "Ode to Mont Blanc," or the latter part of Poe's "Bells."

The ordinary matter-of-fact is best expressed in the colloquial middle tone. Excitement, expectancy, and joy demand the high-orotund. Angry emotion, hateful denunciation, revengeful passion, are rendered with the harsh and guttural. A touch of nasal added to the guttural is useful for sarcasm and contempt. Female speeches (if the elocutionist be male) should be given with the upper register; but reproduction of the female quality of voice is by no means essential. The aspirated voice or whisper may often produce a thrilling effect in the affrighted, the murderous, the ghostly. The cracked quality of voice is of use in the comic department—in the representation, for instance, of old men and women.

Cadence, or modulation, is necessary not only for due expression, but also for the avoidance of monotony. The monotonous is the intolerable. The quality requisite here is that of flexibility, which is to be acquired by constant attempt to express the most varied kinds of thought and sentiment. A famous elocutionist used to "score a point" in his rendering of *Hamlet* by means of a vehement upward swell of the voice, culminating in an intensely aspirated note, in the passage, "Nay, I know not: Is it the king?" To raise the voice either at the end or middle of a question is the well-known rule; but of course the often-repeated injunction, "Keep up your voice at the commas," is patently absurd—for a clause may be pointed with a comma, and yet demand a very well-marked fall of the voice. Parenthetical clauses require distinction, and are uttered sometimes in a higher or lower, quicker or slower tone. Look for opportunity in the piece to employ your entire vocal gamut.

Emphasis is no less important than inflection. In every sentence there are particular words demanding special accentuation; and by a false quantity the meaning of a phrase may be entirely misrepresented. Nouns and verbs receive the largest share of attention in this regard. Contrasts must be strongly marked; while antitheses demand the greatest force of emphasis. To keep an attentive eye upon the precise meaning of the text is the great desideratum. Should doubt arise as to the correct emphasis of a sentence, a useful rule is as follows. It is a fact that in ordinary conversation, people—even the least educated—instinctively speak with expressive accentuation; it is only when they come to render the thoughts of others, or to read from a printed page, that their habitual and unconsciously acquired art fails them. Thus the proper emphasis is the natural. Take, therefore, your doubtful passage, and express the thought colloquially—as you would talk it to your friend across the table. You will thus obtain, not always the proper tone (the due dignity might be wanting), but you will invariably perceive the natural, and therefore the correct accentuation.

Rate of utterance must also be attended to. The gay, the mirthful, the amusing, should speed buoyantly along. Conversational passages should be spoken trippingly on the tongue. Dignity requires a certain stately, measured movement. The reverent and sorrowful are slowly uttered. In the very whirlwind of passion the speed is fitful, the utterance irregular and abrupt. Sarcasm is generally obtrusively deliberate.

Tyros usually burn to learn gesture; but graceful, appropriate, and powerful action is almost a special genius in itself. Let the amateur be as sparing with gesture as he can. A great elocutionist advises that no movement whatever be used for the use of which the reciter cannot give reasons in writing. He states that his own method is to employ during early rehearsal every gesture that suggests itself, and thereafter to thin them down, retaining none for which there is not clear necessity.

ACQUIREMENT OF THE ART OF STANDING STILL.

An essential preliminary to gesture is the acquirement of the art of standing still. Even practised speakers are at a lamentable loss here ; they may be seen to change position every minute, or even second, with no sufficient reason ; to use the hands with irritating restlessness, often holding them in the most grotesque fashion ; to throw the body into ridiculous postures, letting the limbs fall into ungainly figures. This is perhaps most noticeable when clergymen who have been accustomed to the screen and support of a pulpit appear on a bare platform.

As to position, next, let the head be neither bent down nor thrown back, but quite erect. Present to your audience what is termed "the active chest:" *i.e.*, the chest thrown freely forward without being obtruded.

This suggests that you intend to attack your business manfully, and gives free play to the lungs. The arms should be allowed to repose in a variety of ways. No single position should be maintained so long as to attract undue notice ; but we may suggest the following. The arms may be allowed to hang by the sides easily and freely, so that the elbows do not touch the sides—in which deportment it would, of course, be utterly boorish to extend the fingers ; let them be tightly closed without being clenched, and so that the thumb falls lightly upon the fore-finger. Next, one arm may be bent, the hand resting upon the hip, and the other arm falling down by the side as before. Or again, both hands may be carelessly clasped, the one above the other, and so let fall in front of the body. The late Henry Ward Beecher was remarkable for the astonishing variety of his postures during an oration. Let the reciter acquire easy command of as large a number of poses as he can, and vary them as much as possible.

As to the lower limbs, the best position is that in which the feet are a few inches apart, the one slightly in advance of the other, so that the greater part of the body's weight rests upon the retired leg, the foremost leg being gracefully bent at a slight angle. The heel of the advanced foot should point to that of the other.

To place the feet parallel is ungainly; to stand as if they were glued together suggests the awkwardness of a clod-hopper. To allow the body to rest on the advanced foot, the body inclined forward, expresses attention, interest, sympathy, and expectancy. Consideration of these details will do something to secure that pleasing sense of *repose*, without which, as Ruskin remarks, there can seldom be perfection in any of the fine arts.

In proceeding to consider active gesture, it is advisable first to arrange your scene, with the position of your characters, exactly and minutely in your mind's eye, and during recitation to rigidly adhere to the disposal resolved upon. For instance, in Whittier's "Maud Müller," let the city, the judge, and all their belongings be on the left hand, placing the meadow, Maud, and all their connections on the right ; then when you wish to indicate any of these, point or glance according to that location.

Let your gestures be generally flowing and unconstrained, and almost always from the shoulder, those from the elbow and wrist being usually grotesque, and used for purposes of mimicry or burlesque. No exercise is better for teaching free movement of the arms than the graceful art of fencing. Let the motion of the arms be in curves ; angularity is inartistic. The event of the gesture should fall simultaneously with the utterance of that word which it is meant to illustrate, or in the case of a phrase, with the utterance of the salient word of that phrase. There is scarcely ever occasion for the reciter to point directly above his head or beneath his feet ; in pointing upwards or downwards the arm should invariably be at an angle of about 45°. Gesture is chiefly used to vivify description or intensify emotion. Its most frequent service is in the latter case. Impassioned gesture is swift and sweeping ; reverential and dignified, slow and leisurely ; while that of scenic description is of medium rate.

As regards facial expression, the success of the elocutionist will depend largely upon the natural mobility or stolidity of his features. Practice, however, has its place here, as elsewhere. The mirror

DISPOSAL OF WATER-GLASS.

must be brought into frequent requisition; and the student must strive to express by the face such emotions as those of surprise, anger, delight, sorrow, hate, horror, anguish, loathing, fear, contempt, suspicion, sarcasm, amusement. The eyes, mouth, and eyebrows afford the chief means of expression. A flashing eye expresses defiance or indignation; the eyes stare in astonishment, are restless in fear, roll in anger, twinkle in merriment, are narrowed in treachery. Suspicion is expressed by looking askance, cunning by winking, and contempt by measuring the object from head to foot. The lips are compressed in determination, they part in surprise, are curled in contempt, and bit in agony. The lower jaw falls in prostration, and the mouth is opened wide to suggest stupidity or idiocy. The eyebrows are raised in expectancy or surprise, and are knitted in anxiety, anger, and sorrow.

The important point in breathing is to do so diaphragmatically and not clavicularly—*i.e.*, to employ deep breathing, and to avoid all tendency to raise the shoulders. The following are useful exercises:—

Clasp the hands firmly behind the back, drawing down the shoulders, and breathe deeply; catch the breath quickly through the nostrils, and emit it with a sudden brief whisper; inhale quickly and emit slowly; inhale slowly and emit slowly. Practise these in a horizontal position, lying on the back (the ancient Greeks used to exercise in that posture).

In conclusion, having mounted the platform with a confident, yet modest bearing, be careful to avoid indulgence in any of those ostentatious, preliminary antics, such as unnecessary alteration of the desk, turning over of leaves, arrangement of wristband, disposal of water-glass, or any finical trifling whatever. Such affectations only serve to irritate an audience.

Finally, throw yourself heart and soul into your declamation, and do not shrink from the expression of whatever emotion you feel to be genuine.

R. M. A.

NURSERY ACCIDENTS, AND WHAT TO DO FOR THEM.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

SICKNESS seldom, if ever, occurs in the nursery without some well-defined warning, but accidents happen in a hand-clap, and often as unexpectedly as thunder from a clear sky. Yet, while nearly every mother or nurse knows something about the premonitory symptoms of illness, when an accident occurs, and perhaps a little blood is flowing, then for a time, at all events, no one is quite certain what is the first thing to be done.

It is with a view, then, to explaining away some of the difficulties which surround what may be called nursery surgery that the present paper is penned, and I beg to assure the reader that, if it be thought worthy of being preserved for reference in time of need, I shall consider myself well rewarded and honoured for my pains.

It is probably almost superfluous to preface my remarks by saying that in all cases which present anything like dangerous signs, a sensible servant is to be immediately despatched to bring the nearest surgeon. If possible, on an errand of this kind—in the country, at least—a *man* should be sent, and he should have a good horse or good cycle under him. He must, before starting, be quietly and distinctly informed concerning the true nature of the case, else much valuable time may be lost, by the surgeon not knowing precisely what to bring with him.

I shall now notice briefly the more common accidents that children are liable to, taking the least dangerous first; and if my article, when finished, presents somewhat of a cataloguy appearance, why, for once in a way, I must be forgiven; it shall be useful and handy, if not pretty.

I. *Bleeding at the Nose.*—If this be the result of a fall or a blow, the danger is usually trifling, although in rare cases the nostrils have to be plugged—an operation that only a surgeon can perform. Ordinary domestic remedies are first to be tried: cold to the head and face; the traditional door-key between the shoulders; powdered gum arabic snuffed up the nostrils; hazeline drawn or snuffed up, or ice to the nape of the neck. When bleeding, however, comes on spontaneously in the plethoric, for a time it may be allowed to flow; it is an effort of nature to gain relief. Then the above remedies should be tried. If it be in a delicate anæmic child it is more dangerous; ice must be applied to forehead and neck, rest enjoined, a dose, according to age, of gallic acid given, and the surgeon sent for. Iron as a tonic, with milk and cod-liver oil, every day for six weeks, is indicated in the latter case; while in full-blooded boys the diet should be reduced, exercise and the cold bath made compulsory, and proper remedies administered, else a bad form of body will be the result.

II. *Foreign Bodies in the Ear.*—There is never any telling where children will stow small beads, peas, buttons, &c. The ear is considered a handy hiding-place, and deafness or inflammation may be the temporary result. Do not be rash. If you can see the object in a good light, you may be able to get it out with the rounded end of a hair-pin. If you cannot do this easily, send the child to the surgeon, or *vice versâ*. Hardened wax often deafens a child, and causes irritation. Put a drop or two of olive-oil in

the ear the night before, and a bit of cotton wool. Next morning the ear should be well syringed out with soap-and-water. No air-bubbles, please, nor must the water be too hot. The little operation should be seen first, before being attempted by the amateur. N.B.—Picking the ears should be condemned in young and old, and indeed too much interference of any sort. Earwigs are dislodged by first pouring in oil and then syringing.

III. *Things in the Nostrils.*—The nose is another handy place in which to hide a button or pea. Suspect the accident if the child speaks as if he had a cold, without having the other symptoms of that complaint. There may be some swelling on one side. If the object can be seen and got at easily, try to get it out by means of a bodkin or the blunt end of a small hair-pin. Or make the child draw a deep breath, then closing the other nostril and mouth, make him blow or snort hard, and the thing may fall out.

IV. *Choking.* — Children *must* be taught to eat slowly and behave like little ladies and gentlemen at table, else serious results may often occur. Choking is a most alarming accident. The body should be bent downwards, and smart blows applied between the shoulders. This may dislodge the object. Bones, &c., may be got up from the tonsils by the fingers of the operator, or with the loop end of the blade of the scissors detached for this purpose, or a long hair-pin.

V. *Flies or Motes in the Eye.*—To remove these, a dry camel's-hair pencil is less rough than a handkerchief. Do not rub the eye much, rather rub the other eye, not that this can make a deal of difference. If the object cannot be seen, bathe in hot water and leave it alone till the tears wash it down to a corner, then use the little brush.

VI. *Things Swallowed.*—This may or may not be a dangerous accident. If the article goes right down, and is only a shell, for instance, it will be digested. A metallic substance, such as a thimble or coin, will be more dangerous, as its poisonous effects have to be counteracted. In this case apply to a surgeon. An emetic *might* do good, but then—it might do harm.

VII. *Stings, &c.*—The sting of the hive bee is the most dangerous, because it is left in. This must be got out at once, either by the pressure of a small key, pinch of lissom fingers, or by sucking. The wound had then better be sucked, and ammonia water at once applied. Wasp-stings are not left in, so that the ammonia may be applied at once. Ordinary washing soda is the next best thing, then soap. If there be much swelling, fomentation with poppy-heads may be afterwards required to soothe the pain and allay tumefaction, which is often of quite an erysipelatous character. A bottle of hartshorn should be in every house. It is not only an antidote to the bites and stings of all insects, but is handy for inhalation in cases of fainting or semi-fainting from weak action of the heart.

VIII. *Fish-hooks, Splinters, &c.*—Withdraw pins, needles, thorns, or splinters with a fine forceps, then foment to ease the pain after letting the wound bleed a little. Fish-hooks must either be cut out or, preferably, sent on until the barb comes out through the skin. This is then snipped off, and the other part is easily withdrawn. A soothing poultice may then follow hot fomentations. If the accident has been to the hand, this should be carried in a sling for a day or two.

IX. *Enlargement of Tonsils and other Glands.*—This hardly comes under the heading of accidents; nevertheless, I am right in alluding to the complaint. If it be the tonsils that swell, many distressing symptoms occur, such as stuffiness in breathing, difficulty of speech and swallowing, and partial deafness. The treatment is both local and constitutional, and may be attempted at home. Give cod-liver oil and the compound syrup of the phosphates as tonics, attend to all the laws of health, and feed well. Apply every morning, with a camel's-hair brush, a mixture of tincture of iron, one part; glycerine, two parts. This is safe. For all other swellings of a glandular nature, cod-liver oil and good feeding are to be recommended, *but* a doctor must be consulted and obeyed to the letter. When far away from advice, a safe rule to follow is this:—Paint painless swellings of glands with tincture of iodine, and give cod-liver oil internally. Poultice painful tumours, and give an occasional aperient. When they discharge or break, treat, first, with pads of lint wrung from hot water, frequently applied for a day; then apply lint spread with oxide of zinc ointment, or simply steeped in water, with a bit of oiled silk over it.

X. *Burns and Scalds.*—These may or may not be of a serious character, and the constitutional symptoms are at times of a very grave kind indeed. There is not only severe local pain, but pallidness of face, a pinched and death-like look, with shivering. Burns and scalds on the body are most serious when on the face or trunk, the danger being greatest for the first five or six days, although even fatal symptoms may occur as late as the tenth.

Treatment.—In all cases of extensive burning get a doctor at once. Meanwhile, if nervous exhaustion has occurred, with pale face and shivering, try to restore warmth. Place the child in bed or on a sofa, put a hot-water bottle to feet, stomach, and probably spine, and give frequently hot wine-and-water, or even brandy-and-water. Place the sofa he lies on near, but not too near, the fire. Gently, *very* gently, remove the clothes. Beware of injuring or tearing the blisters. Dredge the burn plentifully with flour and cover up with white cotton wool. *Exclusion of the air* is the principal object aimed at, and for this reason the dressing should not be removed unless it becomes offensive from secretion. The greatest care should be taken in removing a dressing, and the new one must be ready to put on. This may be a piece of lint thickly covered with carron-oil, or, if later on, with the benzoated oxide of zinc ointment, and cotton wool with a bandage over this.

The vinous stimulant given at first was only to counteract shock. It should not be repeated; and although the food itself must be nourishing, it should not be stimulating.

In slight cases of burning, with unbroken skin, great

relief to pain is got by douching the part with turpentine.

XI. *Frost-bite and Chilblain.*—Frost-bite is rare in this country. The part frozen or rendered dead for a time is unusually pale. The first object is to induce reaction *slowly*, and for this purpose nothing is better than rubbing with snow, or towels wetted with cold water. Keep away from the fire or heat of any kind. If reaction comes too soon it will come with violence and great distress; swelling, blistering of the skin, and sloughing may follow.

A child found insensible in the snow may easily be killed by being taken into a warm room. Take him into a cold room, and use friction with cold wet towels, or even snow, to the limbs and whole body. He must be put to bed in a cold room, and not until respiration is fully established should even warm tea be given, far less brandy. When I read the fable of the kind-hearted farmer, who took the frozen snake home and thawed it before the fire, I really cannot wonder that the creature bit the man. If he thawed it at all he should have done so *gradually*, and not in a warm room. Remember the fable, reader, whenever you meet with a case of injury to the body from cold.

Chilblain is merely frost-bite in its second stage, and in a mitigated form. If the child had not thawed his hands or face or feet before the fire, perhaps there would have been no chilblain. Attend well to the health of children subject to chilblain. Dress them warmly but not heavily, and forbid them to stand about out of doors in winter. Do not let them toast their toes before the fire, nor come suddenly into a warm room from out-doors, nor wash in hot or very cold water. Unbroken chilblains should be rubbed several times a day with a liniment of ammonia and oil, with a little turpentine added, or the iodine and laudanum application. *But* blistered chilblains must be treated almost like burns, with oxide of zinc ointment on lint, and a light, soft bandage. If broken and in sores, a poultice may first be needed. A child subject to chilblains, &c., should see a doctor. Cod-liver oil, quinine, and iron in small doses may be necessary.

XII. *Broken Bones.*—Children are more subject to partial or green stick fracture than anything else. When such an accident is even suspected, the sufferer should be placed on a sofa in the easiest position, and the clothes gently removed or cut away. Little else can be done till the doctor's arrival, though, if there be much shock and no bleeding, warmth to the feet may be applied and wine-and-water given.

XIII. *Dislocations.*—These are accidents that few save surgeons can treat or even diagnose, though they can usually be distinguished from fractures by the rigidity or fixedness of all the parts. I cannot advise interference, although I fain would. Send for the surgeon, being sure at the same time to inform him of the supposed nature of the case.

XIV. *Fits.*—These are also difficult of diagnosis by the uninitiated, so lose no time in procuring skilled advice. Meanwhile the clothing may be removed and the child placed in a warm bath.

XV. *Wounds* are always alarming, and call for immediate action. Send for a surgeon. Meanwhile keep cool. If there is much bleeding, get the very coldest of water and apply in a stream. If this stops it, well and good; if it only partially does so, apply a linen pad and bandage tightly. Remove this in a few hours by carefully soaking it off with lukewarm water; if the bleeding continues, make a fresh pad and steep it in tincture of iron, and apply as before. Pressure, thoughtfully and skilfully applied, styptics and cold, are the only home remedies likely to do good in cases of bleeding from wounds. Never bind up a wound without washing it, unless it be a clean cut.

XVI. *Bruises, &c.*—These are not dangerous, as a rule. Apply ice or a poultice if much pain; afterwards, rags steeped in arnica lotion. Do not leech. *Sprains* are successfully treated by rest in the horizontal position, and a lotion of lead and laudanum, procurable at any chemist's, or occasional bathing with warm water.

A WALK THROUGH A DECEMBER GARDEN.

WITH most of us we fear that the idea of "a December garden" is not suggestive of anything particularly attractive or inspiriting. Somehow we get to associate the death of the year with the death of the garden. Spring, summer, autumn have come and have passed, and now in December, our half-acre domain is lying in gloomy state: on one side of the little mansion, the only thing green is the lawn, studded here and there with coffin-shaped flower-beds, on a few of which perhaps are some standard roses, no longer gay and bridal and perfume-breathing, but skeleton-like, with only a gaunt stock supporting the little thorny naked arms that sway uneasily about in the wintry blast. Nor do the back windows of our castle command a much brighter view. There is the kitchen and fruit garden, the solitary verdant spot that meets our eye being perhaps the two rows of winter cabbage and winter spinach, out drilling as it were, and apparently

bidding defiance to the winter-time. Of the two sides of the house this is certainly the more lively, for we spy over there another soldierly row of cauliflower, that we hope, with a little protection and care, will stand the winter and give us some early spring results.

Why, however, need our little front garden be without clothes all this time? *That* is the question we are going to ask ourselves this December, and a single word on this subject will form the theme of our observations. "Evergreens"—those are the very things we want to lighten the dulness of the

winter months. And the advantage of treating of this subject in the month of December lies in this: that even supposing we have hitherto been accustomed to devote our whole front garden to mere bedding-out plants, and thus having to go with bare beds for nearly half the year, we have, with the aid of a neighbouring florist, a remedy at once at hand. For even in December the period of *persistent* frost and snow rarely sets in; so that in what we are accustomed to call good open weather—that is, a time when no frost is about, and when a sort of autumnal or mild season is indefinitely prolonged—any operations such as those involved in garden changes can be safely carried on. Indeed, no time is better than a mild winter season for shrub-moving. On this head we must say then a few words. Choose as far as you can a dry season for the importation or removal of your shrubs. The soil will work more

freely, and is altogether in better order after it has been dug than if done while wet, and the labour will certainly be lighter. The first care necessary is in the digging up of the shrub. As far as possible, retain all the fibres of the roots : a shrub got up roughly, and hurriedly torn away from its native soil, will run a good chance of failing after its removal. And next, dig the hole for the reception of your shrub sufficiently large to admit of these roots and fibres being *spread out*. A common error also is to have the hole deepest in the *centre*. This is wrong. Have all the soil at the bottom of your hole thoroughly pulverised, and instead of having it deepest in the centre, have rather a little cone of pulverised earth rising in the centre. And another thing to be remembered is that nothing is so injurious as deep planting. See, therefore, that what we will call the collar of the shrub is exactly on the same level with the soil as it was before removal. Indeed, planting too deeply is a fatal mistake. When in the act of transplanting, hold your shrub or plant in its proper position, and carefully spread the roots out and around. As you throw in the pulverised mould and soil, gently move the head of your plant backwards and forwards, so as to facilitate the working of the earth into and among all the fibrous roots ; and if the soil does not readily fall among the roots, have a blunt stick in one hand with which you can poke the earth carefully among the fibres. When a fair quantity of earth has been thrown in, you can tread it in *gently*, but it will be at once apparent that if you begin *treading* in too soon you will break off many of the fibres ; when all the soil has been filled in, you can tread a little more boldly. Lastly, your shrub or plant, more particularly if a tall one, should have some support, in the shape of two, or even three, sticks placed in an angular position against the stem to prevent it from swaying about in the wind and thus endangering the snapping of the more delicate of the fibrous roots. Of course, low or very dwarf shrubs will hardly, except in very rough weather, require any support at all. Thus much then with regard to our evergreen transplanting. In putting in many of them on a bed or embankment, see that the tallest are in the back row, and necessarily the short ones in front.

And now to mention some evergreens in particular which, coming as they do from all parts of the globe, give us a large and varied choice of habits, textures, and shade of colouring in their foliage. First we must bear in mind they vary much in their rate of growth ; cedars are slow growers, but firs grow quickly ; while laurels are also faster growers than holly. The laurustinus is of great value to us as a flowering shrub, for early in winter it begins to bloom, and we prize much its snowy blossoms, which, with some of the gayer and paler though variegated laurel-leaves, and a mere handful of flowers from our greenhouse, make really a very gay table-decoration, at a time when flowers are very generally scarce with most of us who cannot boast of all the varieties of forcing-houses. And then the arbutus is a very obliging evergreen ; for in winter it favours us with a greenish-white flower, followed afterwards by its pendent and scarlet berries. A large choice, too, we have among the golden yew, juniper, aucubas and euonymus, while, as we have before hinted, many dwarf shrubs that give us gay berries we can readily obtain in pots, which we plunge, pot and all, into our flower-beds, taking care not to disturb any of the bulbs that we put in last October. The rhododendron of course does not give us its blossom in winter ; still it is an evergreen, but, being of a dark colour, it is as well to have near it some brighter shrub of the laurel kind, for the sake of variety. A little ingenuity then, and device, will take away largely from the dreariness and desolation which otherwise in the winter months overshadows our flower garden. Palms again are noble objects as evergreens, but unhappily they are nearly all stove-plants, and only thrive well in a moist atmosphere and in a very high temperature, while the height to which they grow necessitates of course a house of proportionate altitude. While young they can be grown in large pots, but very soon a tub must be substituted for the pot. The soil that best suits them is a rich loam made up of lumps of turf and enriched with a little manure, while a few rough lumps of charcoal are also a good addition.

DOBSON'S PLOTS.

LET not the reader suppose that my title refers to any dark conspiracies of which my friend Dobson was the instigator. No ; his plots were as harmless as himself, which is saying a great deal, for a more good-natured, easy-going fellow than Dobson never breathed. The fact is, I wished to write a story, and the only obstacle in my path was the want of a plot. In vain I cudgelled my brains for something original in the way of love affairs, highway robberies, mysterious disappearances and discoveries ; there was nothing new to be turned up by me in that direction. The subject of madmen engaged my attention for a time ; but I could think of no fresh combination of circumstances in connection with them. Happening one day in despair to mention my difficulty to Dobson, I was surprised at the sudden illumination of his countenance, which, sooth to say, was not generally of the brightest.

"Hard up for a plot, are you, old man?" he ejaculated. "Well, you've come to the right quarter for one. My brain literally teems with plots, and if I only had time I would write the most original and amusing stories you ever read. But, as it is, dear boy, you shall have them all, and welcome."

I was somewhat surprised, never having suspected Dobson's talents to lie in that direction. But then how likely we are to be mistaken even in those whom we think we know best! How often does a simple, dull exterior conceal the smouldering fire of genius! and, with a pang of self-reproach for the slight regard in which I had hitherto held my old friend's capabilities, I grasped him warmly by the hand, and thanked him for his generosity.

"Can you let me have one of them immediately?" I asked, being anxious to start my story without any further loss of time.

I fancied Dobson seemed slightly taken aback. He rubbed his hand hard over his forehead as he answered slowly, "I can't at this moment recall one, but"—here he brightened up again—"just look me up to-night, and I'll have one ready for you."

That evening accordingly found me, all expectation, at Dobson's lodgings. No sooner had he caught sight of me than, with a violent clap on my back—"I've got one for you!" he cried. "Just the thing!"

I begged him to come out with it at once.

"Well," began Dobson, in his most dramatic manner, "you must have a fine old country house—picture-galleries, and all that sort of thing. You'll have to work it up, you know. You're on a visit there, and they put you into a splendid room—oak-panellings, large four-poster hung with silken curtains, and so on. You'll know how to describe it."

"Yes; go on with the story, please," I urged.

"Well," pursued Dobson, with a confident air, and lowering his voice for the sake of effect, "*that room is haunted.* Do you catch on?"

"Yes?" said I, with breathless eagerness.

"At about midnight you wake up suddenly with a sort of all-overish feeling, you know, as if some one were in the room; and there"—Dobson stretched out his hand, and mechanically I followed its direction, half expecting to behold some spectral apparition—"gliding up to your bedside in the moonlight is the figure of a beautiful young lady, hair all wet and streaming, wringing her hands together as if in anguish."

"And what did she do?" I inquired, as he came to a dead stop.

The question seemed to irritate Dobson.

"Do! It was a *ghost*," he explained, with some show of condescension.

"Oh!" I meekly returned, though I certainly had suspected the appearance to have been of that nature; and Dobson took up his parable with renewed spirit.

"The next morning you come downstairs to breakfast, pale and a little flurried. Your host asks you what's up, and you come out with what you have seen. Your host turns livid, mutters something under his breath, and asks you to follow him. He takes you to the picture-gallery: stops before the portrait of a beautiful young lady. But you're not listening."

"Yes, indeed, I'm all attention," I assured him, recalling my wandering thoughts.

"Well," resumed Dobson, fixing me with his pale grey eye, and speaking in his most impressive manner, "that portrait was the very *fac-simile* of the young lady who had visited your room the night before. Her lover had proved false, and she had drowned herself in the moat, more than two hundred years ago. That accounted for her dripping hair, you understand."

The thought occurred to me that the young lady might have managed to get her hair dry in two hundred years, but I kept it to myself.

"Very good," I said; "very striking, really; but do you know, Dobson, I almost think I've seen something of the kind in print."

"Impossible!" cried Dobson, with a touch of resentment in his tone. "I've never told it to a soul before."

"Don't be offended," I said, smothering my disappointment as best I could, "but I fancy ghosts are rather played out. Has nothing curious ever happened in your own experience?"

Dobson evidently withdrew his thoughts with difficulty from the subject of the haunted house, but he made an effort to fall in with my wishes, and, after a few moments' reflection, exclaimed with an ecstatic expression which at once revived my hopes, "I have it! An aunt of mine—I've often heard her tell the story—was travelling in the night mail to Scotland. There was only one other passenger in the carriage with her—a man of dark, dare-devil aspect. Well, after they had gone a little way, he begged my aunt to look away for a moment, as he had one or two changes to make in his toilet. My aunt was a very decorous old lady—spinster, you know—and she was rather alarmed at the request, though the young man's manner was perfectly civil. In about ten minutes he told her his toilet was complete. She looked round, but where was the young man gone? I've heard my aunt say it gave her quite a turn, for in the corner of the carriage where he had been sitting was a most dignified-looking old gentleman—fine broadcloth, gold spectacles, snow-white hair, and all that. She could hardly believe her eyes; but he was reading quietly, and took no notice of her. A few minutes afterwards they reached their station, and then my aunt discovered that she had been travelling with one of the most notorious robbers that was ever heard of, who had made his escape in that disguise."

I had a vague recollection of having met with something very like this before, but as Dobson argued that it was impossible two people should have passed through such a curious experience, and that his aunt was undeniably the heroine of the story he had just told, I could only conclude that the old lady must have published it herself, and took my leave, promising to think it over. It is needless to say I never made use of this plot; in fact, my confidence in Dobson's ability to furnish me with what I required was considerably lessened by the evening's experience.

A few days later, as I was walking homewards, Dobson and his plots far from my thoughts, I heard his voice behind me. "Hallo, Brown, old man! Have you got your story off yet?"

"No," I replied; "I've been rather busy of late."

"Well, it's all for the best," said Dobson. "I've

been considering your case, and I really think I've got a plot that will satisfy you now."

"Indeed!" I asked, I fear without much interest in my tone.

"Yes," he rejoined; "just the other night such an odd thing happened—something out of the common, don't you know."

"What was it?" I demanded, with awakening interest.

"Well, you know," he went on glibly, "the other evening I was calling on the Smiths. Smith was out, but his daughters were all at home—he has seven, you know. I was asked in, and the strange thing is that there were only ladies in the room, fully a dozen, I should think." Here he stopped, as if expecting me to say something.

"Where's the plot?" I said, growing slightly impatient.

"The plot!" echoed Dobson; "why, don't you see? That's just it—one gentleman amongst a dozen ladies! You could work a capital story out of it," and he gleefully rubbed his hands together, as if he saw before him the unfolding of a romance beside which the wildest situations of Dumas, the most intricate involvements of Wilkie Collins would show tame and feeble.

"Isn't it rather bald?" I brutally suggested.

"Bald!" retorted Dobson, somewhat crestfallen. "No; I don't see anything bald about it. None of the ladies were bald," he went on, taking refuge in what took the place with him of choice *badinage*, "and I've still got some hair left," passing his hand meditatively over his sparsely covered pate.

I was turning wearily away when, with recovered equanimity, for Dobson is of a buoyant disposition, he stopped me. "You're awfully hard to please, but here's another, and you can't say it has no point. Founded on fact, too, which would make it all the more taking. Just listen," he persisted, ignoring my efforts at escape. "Do you remember how smitten I was with that McTavish girl? Well, this is a thing I've never confided to any one. I had fully made up my mind to give her the chance of becoming Mrs. Dobson, and had actually called at her house for the express purpose of popping the question. She was standing in front of the mirror when I was shown in, and, as I hastened towards her, I caught sight of the reflection of her face. 'Pon my word, her mouth was all twisted to one side in the glass, quite altering her expression. I was thrown completely off my balance, and the occasion went by—never to return. Ha! ha! very good, ain't it? Just work it up, and you'll make a name for yourself."

"Very amusing, Dobson, but I should hardly feel justified in bringing such a delicate affair before the public. Besides, I've almost given up the idea of writing a story."

"Don't say that," protested Dobson, in genuine anxiety. "I'll find you a good plot yet."

From that hour Dobson became the torment of my life. I could never meet him without having one or more of his plots thrust down my throat, for the poorer they became the more lavishly he bestowed them on me. "Hallo, Brown!" he would exclaim on the most inopportune occasions, "I've got another plot for you." And then I would be compelled to listen perhaps to the mad bull story, related by Dobson with all the spontaneous gusto of an improvisatore; or else to the experience of that incorrigible noodle of a young lady who gets periodically overtaken by the tide, for the express purpose, so far as I can see, of inveigling some young man into wetting his feet in fishing her out.

Once it was the blood-curdling story of a doctor finding himself in the power of a madman, who, in the suavest manner possible, and with no intent of malice, but only in the interest of science, had set himself the task of abstracting the doctor's heart, that he might perform certain long-cherished experiments on it.

Another time the idea to be worked out would be that of a heroine of an extinct dynasty reappearing on the drama of modern life, and working strange charms, through her possession of some secret, unsuspected power, by which she was enabled to keep both decay and death at bay.

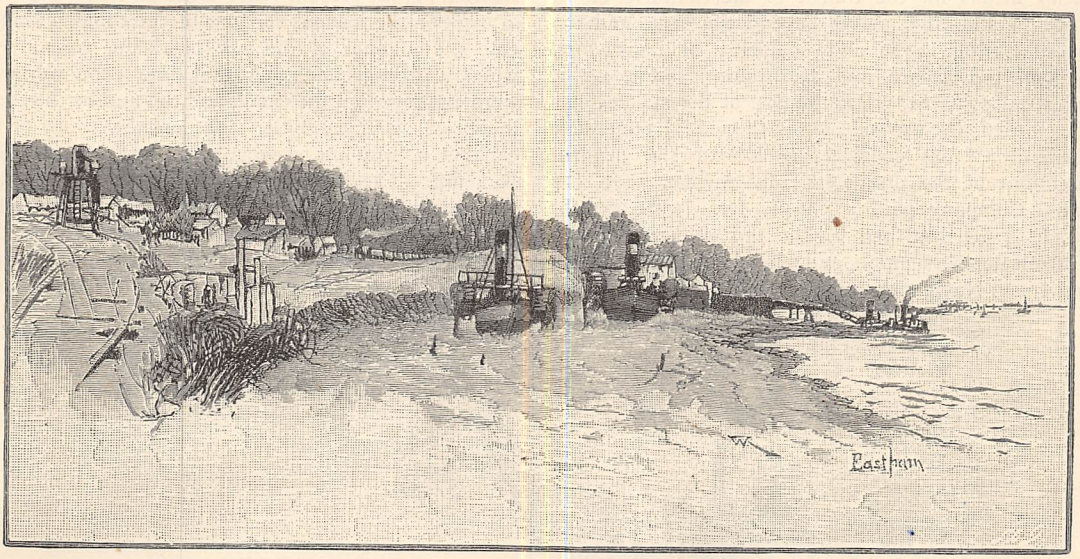
And again, the suggested nucleus of a story would be that venerable device of a missing will, turning up just in time to frustrate the machinations of some evil-disposed party, and to consummate the happiness of two mercenary young lovers.

If it were not one of these antediluvian acquaintances it would be some inane production of Dobson's own, or else the account of any trivial occurrence which might have befallen him in his unusually humdrum existence, and which he would detail as something altogether remarkable, and bid me "work it up." This mania of his at last attained to such a pitch, his brain meanwhile becoming more and more exhausted, that he could scarcely see a cab-horse fall down, or a policeman running a small boy in, but he would eagerly suggest the incident to me as the foundation for a story.

I am certain, however, that Dobson—he is such a good-natured fellow, despite his foible—will be really pleased to see that his plots have proved of some use to me after all.

DAVID C. ROOSE.

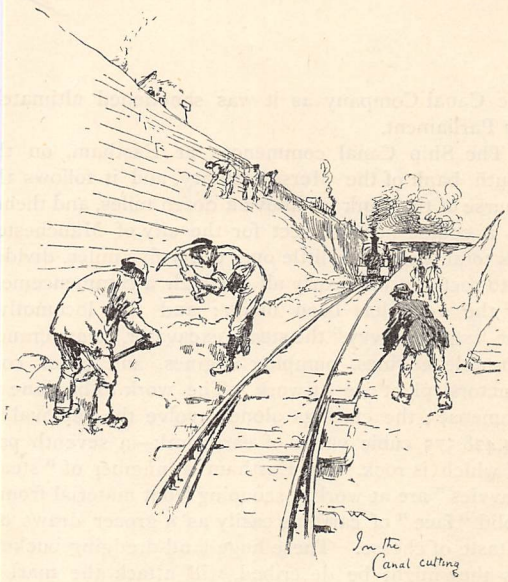
THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.



EASTHAM—WHERE THE CANAL JOINS THE MERSEY.

THE story of the Manchester Ship Canal has its romantic as well as its practical side. Its length is short compared with that of some canals; it has not locks like those which distinguish some of the Continental waterways; but in the extent and variety of the engineering works embraced, in the arduous nature of the effort to obtain the necessary powers, in the enthusiastic nature of the reception the scheme met with in its inception, and in the extent of the work in progress, are features which give it claim to rank amongst the leading works of the age.

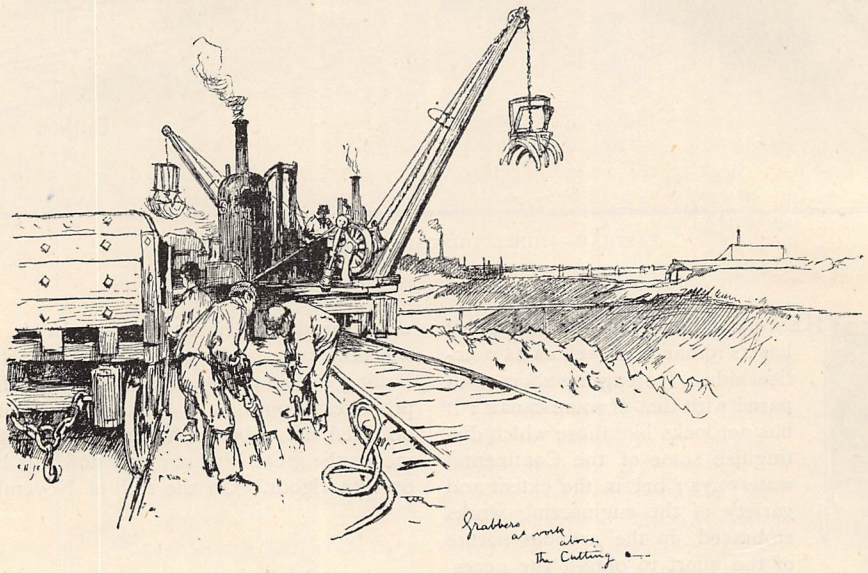
The idea of a navigable waterway to Manchester is not a new one; and schemes were brought forward scores of years ago, which railways caused the abandonment of; but for ten years the idea has taken increasing hold of the citizens of Cottonopolis; and on the 27th of June, 1882, Mr. Daniel Adamson broached the plan to an assemblage at his own house at Didsbury, at which eleven mayors of municipalities were present. A provisional committee (of which Mr. Adamson was appointed the first chairman) was formed, plans were approved, and a Bill was presented for Parliamentary sanction, and the House of Commons sanctioned the measure, whilst the House of Lords decided that "it is not expedient to proceed with this Bill in the present session of Parliament." The long and costly Parliamentary proceedings which succeeded form an epoch in private Bill legislation which needs no reference now. In the end the Act was obtained; and then came the monetary difficulty. Failing to find a response amongst the financiers, the promoters appealed to the people of Lancashire, and obtained subscribers sufficient to enable them to commence the great project; and now it is being pressed on with vigour. On the 11th of November, 1887, the



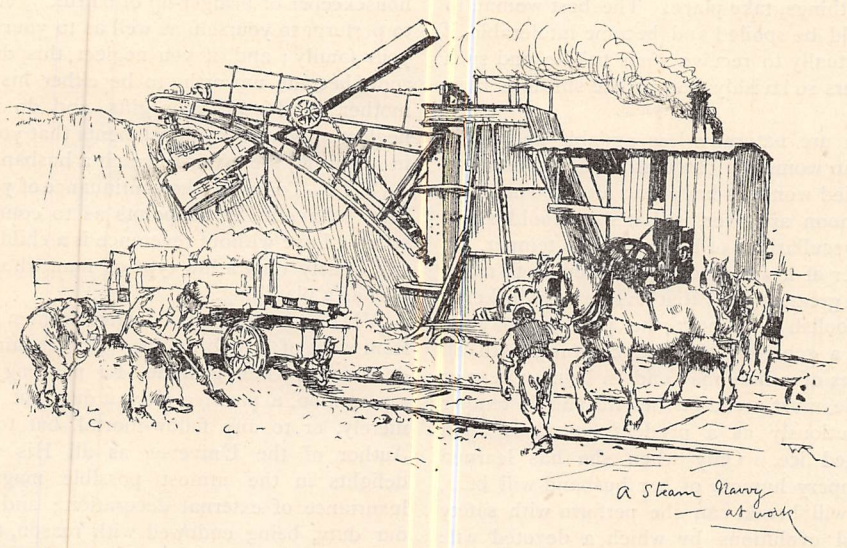
first sod was cut at Eastham (where the canal joins the estuary of the river Mersey) by the chairman of the Company—Lord Egerton. The estimated cost of

the first scheme was £6,904,186 ; the objects were thus indicated in the official "Description of the Project now before Parliament" :—primarily, "to afford a cheap means for the transit of merchandise of all kinds to and from places beyond the seas, and the manufacturing towns and coalfields of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and adjacent industrial districts." But the cost of the scheme has been varied, and the inclusion of the old "Bridgewater Navigation" has considerably altered the original intentions of the promoters. In August, 1887, the Canal Company paid a cheque for £1,710,000, for which it received the rights and property of the Bridgewater Navigation, and also those of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, which form part of the plan of the Canal Company as it was sanctioned ultimately by Parliament.

The Ship Canal commences at Eastham, on the south bank of the Mersey estuary, and it follows the course of the bank for above a dozen miles, and thence in a course nearly direct for the city of Manchester. Its total length is a little over thirty-five miles, divided into sections, on nearly all of which a commencement of the work has been made; and the locomotive, the "steam navvy," the steam excavator, steam cranes, portable engines, pumping engines, and other contractors' plant are at work. The work to be done is immense; the cuttings alone involve the removal of 44,428,575 cubic yards of earthwork—a seventh part of which is rock. At Eastham a number of "steam navvies" are at work, "scooping" out material from a solid "face" of earth as easily as a grocer draws out a taste of cheese. These huge land-dredging buckets, as they might be described, will attack the marl or clay to be removed; and so rapid is their scoop, so vast their hold of the "face," that in some instances one has been found to pull off and place in waggons for removal 1,000 tons of marl in a day's work. The steam navvy claims more than a ton of coals daily, and costs about £2,000; so that a statement recently made by Lord Egerton, that there were in February of the present year "eighteen steam navvies" at work on the various sections of the canal, will indicate the manner of the work, and the vigour with which it is progressing. At that time 3,000 workmen were employed on the canal, and the number has been increased since; and the sight on the route of the canal is a busy one, especially at Eastham and near Runcorn. The "navvy" is seen cutting upwards in the cuttings; locomotives are supplying it and other workers with empty waggons, and removing laden ones; and human navvies are picking, digging, "cornering," wheeling, stacking piles of sleepers, and tending the many machines at work. The operations are changing the appearance of marshy flats and pastoral land near the Mersey; villages of huts have sprung up, sheds for locomotives bulk out in the landscape, huge cuttings are being made, and vast spaces are being filled with the earth thence drawn; whilst a vigorous life spreads itself along the line the canal is to take, and overflows in its eager jollity into the towns near; so that abodes of chemicals, of salt, and of boatmen have added thereto the bustling life of the navvy.



It is a wonderful work: the contract price is to be £5,750,000; it is to be completed within four years from the date of commencement: it removes canals of olden date, such as that from Runcorn to Latchford; it alters the course of railways to some extent; it carries roads above its own course, and places water-supplies under it; it fills the beds of rivers and water-courses; needs vast locks and sluices, hydraulic machinery, many swing bridges (the steel-work in the girders for the bridges is estimated to be more than 3,300 tons in weight), and lifts, to lower and raise barges and boats to and from the canals. And whilst



the capitalists of the greater cities looked coldly upon the project when it was placed before them, the people of Lancashire, and especially the small companies, looked on it with such favour that there are now 39,710 distinct holdings of shares—many being those of stores, companies, &c. Up to the end of 1887 there had been allotted £7,383,020 worth of shares, and nearly a third of that sum had been paid up, a very considerable portion of which had been expended on the purchase of the Bridgewater and subsidiary navigations, on land, and on works.

What this great project will do for Lancashire and Cheshire, when completed, remains to be seen. The hopes of the promoters are that it will increase its trades and manufactures, and carry more cheaply products of present and of future industries. It is a bold venture, brought out by those who "love the land" and its commerce, and believe that water carriage is essential for the development of its resources, and to meet a growing international competition. They have faced the stern and long contest to obtain powers, and at last won; they are giving their capital to it; and they look beyond the picturesque present of the undertaking in construction to the future of completion, with satisfaction at what has been done, and hope for that future.

MATRIMONIAL MAXIMS BY A MARRIED MAN.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY ABOUT TO BE MARRIED.

OUR happiness and misery in this world depend as much on the expectations of things we have been accustomed to indulge in as on the nature of the things themselves. If you expect apples to grow from gooseberry bushes, you are extremely unreasonable; and, when disappointed in the produce, you will have to blame your own unschooled imagination, not the nature of the plant or the virtue of the soil. So with regard to marriage. People in not a few cases, I fear, are disappointed in the results of this great act of social life, simply because they had formed unreasonable expectations. What are your expectations of the married life? If you expect to find in it a paradise of delight and a field of clover you are sure to be disappointed. Expect from it only a more sacred sphere of moral sympathy, and the best school of moral training, and it is not in the power even of a bad husband to deprive you altogether of the rich spiritual blessing of the bond.

(II.)—It is not in the power of the most sagacious young lady to discern the character of the future *husband* in that of the present *lover*. In the case of a lover a thousand motives conspire to give to every attitude and action the amiable character of a desire to please another. In the husband the old instinct revives by which all men in common circumstances are apt to be ruled, the desire to please self. Look, therefore, for a certain change more or less in the character of your present admirer. If he is a good man, you may reasonably look for a matrimonial affection more deep, more steady, and more habitual than the love of courtship; but a diminution in the thousand and one little attentions and devoted services which now delight and flatter you so much, must, in

the nature of things, take place. The best woman in the world would be spoiled and become intolerable, if she were habitually to receive such tribute and such service as lovers so lavishly offer on the shrine of their idol.

(III.)—Men are naturally less amiable and more intractable than women. The first point, therefore, to secure a married woman's happiness after the holidays of the honeymoon are over, is that she should study carefully the peculiarities of her husband's temper. It is in the power of a wise and a good woman to make a lamb of the greatest bear that ever wore whiskers; while by a foolish treatment the process may be reversed, and a generous bearded creature, with all the capabilities of a lion, may end in being a bear or a wolf. A wife must tread on her husband's temper at first as cautiously as a prudent boy does upon recently formed ice. Only when she has learned where the slippery humour of her husband will bear, and where it will break, can she perform with safety those graceful evolutions by which a devoted wife achieves greater triumphs than ever Bonaparte did by his artillery. Wise old Plutarch, descanting on this topic, very appropriately brings in the old fable of the traveller, whom Boreas, with his obstreperous blasts, tried to disrobe of his good great-coat; but the result was quite otherwise; the more violently Boreas puffed his cheeks, the more closely the man wrapped his cloak about him. But what Boreas could not achieve with all his strength, the Sun did with a few slight touches of his genial beams. The man was so overcome by the softening influence that he flung both cloak and tunic away. So let no woman foolishly attempt to gain from her husband in a rough way what she can surely achieve by gentleness.

(IV.)—In your study to master your husband's temper, do not forget to keep a firm hold of your own. Women are less selfish and less imperious, but they are more sensitive and hasty than men, and more apt, on small occasions, to mount into a flame and become indignant about trifles. Of all things in the world beware most of this fault, for by indulging it you lose the grace and vantage-ground of your sex. When your husband speaks harshly to you—as even the best of husbands may do in an evil moment—either remain silent, or, if you are pressed hard, give a firm but placid reply in a tone that expresses neither exasperation nor contempt.

(V.)—Obey your husband in all reasonable matters, and in some unreasonable matters, but not in all matters, otherwise you will make him a tyrant and yourself a slave. When he becomes imperious about crotchets, take your own way and smile bewitchingly. He cannot get the better of you thus without becoming a brute, and beating, or at least bullying you, an issue which, if your husband has any tincture of gentlemanliness about him, in a decent, sober-minded Christian country, you have no great reason to fear.

(VI.)—Always attend conscientiously, as part of your special province, to the kitchen and the pantry; also to the wardrobe, and, if you have children, to the nursery. But beware of becoming altogether a mere housekeeper or bringer-up of bairns. You have a duty to perform to yourself, as well as to your husband and your family; and, if you neglect this duty, you may soon become unworthy to be either his wife or their mother. Cultivate your gifts, and do not prove by neglecting your accomplishments that your only object in acquiring them was to catch a husband.

(VII).—To insure the continuance of your husband's love, behave so in all points as to command his respect. Love without reverence is a childish affair, and can satisfy only a low type of man who looks on his wife as a plaything.

(VIII.)—Dress well. Married women often err here from want of a high motive. In the fair sex, outward decoration, when genuine—for painting is vile—is, in my opinion, a positive duty, a duty not to a husband merely, or to any fellow-mortal, but to God. The Author of the Universe, as all His works testify, delights in the utmost possible magnificence and luxuriance of external decoration; and it is plainly our duty, being endowed with reason, to follow His hint, and, where He has created a fair object, to set it forth with every graceful trapping that is in keeping with the character of the work. Good dress is, in fact, a sort of poetry addressed to the eye, which it is in the power of every well-conditioned woman to compose; and a woman who has no taste for decoration is a deficient creature, as much out of nature as a bird without wings.

(IX.)—When you wish to obtain anything from your husband, and have reason to anticipate his refusal, choose with delicate care a favourable moment to present your petition, and beware of bringing unpleasant requests into juxtaposition with an unpleasant humour.

(X.)—Don't annoy your husband with officious displays of loving attention in small matters when he is busy, and occupied with affairs of serious concern. Neither is it consistent with the proper self-dependence of the male being that you should insist on tying his neckcloth, buttoning his coat, or brushing his hair exactly to your fancy rather than his own. Remember that man is a proud animal, and that a husband is not a doll.

(XI.)—Bear in mind also that your husband, though a very important person in your eyes, may be a very small person in the eyes of the world. Do not, therefore, be eager to bring him forward on all occasions as some women do, quoting all his opinions as if he were an oracle, and discussing publicly his small peculiarities, as if the manner in which he smoked his cigars and shaved his beard were a matter of Parliamentary concern. To parade your husband after this fashion is the surest way to make the man appear ridiculous and the wife petty. But avoid not less the contrary extreme of keeping a close eye on the faults and defects of your husband, from a jealous regard to his honour; for, however amiable it may be in you to desire to see your husband perfect in all points, there are various types of being in the world, and a wise woman will beware of a benevolent longing to refashion her mate after what may be her ideal of perfect

manhood, rather than the type with which Almighty God stamped him from the birth. No man can add an inch to his stature, and there are certain ingrown peculiarities of temper and character in a man which no power can change any more than a block of granite can become a block of sandstone. For a wife to display a forward zeal in endeavouring to remove such peculiarities, is to do something to alienate her husband's affections, while she can do nothing to change his character; for, whatever his faults, a man naturally expects sympathy from his helpmate in the first place, and not criticism.

(XII.)—If your husband is a weakling, and cannot manage his own establishment properly, you are entitled to assume the reins by the law of the stronger; but in doing so be careful to use this superiority wisely, and to display it as little as possible, lamenting the necessity which secures to you power at home only in proportion as your husband forfeits respect abroad. No proper woman should wish to exercise any power over her husband save that which is the natural and quiet result of conjugal love and loyalty, acting in harmony with the graciousness and the tact which are the characteristic excellences of the sex.

J. STUART BLACKIE.

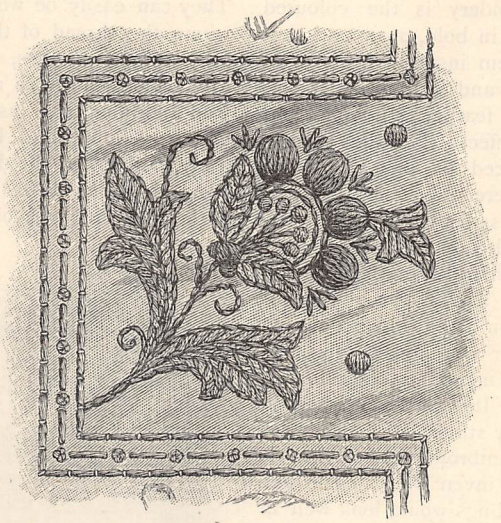
NEW WORK FOR THE NEEDLE.

BY ARDERN HOLT.

"Yes, till the world be quite dissolved at last:
So long, at least, the needle's use shall last."

THESE lines were written many, many years ago; and although the interests and pursuits of life have greatly increased, the needle holds its own the same as ever.

Its history dates from the earliest days. The Israelites in Moses' time had learnt from the Egyptians the art of embroidering in gold, silver, and precious stones. Homer and Pliny have recorded what the women of their day accomplished, and the exploits of many husbands have been perpetuated in the chamber hangings wrought by their wives. A Grecian widow could take no second spouse unless she had worked the gravecloths for her deceased lord; and good needlework has in all days been held in honour by women.



FLAX THREAD EMBROIDERY.

Embroidery is defined to be "the art of adding to the surface of woven textures representations of objects we wish to depict," and it is to the subject of embroidery that most of the new notions in modern needlework are directed. There are almost as many kinds as there are days in the year, but at the present moment designers and manufacturers would seem to be turning their attention specially to two classes—chenille and linen embroidery.

Needlework is the sister art of painting, and as far back as the old Egyptian days weaving was supplemented by the needle, applied with silk, flax, and cotton.

In this year of grace 1888, we have a large choice in the matter of threads, by which term I mean materials to embroider with, whether of silk, wool, or linen. Many of the new kinds stand the test of washing if fairly treated. Pure curd soap and rain-water are best to use, made into a lather. The article under treatment should be rubbed as little as possible, rinsed in clean water, squeezed, but not wrung, dried quickly, and mangled rather than ironed, for great heat is detrimental to the preservation of colour.

Filo floss silk, which is a make between floss and filoselle, twisted embroidery, rope silk, filoselle, and tussah can all be had in the Eastern unfading dyes, which last for centuries, and are the same by gas or daylight. There are some two hundred shades, but they are, perhaps, not quite so bright and brilliant as silks—which will not so surely stand the test of time. Crewel, crochet, and purse silks are well known, and, as also the Imperial knitting silk, are often used in embroidery; indeed, even the ice silk is sometimes called into play.

Decca silk—like floss, but with a finer twist—is proved to be extremely useful; and for flannel there is

a special make called flannel silk, loosely twisted and to be had in various thicknesses.

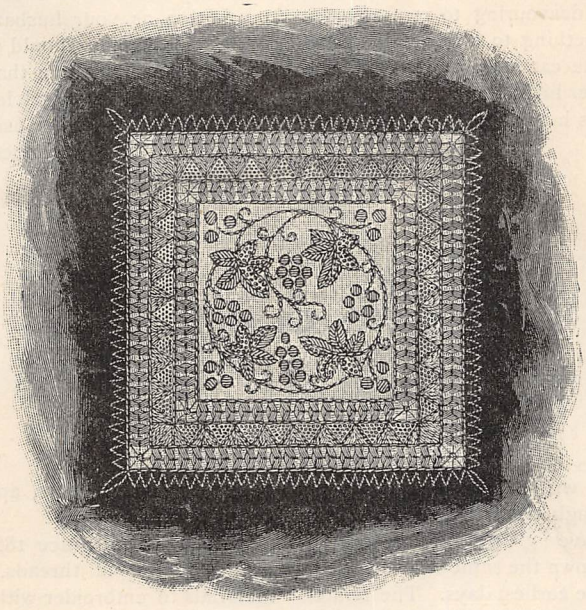
Tapestry and crewel wools, together with Berlin, are the kinds most used for embroidering. Ingrain cottons are for the moment yielding the palm to the flax or crewel linen threads.

Flax thread embroidery looks equally well on silk, satin, woollen cloth, or linen. The old kinds have survived the changes of dynasties and generations. It cannot be given to us to know whether modern flax thread will be equally fortunate with the Persian and Egyptian specimens handed down to us. But it is cheap, yet has all the gloss of silk.

It can, of course, be adapted to almost any class of embroidery where silk or wool is used; but what is now understood by flax thread embroidery is the coloured thread applied to white linen in bold, open, and continuous patterns, many of them inspired by antique models. The ordinary laid and stem stitches are used, and here and there feather stitching and French knots heighten the effect. For the bordering a good result is produced by couching—that is, using two threads of different colours, fastened down by a third. Bed-quilts, tea-cloths, and sideboard cloths in this flax work are the newest kind for the moment. When flax thread is applied to silk or satin, the effect is greatly heightened by the addition of gold thread. But on linen this flax thread is found to be invaluable for reproducing the fine Hispano-Moorish, Slavonic, and other embroideries which are of ancient date. It can be worked in the ordinary crewel or tapestry stitch, but then it does not represent these antique embroideries. There is ample scope for industry and invention; all the fine darning and diapered groundings would look well in this work.

The old linen thread German work can be carried out in the pure white flax, which has all the appearance of silk, or in coloured flax together with, or instead of silk. All the various stitches that I have enumerated are used in it, but the thread is generally employed double.

The Russian crash and coarse linens used are very often fringed at the edges and knotted. A well-tempered needle should be selected, whatever the material, which is frequently damask, with the pattern outlined by stitches; just as the Egyptians accentuated the designs made in weaving by subsequent hand-work in coloured threads. It is easy labour, and yet has a great effect when completed.



OLD GERMAN LINEN THREAD EMBROIDERY.

In searching for novelties, I am always confirmed in the opinion that there is little really new, and that what we call novelties are simply revivals. Such is the case with Holbein embroidery, which is ancient thread stitchery revived and made easy for us now by ready-prepared braids, that, when sewn on, are ornamented by additional stitches. Queen Anne cross stitch and Russian cross stitch are both also most successfully revived in the present day, the patterns mostly borrowed from the Renaissance period. They can easily be worked on coarse materials, but where the thread of the weaving is not a sufficient guide for the stitches, canvas is tacked over, and the threads drawn away after the work is completed. Red and blue tones last best. In very old specimens, greens, yellows, and blacks are found to be rotted away, perhaps by the dye as well as by time and use.

Another revival that deserves all English patronage is the Limerick embroidery, which half a century ago was a productive industry in Ireland. The design is first traced on linen, over which fine Brussels net is laid and well tacked down. The outline is worked in chain stitch with fine lace thread, and various lace stitches complete the pattern, which is generally floral. It can be worked (appliqué) by

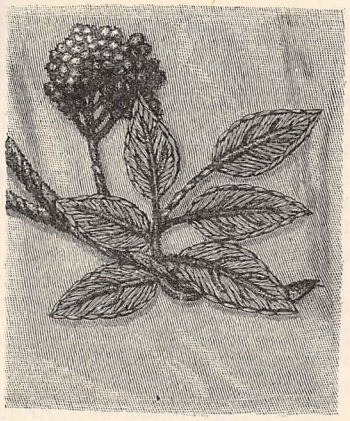
HOLBEIN EMBROIDERY.

LIMERICK EMBROIDERY.

laying muslin over the net, and darning the thickest portions of the leaves and flowers, but the work savours more of lace than embroidery.

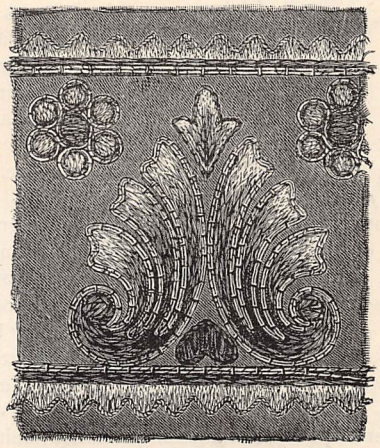
Chenille is described as "*un tissu de soie velouté qui imite le chenille*," for the word means caterpillar. It is soft and velvety, and can be had in many kinds and sizes. Arrasene—which, like chenille itself, makes a great show with very little work—is untwisted, and is fabricated both in silk and wool ; but the chenille now employed is either very fine or strong and coarse. A new work, quite recently brought out, is the application of a strong woollen chenille to canvas. Only the single uncrossed stitch is required, so that it suits admirably those whose sight is not very good, and those who like to have great show with but little work. It makes capital rugs and carpets, footstools, and ottoman covers : the patterns are the same as for Berlin wool work, geometric rather than floral, and the range of colours are fully equal to the requirements of the worker.

The finer makes of silk chenille are being applied to the new Arras embroidery. The word calls up visions of antique tapestry, the art of working which was lost in Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, until it was re-introduced from the Levant by the Crusaders. Flanders established a reputation for tapestry-making unequalled elsewhere, and the town of Arras came boldly to the front, and gave a name to the wall coverings made there. The present Arras embroidery, however, is not tapestry, but rarely has anything more soft and lovely in needlework been brought before the public. The chenille applied to the work is of two sizes, and it is supplemented in the Arras work by silk. It is carried out principally on satin in long continuous sprays of flowers and leaves, coloured faithfully after nature ; the leaves are outlined in filoselle, but such flowers as heliotrope or such fruit as blackberries would be produced, with French knots, on chenille. Cushions, mantel-borders, table-cloths, and screens, high and low, have been and are being most successfully worked in this Arras embroidery. The chenille is also applied to a tapestry work, the foundation being canvas ; but the stitch, instead of the single one used for the coarser make of chenille, is a double tent stitch, and filoselle is used for groundwork.



ARRAS EMBROIDERY.

No notice of novel introductions in needlework would be complete without a reference to the embroideries carried out at Leek, which utilise the wild silks of India. These are produced by the common or wild silkworm not feeding on the mulberry-leaf, and



LEEK EMBROIDERY.

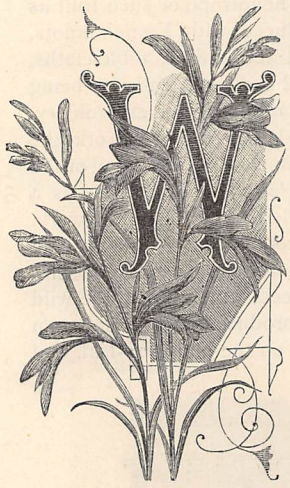
the resulting tussah silk, as it is called, is dyed with Indian dyes, which are varied and most delicate. The foundation is the woven tussah silk in many plain colours, the patterns printed upon them in black. Nearly every kind of embroidery stitch is introduced, outline buttonhole, stem stitch, French knots, and crewel, but the design is almost invariably outlined with gold thread. The beauty of this work is in the perfection of the colouring employed, and the patterns are mostly of Oriental origin, though by its means some very fine old Italian embroideries have been reproduced. It is not work that can be quickly done ; it requires good execution, time, and care.

We desire to make the very most of our leisure ; hence a great deal of the needlework of the day aims at combining various materials so as to give a great effect with little labour ; and appliqués of several materials would seem to find special favour. Quite recently a number of chair-backs, cushions, bags, and similar articles were prepared with an appliqué of leather on velvet ; heartsease, lilies of the valley, and roses were thus produced, with some silk embroidery to complete the pattern.

IN WAYWARD MOOD.

BY WILLIAM J. LACEY, AUTHOR OF "HIS GUARDIAN GENIUS," ETC. ETC.

I.



HEN do you leave the Priory for Bullerton?—You go there as usual, I suppose?"

"Yes; in about a fortnight's time, I expect. But it may be earlier, for papa is apt to fix his dates precipitately. It is our chronic grievance—aunt's and mine."

"And Basil—I beg his pardon: Mr. Colbourne—man of affairs as he has now become — Basil will find time to run down again and again while you are there." It was more soliloquy than interrogation. But Marion Weir answered it.

"Yes; it is Basil's custom, and it breaks the monotony nicely."

The conversation was taking place in the great bay window of the old-fashioned Priory drawing-room. The soft summer breeze had blown in through the open casement a cluster of the trellised roses, and heedless of his action, Arthur Hammersley began a career of havoc. In no long space the rug at his feet was strewn with torn petals. And Marion Weir spoke no word to stay the work of destruction. Was the fair flower of young romance in process of being shattered also?

"Very possibly, though I am sorry to hear you say it," returned Arthur Hammersley, with a refreshing bluntness in complete keeping with his character of a bluff young sailor. "And no doubt it suits Colbourne too, for some purpose, even if Richmond is nearer. I hope he isn't meditating treachery. That would be very discreditable, in spite of the contentment it might bring to Mrs. Colbourne. If he talks nonsense, Marion, there are two reasons why you should not listen to him. One is that I don't like it a bit. The other I am not at liberty to mention with particularity. If you do encourage him—understand me plainly—I believe mischief will come of it, which you would be the first to regret."

"Basil is my cousin——"

"Pshaw! The son of your father's half-sister."

"—And as my cousin, I certainly shall not snub him at any one's dictation. Basil is kind and gentlemanly. I don't think he would indulge in threats. And I wonder from whence your right comes, Lieutenant Hammersley, to point out my duty and use menace. You take too much upon yourself."

The words were very icy. They stung the hearer like a shower of hailstones, though the voice never lifted from its old sweet level. On occasion Marion Weir could speak passionately with no show of passion. And now she was vexed quite past endurance. A few girlish words won from her lips long ago—which, after all, might have meant very little—were all he had to go upon as a basis for privilege, and yet here was Arthur Hammersley, with hardy presumption, laying down lines upon which he actually ordered that she should rule her conduct. Without ever taking the trouble to ask her plainly to be his wife, he was arrogating more than the authority of the accepted lover.

The young lieutenant turned from the window, walked the length of the room, and came back. He was sturdy of build, fair, and handsome. You instinctively thought of the boisterous, wholesome ocean that was his chosen element as you looked into his fearless face.

"Don't let us have a serious difference just as the *Satrap* sails, even if it is our first," he said, gloom in his eyes, care drawing a rugged line across his forehead.

A slight shrug of Marion's shoulders was perceptible. And it boded ill for the success of his appeal.

"Perhaps you will be good enough to give me a rough clue to the second reason which you spoke of—why I should treat my cousin with coldness, seeing that I do not recognise the first as sufficient," she said.

"No; I decline to do that."

Decision vibrated in the answer.

Whether amity would have triumphed in the long run over discord, if the talk had continued, the day was not destined to reveal. The door opened, and Mrs. Colbourne entered. She was a woman of character and presence, with one object in life—to advance what she imagined to be the interests of her son, a clever young stock-broker. And the leading item in her present programme was to bring about a match between Basil and his half-cousin Marion. As since her widowhood she had been installed as Maynard Weir's housekeeper—in place of the mother Marion could but faintly remember—she possessed opportunities in abundance for the match-making diplomacy, dear always to the feminine heart. Hammersley knew her for his foe.

With a slow, languid movement which was a natural disguise for the promptitude and vigilance that belonged to her real habit of mind, she crossed the room and held out her hand.

"You will be making a stay of some duration at the Manor?" she said suavely, after a few commonplaces, noting with vivid interest the shadow on the visitor's countenance and the constraint in her niece's manner.

"No; I go to-morrow," Arthur Hammersley replied.

"MARION WAS ALONE."

"*IN WAYWARD MOOD*" (*p.* 31).

So soon! And perhaps for years: perhaps for aye! There was a tremor of relenting at Marion's heart. But a sense of secret disappointment stepped in to steel her still against the laggard in love. If he really cared for her as he had led her to believe, why had he not sought a straightforward engagement?

Mrs. Colbourne grew conspicuously gracious.

"We have seen but little of you," she said reproachfully. "Is not your departure abrupt?"

"Very; and I have scarcely been in Holtwood at all. The pater carried me off to Scotland with him, you see. On our return last night I found waiting orders in the shape of a telegram transferring me to the *Satrap*, which sails for Singapore at the end of the week. It has put all my plans out of gear. I was expecting no such command."

"The squire will be discontented."

"He is—very. Now Dick is with his regiment in Ireland he finds the country slow. Is Mr. Weir returning from town to-night?"

Marion was addressed, but it was her aunt who answered.

"We do not expect him," she said.

Mrs. Colbourne was astute. Not a chance of further explanation with Marion did Hammersley get the long afternoon through, until he finally stood in the outer porch, hat in hand. Somehow Marion was with him then.

"I have displeased you; you are frigid," he said, in low tones, bitterly.

The girl was silent.

"Is the past dead, I wonder? In a fortnight I could have spoken. Now, must it be only good-bye?"

It was an enigmatical speech, and Marion puzzled over it after. But her hauteur did not yield. The delinquent offered no syllable of apology, and Marion merely echoed his word of farewell.

"Good-bye!"

II.

To know what a young girl really wishes in her heart of hearts when the disposal of her hand is in question, is a problem as likely to baffle the man of power and intellect as the average guardian. Perhaps more so, for its conditions are not those which can be determined by will and capacity, however imperious and considerable. This difficulty was troubling one of the foremost civil engineers of his day. Maynard Weir—marked out infallibly for knighthood when a certain great bridge was opened—acknowledged to himself that here he was totally at a loss. If fortune had given him a son instead of a daughter, he believed he could have tracked the true bent of a boy's inclinations. Or if Marion's mother had lived, he might also have escaped his present solicitude. But as things had fallen out, a heavy load seemed to rest on the wrong shoulders.

Marion's half-anticipation of a rush to the coast on abbreviated notice had been justified by the event, and the Weirs were installed in familiar quarters at Bullerton. On the fourth morning after their arrival, a letter had followed from Basil Colbourne, which gave a reward for many earnest persuasions to Mrs. Colbourne, and a season of sharp anxiety to her brother.

"It is to me, and brief, and to the point. Basil asks me for my daughter. I must see Marion about a reply," the latter moodily said.

"Indeed!"

The widow rightly judged that it was a time for reticence, and practised it accordingly.

"I suppose Marion will accept him. You, at all events, will be pleased, Honora; and that is something."

The intonation of the last sentences was peculiar. Irony was in it, and a sombre bitterness, and a quasi-suspicion as involuntary, as, surely, on the surface devoid of excuse.

And still the equable eyes—at fifty but little abated in their lustre—parried his glance, and seemed to marvel at his restless manner.

"I admit at once that I shall be very glad. Marion and Basil are in every way suited for each other. He will enter Parliament, and she will be a great social success."

"Well, Marion must decide."

The girl was in one of the rooms of Crescent House, which at some date had been used as an *atelier*. All its arrangements showed this. Marion usually brought it back for a space to its original purpose. She had an easel up now, and was putting in tints of pronounced vermilion on a sketch of a jumble of roofs in the fishing quarter of Bullerton. She worked with a curious, feverish eagerness, as her father came to her side and critically inspected the canvas.

"Will it be like, papa? Or is it a hopeless daub, and am I a ridiculous impostor?" she asked.

"Humph! The general effect is rather pretty. But the colour in your brush is too vivid. The tile was never baked that was of that hue. Don't lose touch of reality at the finish, Marion."

The white, low brow puckered; a shadow descended on the mirror of the liquid, grey-blue eyes; strangely rigid lines formed about the rosebud of a mouth. Did her father intend his advice to have a double application? The attitude of her mind was one of revolt and resistance.

"The sketch is a failure; there, let it go. I'll try a different subject next."

And the impulsive girl laid down palette and brush, and wheeled away her easel into an obscure corner. This done, she came back, and faced her parent with a strange, apologetic, uncertain smile on her winsome face. Marion was beautiful at all times, with features exquisitely formed, a piquant carriage of the small golden head, and a slight but shapely figure. But when battling with dubious success against her chronic temptation to be headstrong and rash, and conscious that she was partially worsted in the strife, she flushed as Aurora might, and every charm was heightened.

"The powder of impatience was waiting for the

match, papa, and you happened to bring about the explosion," she said.

The listener sighed. His task had, however, to be attempted, and he went straight to business.

"I trust, Marion, you will not be too impatient to attend very carefully to what I have to say," he began. "You brought the post-bag in this morning. I think you are, therefore, aware that I got a note from your cousin Basil?"

"Yes."

It was absolutely a featureless monosyllable.

"A letter which wholly concerns you. I was anticipating a communication relative to a purchase of stocks; but Basil has forgotten that. He makes you an offer of marriage through me; thus, he says, insuring my consent. A bold assumption is there. But I pass it by. The questions I want answered are these: Does my little girl feel that she can render to Basil Colbourne wifely love and obedience? Is he the choice of her heart? I used to fancy that the event, when it came—and there is no hurry now: you are only twenty—would wear another face; that Arthur Hammersley, of whom we have seen nearly as much since we moved to Holtwood as of Basil, would be the favoured suitor. And I will be quite explicit. Though Colbourne is of my own kith and kin I like Hammersley better. He is every inch a man. There is a downrightness about him too—an air of command—that I thought likely to win upon a girl's imagination. People say girls like a master. I am a little surprised if, after all, it is Basil; and a little sorry also."

"It—is—Basil."

The words were spoken faintly, but they were emphatic.

"Then, may Basil Colbourne justify your love!" he gravely said.

Gently raising the girl's averted face, he kissed her throbbing brow, and for this hour left her.

And Marion's eyes looked out on vacancy with the stony gaze of despair. What had she done in wayward mood?

III.

BULLERTON has still the recommendations of quaintness, neglect, and insignificance. This was why Maynard Weir preferred it as an autumn retreat to gayer places. Its beauties were his own pet discovery, and with the pardonable selfishness of the connoisseur he was silent concerning them, when a letter over his name in the *Times* would infallibly have brought other visitors. Why should the British tourist be rampant everywhere?

His women-folk had latterly found it a trifle dull. But now the quietude at which she had been minded to mock as rivalling that of Tadmor in the wilderness, was grateful to Marion. It relieved her from the strain of perpetually carrying a cheerful face over a heart as heavy as lead.

The sea has a message of peace for many cares, and a balm for many sorrows. But not for such as through wilfulness and pique had entered the lot of Marion Weir. It rather seemed to accuse her. Yet she was more than ever by its side, drawn thither by a fascination, one source of which she recognised with shame and sharp contrition. In defiance of all coercion, her thoughts were with a young sailor outward bound, as she believed, to the China seas. She had told herself that she did well to be angry, on the one hand, at Arthur Hammersley's remissness as a wooer, and on the other at his pretensions to control her conduct. But now that resentment, re-kindled by her father's ill-timed reference to Hammersley's strength of character, had carried Marion to a decision as hasty as it promised to be hateful, the girl sat by the hour in her favourite nook by the side of a primitive pier on the narrow neck of land, haunted mainly by fisher-folk, which interposed between the river and the wide sweep of Bullerton Bay. She listened to the winds of the western sea as they wailed to her of love's blindness and inconstancy.

And here two men found her. The first was Basil Colbourne, dark, dapper, spick and span from head to foot, but hardly so radiant as his circumstances might seem to warrant. To Mrs. Colbourne he had been chilly and unresponsive, which was a poor recompense for her endeavours to wed him to an heiress, and made her spirits sink. He had inquired for Marion's father; but he was out on the moors. Then, under the guidance of memory, Basil walked straight to Buller Point.

It was a queer meeting. No light of welcome shone on Marion's face; no hungry appeal for it gleamed in the young man's eyes. Marion was alone. They were secure from eaves-droppers, and it was possible to come at once to the curious disclosure which must be made.

"I knew pretty well whither to turn my steps when I heard you were out on the beach," he said, a little stiffly; "but I looked to find you sketching—idealising the prose of fisher-life."

"No; I am an incorrigible idler," she answered, disdaining the flattery.

"Of course you were expecting me? I was in duty bound to come."

A quiver ran over Marion's frame. She looked up, and her glance was hard and haughty.

"Stop, please; there are just a few words you must hear now, at the beginning," she said, almost fiercely; "it will not be fair to hide what I cannot help or alter. Perhaps if—if you had asked me in person we should have come to a better understanding. Though I do not reproach papa; the fault is mine—mine. I must take back my promise. I cannot care enough—I cannot be your wife. It was all a miserable mistake."

The clouds cleared as if by magic from the young stock-broker's countenance at surely the very moment when they ought to have grown denser. He drew a long breath.

"You will never guess how you have relieved me," he went on. "That letter was sent astray. It should have gone to John Forest, a surgeon at Richmond, of

whose son, Reginald, you will have heard Lieutenant Hammersley speak. They were school chums, and have been shipmates since. I hope to marry Miss Marie Forest. I thought Hammersley might have told you ; he would be certain to know from Reggie. I was astounded when I received uncle's letter, and saw of what ridiculous carelessness I had been guilty."

Fast friends, but lovers never, they walked back in amicable converse up the long lane to Crescent House. The news was heard within by Mrs. Colbourne with profound chagrin, and, later, by Maynard Weir with amazement, passing into satisfaction.

* * * * * *

Half a week went by. Marion was ensconced in the shadow of a fishing-lugger, toning down the over-conspicuous red on the selfsame sketch which she had formerly put aside as worthless. A step she knew sounded upon her ear.

"I was directed vaguely out amongst the crab-nets to my lonely sailor's lass. And I've steered true. Am I forgiven, Marion?"

Not "Miss Weir" even now! How precisely like the dear gallant fellow it was! And fickle, faithful Marion began to think that assurance on some lips had its charms.

"But—you are *en route* to Singapore!"

Arthur Hammersley laughed, with a humour chastened by other emotions than that of mirth.

"Am I? then it's very strange. Didn't suppose I was a wraith!" he said. "No, Marion, my love, my life. But I was very near to going. The *Satrap* showed a dangerous bit of plating on a final inspection, and was delayed for three weeks. I ascertained that my transfer could be altered if I took the trouble to ask. But what was there for me to stay in England for? Nothing. I thought you meant marrying Colbourne, whether it wrecked two other people's happiness or not."

"It was Miss Forest you spoke of that evening!"

"Yes. And for myself I could not plead. My brother Dick contracted a *mésalliance*—his wife is dead—when he was just of age. And the pater had bound me by a promise not to make an offer to any girl until I was twenty-five, the number of his own years, I believe, when he became engaged to my mother. The period of probation is up now. Will you be a sailor's wife, Marion? From Basil I have received a message which gives me hope."

It was a very glad voice that whispered "Yes!"

But Marion was not content without adding a full confession.

In return Arthur Hammersley merely answered in his decisive way—

"Somebody else will take my place on board the *Satrap*. I shall wire instantly to Captain Richings. He'll manage it for me."

"So you took my counsel, Marion, and saved the finish," slily whispered Marion's father.

"I shall always tremble, papa, to reflect on what might so easily have happened through my perverseness," the girl answered, with a new and happy meekness.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

DECEMBER—ROBIN.

ROBIN looks round on the wintry world,
Snow-draped in ermine, with frost impearled ;
"Now birds," says he, "should go fine-dressed too"—
So out comes his russet and crimson new.

AMUSING JUVENILE ANSWERS.

SO many and varied are the amusing answers given by juveniles in reply to questions either beyond them, or so well within their ken as readily to lend themselves to their fun, that a volume could easily be compiled of them. The modern school-boy, indeed, if we are to believe all we hear of him, is a creature from whom flashes of unconscious wit and humour may at any time be expected; and these flashes are, in general, so interesting that they deserve a better fate than to sink into oblivion. To rescue a few of them from that fate is the purpose of this paper.

It is, it appears, at examinations rather than during ordinary lessons that these gems of original thought are elicited. It was at such a ceremony, for instance, that a cape was described by one boy as "a piece of land and rock joining the sea and its tributaries;" and by a second as "a point adjoining the ocean for putting lighthouses, &c., on." By another bright youth continents and volcanoes were described as follows:—"A continent is a portion of land partially surrounded by water, with mountains and plains in it; a volcano is a mountain with a basin on the top, spitting out fire and brimstone." Besides these items of geographical information, we are told that "Africa is called the Dark Continent because the negroes in it are black;" and that "a fort is a place to put men in, and a fortress a place to put women in."

In English literature some of the answers are calculated, if not to overthrow established notions, at least to make us wonder at the state of mind by which they could have been prompted. "Who was Sir Walter Scott?" was an examination-paper question; and the reply, which would have delighted Mark Twain, was: "He was the last minstrel seen in Wales, and was killed by Llewellyn for giving money to those who captured wolves. Among his poems are *Ivanhoe* and *Shakspeare!*" This, however, is capped by our next example, which displays a curious state of mixed knowledge, the effect, let us charitably suppose, of a system of cramming. "Milton was the novelist who wrote *Killing no Murder* against King James II., who put out his eyes for it, when Milton said: "Had I but served my God as well as I have served my king, He would not have forsaken me in mine old age." According to other original thinkers, Byron was imprisoned for twenty years in the Castle of Chillon; Wordsworth was called a Lake poet, because he drowned himself in a lake owing to money difficulties; and the reason of Chaucer being termed the father of English poetry is that he invented printing!

With the text of our literature liberties are sometimes taken by erring juveniles, as when a boy in an advanced class at a public school rendered the concluding lines of the first act of *Hamlet* thus:—

> "Let us go in together;
> And keep your fingers on your lips, I pray,
> Whose arm is out of joint with cursed spite,
> And he is never born to set it right—
> Nay, come, let's go together."

A reference to the play will show how extraordinarily the words of the immortal bard have been perverted. At the same school one of the tasks in an examination-paper was to write out the combat scene in the fifth canto of *The Lady of the Lake;* and the version given of some of the lines by one boy was almost as remarkable as the above. He wrote:—

> "I thank thee, Roderick, for the word:
> It nerves my heart, it *steals* my sword;
> * * * * * *
> We try this quarrel *kilt* to *kilt*."

In the domain of history we have several answers more amusing than instructive. "The Crusaders," according to one rising genius, "were the men who conquered America and Peru, and were so called because they were the first to cross the Atlantic." By a second historian we are told that "Edward the Confessor was the first English monarch to embrace the Popish religion, for which he was deposed by William the Conqueror, and forced to flee to France." Perhaps it was the same youth who was of opinion that "Robert the Bruce was the son of Sir William Wallace, of Scotland, and when he was in a hut he saw a spider swinging seven times, and he said, 'I will yet be king.' So he gathered his men, and defeated the English by driving them into the *Fourth*, after which he died fighting with the Black Prince against the Moors, who flung his heart among his enemies, and cried, 'Go, thou faithful heart, and I will follow thee.'"

But the gem of the historical answers is that given in reply to the question, "Who was Queen Elizabeth?" "Queen Elizabeth was the last of the Roses, and, fearing that Mary Queen of Scots would marry her husband, Sir Walter Raleigh, she beheaded her, and in remorse sent Raleigh to discover the United States. When he returned without doing so, he was executed by Elizabeth's son, James I., after gaining time to write his long and varied biography in the Tower." Other interesting items tell us that Julius Cæsar was a Frenchman who rose to be king; that "Ireland's *pattern* saint is called St. Patrick because he killed all the snakes with a stick;" and that the French Revolution was caused by the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo!

Turning now to grammar, we find that there is a practical side even to that prosy science. This was displayed by the boy who, when asked the future of "he drinks," replied, "He is drunk." Somewhat similar but still more to the point, is the story of the little girl who was of opinion that the future of the verb "to

love" was "to marry." The fitness of things was not so apparent as in these instances to the scholar who figures in the following dialogue. At a *vivâ-voce* examination a little fellow was asked, "What is a monarchy?" to which he replied, "A country governed by a king." "Who would reign if there was no king?" was the next interrogation. "The queen." "And if the queen should die?" This was a poser, but, after a minute's thought, the boy gave the astounding answer, "The knave!"

From whatever cause it may be, there can be no doubt that the young people of London evince a sharpness not shown elsewhere. For example, who other than a London Board-school boy could have given such "a short account of the Conquest of Ireland" as "The Conquest of Ireland was begun in the year 1170, and is still going on"? Nor is this talent confined to the boys, as a writer in a London newspaper demonstrated some time ago. One girl, when asked how beef-tea was made, answered, "Buy a pot of beef extract, and follow the directions on the lid;" and a second gave "Cayenne pepper and Jamaica ginger" in reply to "What are warmth-producing foods?" But it was a boy, I think, who was asked what celerity was, and who, perhaps from experience, defined it as "something to put hot plates down with."

A pretty and sensible answer was returned to an inspector the other day by a little girl, when asked to explain what was meant by "bearing false witness against your neighbour." "It was," she said, "when nobody did nothing, and somebody went and told of it." Another gentleman of the same class was examining some country lads, and asked one of them if he knew what vowels were. "Fowls, sir?" answered the boy—"why, fowls be chickens!" Equally naïve was a little boy whose uncle inquired of him how he liked going to school. "I like going well enough," was his ingenuous reply, "but I don't like staying when I get there." Still more amusing was the retort made by a small boy to an old gentleman who, on his twelfth birthday, hoped that he would "improve in wisdom, knowledge, and virtue." "The same to you, sir," said the little fellow, totally unconscious of the sarcasm implied by his words.

So much for short answers; and, before concluding, I may be allowed to give a few examples of juvenile composition, the first two of which came under my personal notice. In reply to "Give a short description of the pig," a youthful Buffon wrote: "The pig is an animal. He is useful in many ways, because he is easily fed on stuff not needed, also mud. His skin is thick and dirty, and his head ugly, with cutted (*sic*) ears, and a short tail on it. When he is a mail he is called a bore; and a femail, sow. He likes spirits."

Another natural history subject was "the dog," and it was announced that extra marks would be given to those who introduced into their essays a couplet on that animal. This, as may be supposed, proved an insurmountable obstacle to most; but one of the boys got over the difficulty in this manner:—"The dog is a noble animal, being of several kinds, such as Newfoundland, collie, pup, mastiff, and mongrel. It is called the friend of man, because on the Alps they carry bottles round their necks to save the lives of travellers who are lost in the snow. Also the friend of women, like the poetry which says—

> 'Old Mother Hubbard, she went to her cupboard,
> To give her poor dog a bone,'

but she hadn't any. The dog has usually a hairy coat, though some haven't, like hounds and such. Hairy ones are best for watching."

But even this must give way in precocity to our next, and last, example. All the boys at a certain school being ordered to compete for a prize offered for the best composition, one of them, named John, refused to do it on the ground that he could think of nothing to write about. Nevertheless, he was obliged to compete, and when the day of trial came he was asked in turn to read his essay. He began:—

"My composition is about spring. Spring will soon be here. How do I know that? Because it came last year, and the year before that, and the year before that.

"The grass will soon grow green, and the trees will put forth leaves. How do I know that? Because the grass grew green, and the trees put forth leaves, last year, and the year before that, and the year before that.

"And the lambs will come, and they will gambol and play and have a good time. How do I know that? Because the lambs gambolled last year, and the year before that, and the year before that. And——"

Here the reader was interrupted by his teacher, who, tired of the iteration, told him that he need read no more; and John triumphantly returned to his seat amid the laughter of the audience. Needless to say, however, his composition did not gain the prize.

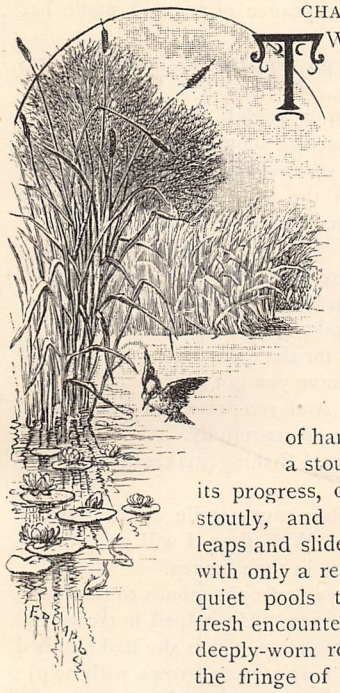
This last instance and others will show that the scholars were not in every case influenced merely by a desire to make the most of their subjects according to their lights, but were, in a manner, led out of their way by a prospect of mischief. But, of course, most of the replies here chronicled are quite ingenuous and free from guile; and from them I trust a little entertainment and amusement may be had.

D. LAWSON JOHNSTONE.

MR. TRENCH OF BRASENOSE.

THE ROMANCE OF A LONG VACATION.

By MARY L. ARMITT.



CHAPTER THE FIRST.

TWO young ladies were sketching in a lonely and remote Welsh valley on the afternoon of one bright summer's day. The scene about them was enticingly picturesque. The river, hurrying to the repose of a lake that lay not far below, fell, in this part of its course, over a bed of hard rock; and, finding a stout resistance made to its progress, did battle quite as stoutly, and fought its way by leaps and slides and foaming falls, with only a rest here and there in quiet pools to take breath for fresh encounters. The sides of its deeply-worn rock-bed, close up to the fringe of meadow-grass, were smooth and rounded; the hard slate was worn into basin-shaped hollows and "pot-holes," which proved the strength and width of the little stream when storms were rife; and the shallow pools, isolated from its surging waters, that just now glimmered peacefully in the sunshine or reflected the blue above, showed that tempest and rain were not long absent, even in summer, from these upland valleys.

It was by the side of such a pool that one of the two sketchers—who had been driven by the heat of the day to practise their quiet art in the cool shade—had fixed her seat. It was an awkward position; but Jean Langton was a girl of quick thought and resolute temper; and, when she had declared that nowhere else was there just the same lovely peep of rocks and falls to be obtained, the matter was settled, however many obstacles to the carrying out of her idea might present themselves. To be sure, it was difficult to adjust a camp-stool with firmness on a smooth and sloping rock-surface; but then she could easily hold it in position, she said, by pressing one foot, as she worked, against a convenient projection.

Her companion and sister had chosen a less ambitious point of view, from which only the ivy-clad bridge and the river's first fall below it could be seen, with a flowering mountain-ash bending over in the foreground. The sketchers themselves, now that they had got to work with spread palette, moistened colours, and blocks wet with the first pale washes of buffs and blues, gave a touch of animation to the scene. They were daintily attired in fresh morning-gowns of striped blue and white, which, in spite of gathered fronts and full skirts, did not altogether hide the buoyant erectness of their young figures; and under their sloping straw hats might be seen, by glances shot from lower levels than those of the bright sun-god, shining eyes, and happy, healthful faces.

They gave, altogether, a very agreeable point to the landscape, as seen by other eyes; and, as it happened, those eyes were not wanting. There were two pairs of them, in fact, the possessors of which were fishing silently in the shadow of the trees a little further down-stream; but the girls, unconscious of observation, worked and chatted in happy ease.

They had nothing to say to each other that really need be said, for they were not only sisters next in age, but companions in the truest sense, both by force of similar tastes and of opposite temperaments, and they were never more than an hour asunder; but youth is light-hearted and loves to converse. So they had a little discussion about their respective views, and the colours they had best use; then they touched lazily on the subject of the heat, and the reason why Maria, their elder sister, had chosen to remain indoors; then they wandered off to the delightfulness of this remote valley amongst the mountains—to which they had come only yesterday—and to the walks and the excursions they were to make in the summer holiday that was yet wellnigh whole; then they diverged—and here it was fortunate that their voices came only as a pleasing murmur to the fishers below-stream—to the subject of wonder that there should be found other visitors, not only in this lonely region, but in the very lodging-house in which they had taken rooms; and they idly guessed the relationship there might be between the three men they had seen smoking in the garden when, in the dusk of last evening, they had returned from their first stroll.

But this did not interest them very much; and Lillie, the younger and the cleverer painter of the two, had again got on to the subject of colour, and was laying down the law on the tempting smoothness of that treacherous medium, Prussian blue, when she was startled into silence by a cry from her sister.

Looking quickly round, she was just in time to see Jean make a rapid and unwilling descent into the pool below her. Feet foremost, and camp-stool following, colours and palette flying wide, she slipped; and Lillie, having seen her reach the bottom in what looked like safety, broke into a peal of irresistible laughter. After a second's silence of dismay, Jean joined her, and laughed too. Still, when she got herself upright and crept out of reach of the water,

she found her position was not quite comfortable, though it might be ludicrous. Her feet were wet, and so were the skirt-edges of her fresh gown ; her camp-stool lay immersed, and brushes, paint-box, colours, lay scattered over the rocks, some in pools, gaining more moisture than moist colours can well hold, others showing an erratic course by smears of blue and red and yellow ; but, worst of all, she did not quite see how she was to get back again. She was in a decided hole—one of those "pot-holes" that, with the swirl of water and the grinding of stones, had attained a surface perfectly smooth and polished ; and she saw no inequalities that would help her to climb a height that one bound would not reach.

"Oh, Lillie," she cried reproachfully, as she looked about her, "how heartless it is of you to laugh! What am I to do?"

She laughed a little herself still, but her discomfiture was evident.

"Let me help you," then called out a strong and cheery voice ; and both sisters, Jean in her hole, and Lillie, who was now preparing to go to her assistance, looked across in surprise, and saw the athletic figure of a young man making his way over the rocks towards them. They both recognised him as one of the gentlemen they had seen in the dusk of the previous evening ; and they now saw, in his open, ingenuous countenance, in his lithe though strong frame, traces of that youthful manliness that girls of eighteen and nineteen love to term boyish.

"Thank you," Jean answered, in a more guarded but quite friendly tone, when he got nearer ; "but I am afraid you can't help me."

"Oh, never fear, I can give you a hand up quite easily." He was already at the edge of the hollow, and surveyed the place with a practical and decisive air. "See here ; there is a ledge will do very well for you to rest your foot on a moment, if I hold you. Give me your hand—don't be afraid."

Jean laughed ; she was not at all afraid. She had already scanned, with some of the closeness of her mother's look, the broad, strong, somewhat short-nosed face of the "boy" before her, and had mentally pronounced him "very nice indeed." And now, when for an instant she stood poised on the little pinnacle and felt herself upheld by his grasp—she who had been brought up under the austere tenets of a sister who insisted that self-help was always the best, and man's help in particular to be discarded as invariably poor—she felt there was a spice of adventure in the incident that was more exhilarating than precept.

"Oh—but," she said, with a pause of recollection, to the youth, whose face was bent down close to the level of hers, "I have forgotten the things behind me. The camp-stool is at the bottom."

"Never mind that ; I will see to it afterwards. Hold on to me while I step further back. Now, both your hands, please—and spring."

Jean sprang, lightly and high, and was landed once more on level ground. As she stood there, feeling the glow that the effort had lent to spirits and face, with hands still held for a brief second in those of her rescuer, she looked at him, and he looked at her, with the trustful, smiling confidence of youth, and they became straightway friends.

But Lillie had now drawn near with a more sober countenance than the improved condition of affairs seemed to warrant. She was of a shyer nature than Jean, and the abrupt appearance of this stranger, and her sister's friendly acceptance of his aid, made her feel serious.

"You will have to go home now, Jean," she remarked with severity.

Jean admitted, with a rueful glance at her bedraggled petticoats, that she should.

"Yes," the stranger chimed in, quite as if he were a responsible party in the affair, "so you must ; but first I must pick up your traps."

When these were gathered, the sisters having helped him with the scattered colours, he proceeded to dispose of them with little regard to their owner.

"Oh, no, you can't take that," he answered Jean, as she held out her hand for the dripping camp-stool, "I shall carry it. Now, have you got everything?"

"Yes, I think so. And *you* have got wet now in helping me," she observed regretfully.

"Oh, that is nothing. Fishing makes a man amphibious, you know."

Jean checked a rather saucy smile at the "man," and hastened to say, "Well, then, I will go. Good-bye, Lillie ; come home in time for tea."

She then made her way over the stones to the bank, followed by the young man. He helped her over the low wall skirting the highway, which she had climbed before with ease (for helplessness grows with help) ; and then, having picked up his fishing-tackle, he proceeded to accompany her, as a matter of course. But here she felt it was necessary to protest.

"Oh, you must not come, indeed," she assured him. "I can carry my things quite easily. I should be sorry to take you from your fishing."

"For the matter of that," he remarked, as he walked on with her, "I am tired of fishing. There is no sport this hot weather."

"But I may be taking you out of your road," the wily young woman proceeded, with a fine smile of deceit.

But her companion was capable of none of the subtleties of polite conversation.

"That is so likely, is it not?" he replied with a frank laugh, "when we both lodge in the same house. I saw you last night, you know," he added explanatorily, "as you passed through the garden."

"Well," Jean admitted, feeling herself infected with a certain unconventional gaiety in presence of this straightforward youth, "I saw you too, only I didn't know whether it would be wise to let you suppose it ; people are understood not to know each other, even by sight, before they are properly introduced."

"Yes, but, even if we wished, we could hardly keep up such a pretence in an out-of-the-way place like this, where there seems to be only your party and mine, besides the scant population of the region. And why should we have any pretence at all? We

know each other already," asserted her confident companion, "and as for names, why, I am George Tindall, and you are Miss Jean——"

He stopped, and a momentary embarrassment, that Jean did not like him the less for, showed in his face as his tongue paused on her name.

"SHE WAS THROWING HIS LINE HERSELF" (*p.* 39).

"Langton," she completed. "And now that we have begun," she went merrily on, "let us do the thing properly, and once for all get to the bottom of everything. Let us tell who we are, why we are here, what we were in a previous state of existence, with any other particulars of a startling and tragic character that would lend interest to the narrative. You have begun very well, though, to be sure, names are nothing. Shall I proceed? And, now I think of it, I have not much to tell myself. I live in the prosaic town of Middleborough, in the Eastern Counties, with my two sisters and my mother, who is a widow. We girls earn our living very unromantically by the pursuit of painting, because our father, who was the doctor of the place, died young, and did not leave much money behind him. We chose Tyn-y-bran for our summer out this year, just because mother saw the lodgings advertised in the paper, and we thought it would be a nice quiet place for sketching and walking. For walking in particular, and for mountain excursions we have a perfect passion. We arrived yesterday, but that you seem to know"—with a bright

glance—"and—let me see—I am afraid I have come to the end, and there is nothing more to tell, unless you would like to hear that mother has an old friend with her, Mrs. Rogers by name. And you, I suppose"—in a careless tone that covered some curiosity; for, glad as Jean was to let the stranger understand her social status, she was in reality anxious to learn if a conjecture she had hazarded to her sister about the party of gentlemen were correct—"you and your friends are fond of fishing, and have come to Tyn-y-bran for summer sport?"

"Well, not exactly," the young man admitted. He had been looking at her with a sort of surprised interest; he was clearly not accustomed to be told by pretty and well-dressed young ladies that they worked for a livelihood. To be sure, this girl, with the frank pride that showed itself in the glance of her bright brown eyes, the erect set of her small head, covered with a mass of wavy hair, and in her mouth—not too small, and often smiling—was altogether beyond the limits of his past experience. He now withdrew his thoughts, if not his eyes, from the subject, and proceeded to do what was clearly expected of him. "No, we are supposed to be reading hard this long vacation, Arthur and I. And very hard lines it is, not to have done with books when college terms are over." ("Ah! I was right!" was Jean's mental comment.) "But then my father would be awfully cut up if we left Oxford without a degree; so we agreed to do our best this Long, and, to make sure, we asked Mr. Trench to come along with us."

"He is your tutor perhaps," Jean suggested, again commending her own penetration.

"No, not actually. He is a tutor at Brasenose, and we are at Merton College. But he is a sort of family friend, so he consented to come and coach us."

"How tiresome that must be!" she sympathised. As usual with her, she had drawn certain quick inferences, and spoke from them.

"Oh, I can't quite say that," he felt himself bound to reply. "He is a very good sort, and of course it was a great favour his coming. He is a tremendous gun in Oxford, I can tell you. But it is a nuisance poking in classics in holiday time."

He sighed with genuine sorrow, and Jean smiled with the tolerance a clever girl will sometimes show towards the superior stupidity of one of the opposite sex. Yet her smile was encouraging.

"And does your brother like it better?—or is he your brother?"

"Oh, yes, Arthur is my brother. No, I don't know that he cares about it very much. He likes sporting and natural history better than Greek and Latin. You see," he explained, as if the friendly condolence in the girl's face should be justified, "we were born and brought up in Australia, where my father bought land and settled a good time back. We did more riding and shooting and fishing as youngsters than anything else, and it was precious little besides we could be got to learn. Then my father sent us over to England to a large public school, to prepare for the University course. But we were fifteen by that time, and precious drudgery we found it sticking to desks five and six hours a day, after the free life we had led."

"I should think so. But you were not both fifteen when you came to England?"

"Yes, we are twins."

"Oh! I should have thought you were the elder."

"So every one thinks, just because, I suppose, I am two inches bigger than Arthur and a trifle broader. But that is nothing of a difference," the young man went on, whose own splendid physical development made him the continual envy of men of feeble build. The two brothers, indeed, whose height together measured twice six feet, had gained some renown in their University, if not in matters of lore, at least in athletic prowess. "But Arthur is so quiet, and keeps in the background."

"So it seems," responded Jean. She now remembered to have seen the brother's figure lurking in the shadow of the trees, when she reached the bank after her accident; the rush to the rescue had been left for George. She was inclined to think the more kindly of her companion for this; and when he hastened to add, as if in answer to her tone, "But Arthur is a lot cleverer than I am," she at once decided that modesty and manliness were far preferable to most sorts of cleverness.

It is not possible to praise a young man to his face, but it is possible to convey to him by other means the impression that you think well of him. And Jean was quite willing that her face should speak some of the good-will and gratitude she was just then feeling.

It was at this moment, when they were quite engrossed in each other, and in the new and pleasant intercourse their chance meeting had afforded, that a sudden interruption came. A man, who lightly sprang from a stile they were passing, alighted close before them in the road. He seemed as surprised as they, and the expression of his face might be as easily read as theirs had been, when he first caught sight of them. Jean would have been quite sure, if she had had nothing else to guide her but the men's looks at each other—for, after the first quick glance, the new-comer had turned his eyes studiously away from her—that this man with the exceedingly handsome countenance, and cold forbidding demeanour, was Mr. Trench, the tutor.

"I thought, George," he proved the conjecture true by saying, after an awkward pause, "that you were down by the river."

"So I was, a while ago," George answered. He was already mentally up in arms against his tutor's manner, and a flush was beginning to show through his tanned skin. "But now, as you see, I am carrying Miss Langton's traps back for her."

At the mention of her name, Mr. Trench made a grasp after the soft hat he wore, still without looking at her, and there seemed nothing now for him to do in face of this immovable pair but to move on himself.

"Since you are occupied," he remarked, "I will

see if Arthur is ready for a stroll along the Glydar valley before dinner."

"I don't fancy he will be," the youth replied, thirsting for revenge. "We left him just now fishing close by Miss Lillie Langton, who is sketching, and he will probably wait to bring her back."

And with this audacious speech the young man and his companion moved on. They were silent for a few seconds, and George did not altogether understand the set smile on the girl's face, or the strange light in her eyes. He hardly knew what to say, fearing he might offend instead of pleasing her by a too open expression of feeling, so he was glad when she broke the silence, still looking straight before her.

"Oh, you should not have said that about your brother and Lillie; it was not true."

"Well, I said it to vex him. And I dare say it will come true."

"Oh, no, you are mistaken. Lillie would not allow it, I am sure. She is not like me, not so—so——"

She paused, in some distress perhaps at the point her own impetuous speech had brought her to.

"Nice?" suggested her escort, with apparent innocence, as if he were looking about for the missing word she seemed to seek.

Here Jean broke down in a laugh, and with the rippling sound, that came forth as if it were a relief, some of her vague discomfort appeared to vanish. The gallant suggestion, just then, came with peculiar consolatory force.

"No, indeed," she corrected him, when she had got her breath again. "She is far nicer than I—nicer, I mean, in the old sense, when 'nice' was a term applied to fine shades of behaviour. Lillie is peculiarly nice in that way—so prudent and discreet! She, now, would never have incurred such a—such a glance as I got just now, for instance."

She had hesitated again in her hurried speech, but now she looked brightly and frankly at him, with a sparkle in her eyes that might mean mischief.

George too breathed freely again. "I'm much mistaken if she does not," he laughed, with all the ease of a mutual understanding. "If you think you know your sister, I can answer for it that I know my brother. He had it in his mind, I am certain, to speak if he got the chance. And Arthur, quiet as he is, is about as good a hand at doing what he wants as any one I know."

And the event proved the astute George to be not far wrong; for Lillie Langton did, later in the afternoon, walk back to Plas Tan-y-craig with Arthur Tindall. It happened, briefly, in this wise. When Jean left her she had sat down to continue her sketch in a very unsettled and uncomfortable frame of mind. She had not thought it necessary, just because Jean had spoilt her own afternoon, and because a stranger had taken upon him the office of escort for her, to insist on adding herself to the party as a protest and a duty. It would have looked ridiculous. But what would mother and Maria say?

As she picked up her brush to continue, she wished that Jean were not so rash; that she had snubbed that boy, and kept him at a distance. Jean had managed very badly altogether.

But presently Lillie became aware that another "boy" was fishing in a pool close by her. She could not help, with covert glances, watching him play and bring to land the pretty silvery trout that had so foolishly taken the bait. And when he brought it to show her, as if he supposed her interested, he stood and talked with an easy naturalness that could not affront. To be sure, she only vouchsafed him stiff little answers, but Lillie's sweet voice and gentle looks did not succeed in giving a quenching effect to her words. And presently, before she quite knew what she was about, she had yielded to his suggestion, and was throwing his line herself, and laughing with girlish delight at her own false flings. However, when she came to think of it, she was vexed with herself, and thereupon declared that it was time to go home. But even this did not produce the desired effect; the young man simply said he would go back too, and proceeded to accompany her as a matter of course.

It happened, therefore, that in the sisterly exchange of confidences which took place that night, there was not much for Jean to tell of the Australian brothers that Lillie did not know already. The elder girl's spirits seemed dangerously high.

"Well, Lillie," she remarked—after her sister's continual "Yes, I suppose so," "He told me so," proved there was little information she could give—"this is very strange. Perhaps you met the tutor as well?"

"No, indeed, we did not."

"Then you were luckier than you deserved."

"Did you meet him?"

"Yes. And shall I tell you what his looks said, as plainly as words?—'Here is a dreadful young woman doing her best to catch poor George!'"

"Oh, Jean, how horrible! What did you do?"

"Do? Nothing, except try to look as if he didn't exist, and I don't suppose that produced much effect upon him. How I should like to frighten him properly, and give him a real bad time!"

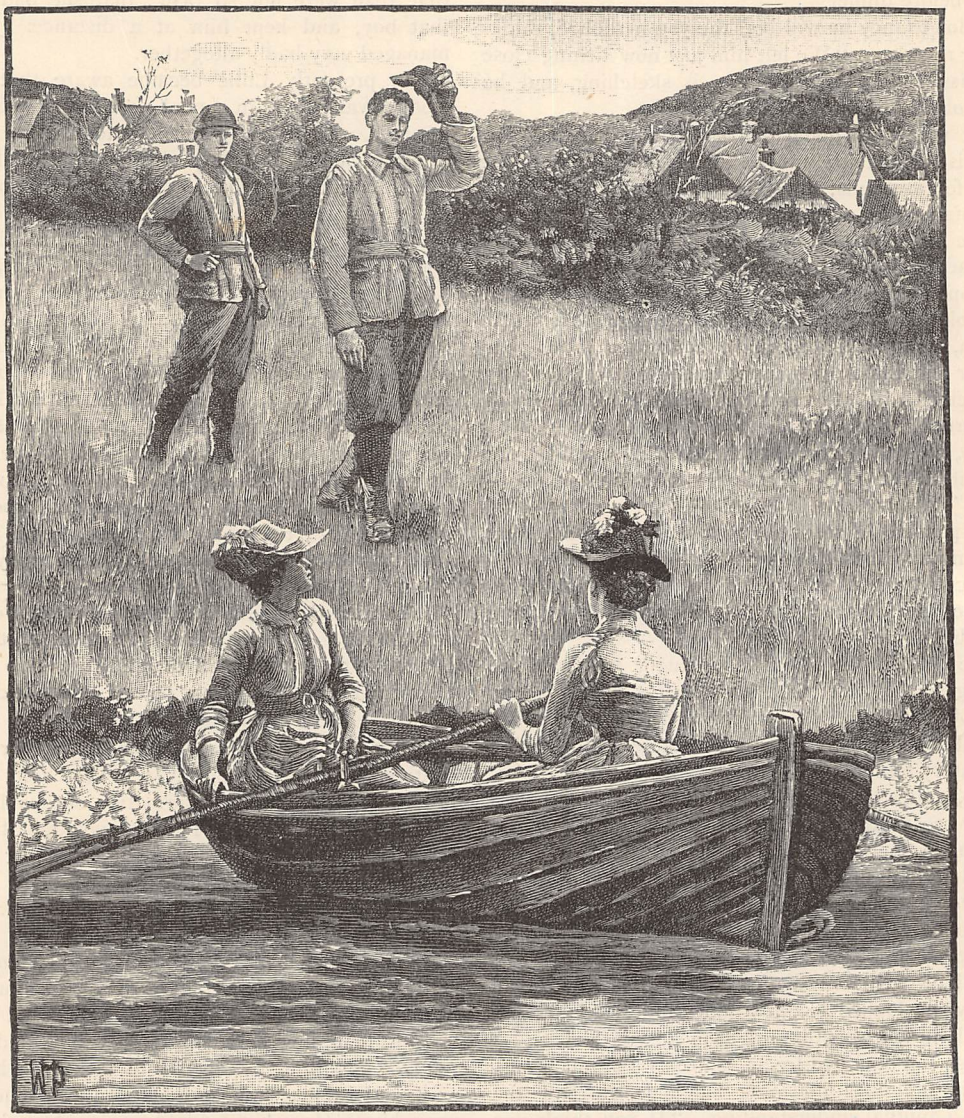
"How do you mean?"

"Why, to flirt with that delightful boy George, until his tutor is driven out of his wits with terror; to do, in fact, for revenge what he suspected me of doing by design."

"Jean, how can you say such things? What would he think of you?"

"I don't suppose it would matter very much what he might think. He thinks about as badly as he can already. It would serve him very well right—insufferable prig!—for imagining every woman immediately wants to marry any man or boy she may come across. It is disgusting! He deserves to suffer, and I wish I could make him do it. It would be the best summer sport I ever had."

And Lillie's wiser counsels had no effect on her elder. When she ventured to suggest that Jean's



"THEY SAW THE TWO YOUNGER MISS LANGTONS IN THE BOAT, FIXING THEIR OARS" (*p.* 41).

conduct had perhaps been a little imprudent, that young lady asked her how it came about that she herself had walked home with Arthur Tindall, when he had neither rescued her from a pool nor had to help her with wet belongings? And Lillie found that she had no answer ready that would reinstate her in the dignified position of moral preceptor. She was obliged to laugh, and say it had been rather fun, but she should like to tell mother all about it.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

It was the evening of the next day. The three gentlemen who occupied the downstairs parlour of Plas Tan-y-craig were partaking of as good a dinner as a Welsh landlady of an enterprising mind could provide. They had almost finished their cheese when Mrs. Owen, a stout, matronly woman, who did most of the waiting herself, made her appearance uncalled for.

"If you please, sir," she said, "will you be wanting the boat on the lake this evening? If you could spare it for an hour it would be a convenience."

"Certainly, we can spare it, Mrs. Owen," Mr. Trench replied, in his high stiff voice, from his place at the head of the table. "Is your husband going to fish?"

"Well, no, sir," Mrs. Owen paused in her rather hurried retreat to answer. "It is for the ladies upstairs. They knew we had a boat, so they asked to use it. I think they want to go over to the village."

George and Arthur glanced at each other. Mr. Trench remained immovable and apparently unobservant. In a few minutes George said respectfully to his senior—

"I think we have finished, sir. I will take my cigar outside, if you have no objection."

"By all means," Mr. Trench answered, rising. George promptly disappeared, followed by Arthur, who made no sort of excuse, and a few moments' rapid walk took them down the garden, across the road, and through the pasture to the edge of the lake. There they saw, as they had hoped, the two younger Miss Langtons in the boat, fixing their oars, and making ready for the start.

"Good evening!" cried the boys gaily, lifting their caps.

"Good evening," answered the girls demurely.

"We have come down to row you, if you will let us," George said, in the tone of an old friend.

"Oh, thank you," Lillie answered anxiously. "We are crossing to post our letters. I hope we are not taking the boat from you."

"Not at all. But we should like to pull you across."

"How did you know we were going?" Jean now asked.

"Mrs. Owen let it out, bless her! Now, Miss Jean, please"—as Jean proceeded regardlessly to seat herself on the rowing-bench—and he stepped in.

"Oh, you may come if you like," she answered, "but I would rather row. I like rowing, and I don't want to be done out of it."

"Very well, then," the facile George arranged, "you and I will row. Come, Arthur, get in and sit with Miss Lillie in the stern. Now, Miss Jean, which oar will you take?"

"You must be stroke. I shall be proud to follow a 'Varsity oar."

"No," George objected, "I shall pull too long for you. Besides, I should have no view! Change, please."

Jean laughed at his audacity, but prepared to make the move from the position she had already taken in the prow. As she did so, her eyes wandered idly over the meadow, and she turned to George with a startled look.

"Here is Mr. Trench coming down the bank," she said in a quick whisper.

George muttered a word under his breath that she could not clearly make out. "Let him come!" he then said audibly.

"Oh, certainly, if he wishes it," she answered. "We will wait for him."

A fine flush had come into her face, but she kept her mouth in smiling curves that somewhat belied the defiant mischief that lurked in her eyes. So she stood and waited, still in the prow, with her face landwards; and Mr. Trench, as he strode towards them, found that the stately figure of the girl occupied his gaze. The towering form of George behind her made no impression, and the seated couple beyond, with some uneasiness legible on their faces, were lost to view. It was to her he was forced to speak when he reached the edge of the lake.

"Excuse me," he said, raising his hat with courtesy. "I heard you were crossing to the village. I have a letter to post. Will you take me across?" He was surprised now to find his request seemed awkward. He had meant simply to suggest to George, with his air of easy command, that he should join the party.

"Willingly, if you wish to go," she replied rather markedly.

"Perhaps you will let me take your oar?" he offered.

"No; I wish to row."

So he stepped into the boat, and Jean made way for him, giving him such wide passage-room that George involuntarily put out his hand lest she should sway further. They settled to their places almost in silence, except for the slight introduction Arthur made between his tutor and Lillie. George pushed the boat off, and he and Jean swung it round and settled into a steady stroke.

Jean looked out on the lake, that gradually expanded as the skiff shot through its liquid surface, but no considerations of scenery occupied her mind. A strange expression lighted up her eyes; was it amusement or annoyance, or both? It was she who presently broke the silence that had fallen on the little party.

"How strange it is," she remarked, in her clear treble, "that we should all have letters to post to-night!"

There was a minute's interval; then she heard George's low laugh behind her. "Well, I haven't a letter to post," he said, "and I never told you I had."

"But, George," his brother suggested, having been visited by a convenient flash of memory, "there is that post-office order, you know, that we ought to have sent off days ago."

"Then it will serve excellently as an excuse," Jean said. "But Lillie and I have letters that we wish to post to-night. At least, that was what we started out for. But in the general uncertainty I begin now to have my doubts about it. Lillie, what did we come for? Are there really letters there? Produce them, that we may be sure!"

"Jean, how absurd you are!" Lillie remonstrated in a low voice, and she pushed the white envelopes into view from under the edge of her dress. "Of course the letters are here."

"Well, that is right. It would be a pity to make this voyage for nothing."

Then Jean heard another laugh. It was low and full, but she detected a satirical ring in it that roused her ire.

"Is this a challenge, Miss Langton?" the tutor's calm voice asked. "Must I also produce my letter? Here it is then—an actual fact. Arthur, please assure Miss Langton that you see my credentials for my passage within my hand. Or will you pass it to her?"

For Jean had not vouchsafed a single glance to that quarter of the boat. "It is not necessary," she remarked, with some loftiness of manner. "But it is really a comfort to know that there are, at least, three letters in the escort of five people."

To Lillie the situation was getting unbearable. She wondered how her sister could be so provoking; but then she had not to face this quiet, unimpressionable man, who looked as comfortable as possible. Inadvertently she pulled the right cord of the rudder, and the boat veered in its course.

"Arthur," growled George, who thought his brother was steering, "look out, will you, and keep a straight line."

"Let me steer," Mr. Trench said, "then Miss Langton will perhaps tolerate me as well as my letter."

"Oh, thank you," Lillie answered him effusively, "that is very kind of you."

He began thereupon to talk to her, and kept up a quiet chat that did not include the rowers. She felt very grateful, and quickly recovered her lost equanimity. George, meanwhile, was recovering his temper, and allowed himself an expression of sentiment he had been suppressing for some time.

"How well you row!" he said to his companion in a low voice, as he kept his eyes on the trim figure that swayed rhythmically before him. "You keep time capitally."

"Do I?" she responded, throwing a pleased glance back at him. "It is such a treat to row again. Yet it must be a bore for you to have to pull with my short stroke."

"A bore!" repeated George impressively. "How can you say so?"

But these two, though they continued to flourish the red rag of their friendliness in the eyes of Mr. Trench, could not provoke from him any signs of wrath. He appeared quite oblivious of them, while he chatted with Lillie and Arthur. As they strolled up to the village together from the banks of the lake, Jean could not resist lingering behind for a confidential word with George.

"Why did he come, do you think?" she imprudently asked.

"Well—not to post his letter," he replied with a speaking glance. "That letter was a hoax."

"Yet I saw it."

"Oh, well, he may have one, of course."

They followed the others into Tyn-y-bran, a hamlet that consisted chiefly of white-washed cots, many of which carried an inn-sign above their doors. About the road stood black-eyed, dirty children, and some of the mothers came to look out of their cottages on the well-dressed party of three stalwart men and two pretty girls who were passing by. A lowly church, a chapel, and a shop—which was likewise the post-office—completed the buildings of the place. Outside this last the party paused, and Arthur dropped the letters into the slit. George then went in to get the post-office order his brother had reminded him of, while the rest waited outside. Arthur and Lillie began to examine the contents of the shop-window, which displayed a miscellaneous mixture of woollen goods, old stationery, biscuits, and candles.

"Oh, do look," he begged her, "at those photographs. I actually believe that one is intended for the village bridge, but it is bleached nearly as white as the paper on which it is mounted."

Lillie laughed, but she refused to be entirely derisive. "See, there is a nice little compass in that corner," she said.

"So there is. George!" he called out, putting his head inside the shop, "Buy that compass; I've broken mine."

George, to judge from the tone of his unlistened-to reply, was not wholly pleased with this extension of his business. But no notice was taken of this, and Arthur continued his talk with Lillie.

Jean, in the meantime, had stood silently with Mr. Trench. Since happy talk was the rule of her nature, silence on her part showed intention. She poked the point of her sunshade into the niches of the cobble-stones on which they stood, and kept her eyes passively fixed on it. But when at length she lifted them, she found the looks of the tall man near her fixed rather searchingly upon her. She threw back her head as if she had received a challenge, and let her glance wander over the street, the bridge, the running river, and the mountains.

"You know all the resources of this little place by now, I suppose?" she remarked, with a fine air of beginning a friendly conversation.

"Or its want of resources, which perhaps is the better way of putting it," he answered. "You have them all before you—the church, in which there is a Welsh service on Sunday afternoons (but who knows? the parson from the next village may give us an English version when he hears there is such an influx of visitors), and the post-office, whence the mail goes off at three p.m., to reach civilised districts at a period yet undetermined by either the postmaster or myself. I only know a newspaper arrives at this place thirty-six hours after its issue."

A smile had now begun to broaden Jean's mouth. "Three p.m.," she repeated. "Ah! it was a pity we hurried about the letters. We thought the post-time was eight. They might have been left now till to-morrow, if we had known—and yours too!"

In spite of his reserved looks, some consciousness of the mischievous meaning in the girl's eyes appeared on Mr. Trench's face. "It is quite clear," he answered her, "that the notions of time bred by civilisation are still clinging to you. I have been three weeks in these wilds, you must remember, and I act accordingly. It would have seemed rash and dangerous to have trusted my epistle to the chances of to-morrow. I have only secured it being in time for the next post. And I am told that the natives often post their letters a week before they mean them to go."

Jean checked herself in a laugh, and began once more, in the tone of superficial politeness she had adopted: "It is a delightful place, though, in spite

of defective postal arrangements. Don't you think so?"

"Perhaps," he admitted, "but I am not accustomed to formulate my opinions into admiring phrases."

"No? That is very superior. But we have been agreeably surprised in the place; it is so quiet, so absolutely empty of everybody."

Amusement began to light up Mr. Trench's eyes now, as he perceived his companion's intention. He glanced involuntarily at George's broad back, visible through the shop door.

"Is that its attraction?" he asked. "Surely a strange one! Then you don't like people, only mountains and solitude? I thought young ladies mostly loved seaside resorts, and promenades, and crowds." There was a quizzical tone in his voice that irritated Jean.

"Perhaps you know," she replied loftily. "I can only speak for myself; I and my sisters never stayed a week in such a place as you describe. Still, we have never before found so lonely a spot as this, and we like it. It is so nice to do just as one likes, unfettered by criticism."

"Do you so much fear criticism then?"

She looked straight at him as she answered, "No, I don't fear it; it may be even a pleasant stimulus sometimes."

Yet it was a decided relief to her—for she felt by no means sure of her depth in the current of this conversation—that George now appeared from within; she turned to him at once, and, during their stroll back to the lake, talked to him confidentially of the river at Middleborough, and of her boating exploits there. But Mr. Trench was with them, and he kept up a pleasant and general conversation in the boat that could not be ignored. He escorted the young ladies to the door with the boys, and wished them a courteous "Good evening." Jean turned away with a stately bow, but, as she ran upstairs, she exclaimed to Lillie, "Is he not dreadful? I hate him!"

"I think he is rather nice," Lillie said, surprised by the amount of feeling her sister's tone betrayed. "But I shall tell mother all about it now."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

IT was later in the same evening, when Mr. Trench and his pupils were rather moodily finishing their evening chat and their pipes, that the tutor broached a subject which, it seemed to him, was becoming urgent.

"I don't know, George," he said, "what you and Arthur think of it, but it seems to me that the three of us behaved rather extraordinarily to-night. We forced ourselves into the company of ladies totally unknown to us, and who evidently didn't want us."

The colour distinctly rose under George's brown skin. "I speak for myself," he answered curtly—"I don't consider that I forced myself on the ladies you refer to, or that I wasn't wanted. I should also like to say that the Miss Langtons are not totally unknown to me."

"Your inference is quite obvious, George," said Mr. Trench, with an amused smile. "Perhaps I ought to have made an exception. But the young lady you named Miss Lillie Langton was neither comfortable nor pleased with our presence, that I am sure of." Here it was Arthur's brows that were drawn to a set frown. "And I should like to know in what sense you talk of knowing the Miss Langtons."

For a minute the boys were silent. They felt that Jean and Lillie were friends of theirs, whom they would defend to the knife, but they hardly knew how to justify their friendship in words. That the girls earned their own living and had the courage to confess it seemed to them a fine thing, but they instinctively felt that it was a fact that might tell against them in the eyes of their aristocratic-minded tutor.

"You saw them for the first time yesterday," he went on, taking no notice of Arthur's correction—"The day before"—"and you immediately plunge into an acquaintance, without any justification, or without considering how difficult it may be to withdraw from it. The girls themselves may be nice enough, but that has really nothing to do with it" ("Had it not?" the boys thought) "and they are total strangers."

As it was evident from the faces of his auditors that Mr. Trench was making no way with his argument, he changed his ground slightly. "Besides, if you consider the young ladies themselves, you are not behaving considerately. It is not usual, nor quite gentlemanly, to my thinking, to rush into sudden friendships with nice-looking girls who happen to lodge in the same house, and to accompany them in boats, without seeking to have any proper acquaintance with their families, or knowing their mother. The mother in this case looks a respectable-enough sort of person; if she is so, I should like to hear what she thinks of it all."

George by this time was wrought up to a speech. "I don't know what you would call it, sir," he protested, "but I should call it very ungentlemanly to see a woman of any age or looks slip into a pool without offering to help her out, or to carry her wet things for her afterwards. I should call it not only ungentlemanly, but soft, if next time I met her I looked the other way and pretended I didn't see her. And if I liked her," he added boldly, "I shouldn't mind letting her find it out."

Arthur's eyes were fixed on his brother with a corroborative and admiring gaze. Mr. Trench's were not.

"That is all very well, George, and sounds quite the right thing. But how about the boat incident to-night? That can neither be accounted for as a gallant rescue nor a chance encounter. How do you think the Miss Langtons are going to explain it to their mother—supposing, indeed, they are disposed to explain?"

George looked rather red. "I don't see that it *is* a thing to make a fuss about," he said. "All the same, sir, if you think we haven't done the right thing by the Miss Langtons, I am sorry. It is too late to send up our cards to-night to Mrs. Langton; but I will certainly make her acquaintance to-morrow."

This was hardly the turn Mr. Trench intended matters to take. Still, in spite of his disagreement with the modes of procedure of this rash youth, whose twenty-two summers seemed in such contrast with his thirty, he threw him an affectionate and even admiring glance.

"Not so fast, George," he said. "Matters have not come to such a climax as all that. There is perhaps a better way than that to be found out of the difficulty. We chose Tyn-y-bran for our reading quarters because the fishing was good and the place quiet. The quiet has gone with the unfortunate arrival of these ladies, and there is good fishing to be had elsewhere. Suppose we move on. I foresee there will be little or no steady reading done here now."

It was plainly to be seen that this proposal was regarded by the Tindalls with something like consternation. Arthur's mouth became set in obstinate and rigid lines, but, as usual, he looked across at George to speak.

"Well, sir," the elder brother said, "I think, if you will excuse me saying so, that this is a bigger climax than the other. I take it that if we left Tyn-y-bran now, it would look as if we were running away from the ladies, which, as a matter of fact, we should be doing. It wouldn't have a good appearance. And, whatever it appeared like, I shouldn't like it. Suppose we make a compromise. Arthur and I know Jean and Lillie Langton by this time, and we can't unknow them if we would. But we will stick to our books"—he heaved a sigh—"as long as you think necessary, and we will get Mrs. Langton's sanction before we go on with the acquaintance."

And there the matter eventually rested, for Mr. Trench felt he could not wisely push it farther. As he bade the young men "Good night," and took up his candle after they were gone, he could not say to himself that it was satisfactorily ended. He did not hope much from the interference of the mother, for he knew too well the charm of George's and Arthur's frank and affectionate ways with women. Nor did he feel sure that the look-out he meant to keep would have a very restraining effect on the intercourse of the young people. He could only hope that no serious complications would arise from it. The conjunction of circumstances was particularly unfortunate. His pupils, no doubt, had found three weeks of study in these lonely parts very dull; they would have hailed any society, probably, that offered itself, as a welcome relief. And now came these bright, pretty-looking girls, who might be found attractive by any man moderately young and susceptible; and it seemed to him they had already got a firm hold of his foolish boys. It was the elder of the two, that defiant Jean, who was the danger; he was certain. As he climbed the stairs, and turned along the dark passage of the quietened house, he thought of her as she had stood in the boat waiting for him, with smiling defiance written on her face. He remembered how she had compelled him to an explanation that was at least beneath his dignity; how later on she had thrown bright glances back at George, and laughed merrily with him. Could he save George from her?

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRD.

WHAT TO WEAR IN DECEMBER.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR LONDON AND PARIS CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

A COMFORTABLE bonnet is what we all desire; and I think in the accompanying vignette I have chosen one which is likely to meet the wants of the majority of people. It is made in the most fashionable material for bonnets this winter — velvet; its trimmings are a band of flat feathers at the side, a tuft of upstanding feathers in the front, with a bow of satin ribbon, having a reverse of velvet, just above the forehead. Without the trimming, the shape is not high. It has strings, and is in no way extraordinary and fanciful, as so many of the new introductions would seem to be. The feather tuft is a combination of osprey and bird of Paradise, and a fluffy plume from the aigrette bird, as the French call it, which is only seen in the mating season, and is indigenous to Sweden.

Poor little humming-birds are, I am sorry to say, much in request in millinery. When you see them flitting about in the tropics, and their extreme beauty of plumage in life, it seems all the more cruel that, small as they are, requiring several to make any show, they should be thus sacrificed on the altar of fashion.

In some of the more curious bonnets the crowns are pointed, and so divided and raised in front, that a puff of contrasting material is introduced between the crown and front pieces. Felt bonnets, worked in chenille, and quite plain felts with cloth braidings and a bow on the front, are worn, and stand any weather,

which is a consideration in England. Afternoon parties in town are daily events throughout the winter, and for this reason, I expect, many red velvet bonnets are worn—they show so well in dimly-lighted rooms, and give a certain brightness. They are almost always worked in black jet.

The "thatched roof" bonnet has a decided point standing well up in front, filled in with lace or ribbons, and is still worn; but sometimes this point is arranged as a coronet, as in that worn by the first of the two girls in our illustration, who are enjoying a chat and a warm before they part. The bonnet is made of velvet leaves, and has a couple of little birds at the back. The leaves match the walking-dress—a style now much in fashion. It is intermixed with wool, which is arranged in long pleats, the bell-sleeves enabling it to be slipped off and on easily. There are large bows of velvet in front, and braces of velvet outline the bodice back and front. It is a marked contrast to the accompanying comfortable home-gown, made in two shades of grey. The under-skirt is of the lighter tone, and is gathered at the hem, so that it forms a species of bouillonné, the mode of arrangement being hidden by a pinked-out ruche, which is fulled on a coarse central cord. The upper draperies are hemmed, and form a point at the side. The bodice is outlined at the waist by a gold pointed band, lacing at the back; the front is slashed three times in such a fashion that the lighter cloth peeps through. A band of gold borders the wrist of the tight sleeves. This costume could also be made in two shades of green, now much in fashion, or in brown and stone, likewise a favourite mixture.

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER?"

Winter garments make a far greater inroad on our purses than those required in summer, when cheap light fabrics can be converted into good-looking gowns at a small cost. On the other hand, a winter gown is an investment which lasts for a year or so, and is a comfort and stand-by all the time. There is no doubt that there is nothing so really serviceable and, in the end, economical, as a tailor-made gown; for if you go to a good firm the work will stand hard wear, and draperies do not come undone, nor buttons fly off. Alas, that it should be so! Man's handiwork

is notable for more solidity and thoroughness than women's labour. Where the needle is concerned—woman's special implement—this is a shame.

I do not find anything very new in the make of gowns at our leading London tailors'. In nearly all cases the skirts are draped in straight heavy folds, with just a little fulness puffed up at the back. The

AN AFTERNOON CALL.

narrow fronts and the side panels are often braided, frequently with cord or braid having a tinsel effect. A new kind of metal wire, which looks like cord, has been now brought out, which will not tarnish, and only requires rubbing now and then to keep it bright for years.

In bodices there is far more variety than in skirts. Norfolk jackets, with leather belts, are too useful for country wear, to ignore and banish from Fashions. The newest style is an outer bodice with revers, a low-cut moire waistcoat such as men wear with a dress coat, and a vest beneath. If you follow a universal fashion and select a Directoire coat, you must have revers of black Astrakhan or black moire, or beaver, and a turn-down collar at the back to meet them. The leading features in bodices which admit of most variety are the revers. Some plain untrimmed habit bodices are worn, but they are few and far between.

Green, brown, beige, and red are the colours of the year. Navy blue is always worn by people who dress well, but it cannot be said to be the fashion now. Most beautiful galons are introduced on the more expensive gowns; silk passementerie, and a great deal of gold, often intermixed with very delicate tints, light greens and pinks, and these on beige, have a charming effect. Smooth cloths are used for the more dressy gowns, but there are a number of checks and stripes in mixed colourings worn also, brown almost invariably playing its part. The bordered materials are employed in more costly gowns, but are not everyday wear. Some of the newest show Cashmerienne designs, others appear to be worked in cross-stitch with filoselle, while some are woven in a Persian embroidery stitch. The patterns end in points mostly, and are suited to the Empire styles of make.

Honeycombing grows in favour, and some of the plain skirts are thus worked to the depth of a quarter of a yard below the waist, the top of the waistcoat being similarly treated. Loose classic fronts, starting from the shoulder, cross some of the skirts and bodices, but they do not seem to be in character with heavy cloth fabrics.

All dresses are made up on a foundation, and there is nothing so suitable as silk for the purpose. Sleeves are treated in many new ways; sometimes the darker material is put into the shoulder high and full, the lighter being gathered with a heading some six inches below. Others are fulled from the shoulder into a close-fitting velvet cuff, coming almost to the elbow, such as the Italian peasants wear. Loose soft silk sashes are gathered under the bodice points and tied at the side, and there are few dresses, except just the most useful kinds, that do not display some kind of sash, which, if of silk, is generally fringed at the ends.

The Swiss belt is coming in again in several new forms, and for slim figures is becoming. If bodices are made in a triple form, cloaks are made double. Many of the new long cloth cloaks fit the figure and have long sleeves, but over this sort of coat comes from the neck an equally long front, loose and full, richly lined and bordered with fur, that opens over it. This has great advantages where warmth is concerned. Many of the travelling-cloaks, too, have a double front lined with fur, turning back to show revers of fur, like the coats seen at Leipsic and in Russia, that are among the most luxurious garments with which human beings can invest themselves.

II.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

Frenchwomen as a rule divest themselves of their warm outer wraps when they pay calls, and thereby save themselves many colds, which Englishwomen acquire by a want of such sensible precautions. The figure by the door in our illustration has acted on this wise principle, and we are thereby able to see in what a completely new style her dress is made. It is

YOU LOVE ME STILL.

(*See p.* 47.)

arranged in a manner which carries out the idea of one dress over another. The petticoat of dark brown velvet is, apparently, of full and ample dimensions, but in fact the foundation is silk, and the broad piece of velvet introduced at the side is sufficient to carry out the effect. The soft light brown vicuna is braided in a darker tone, and bordered with velvet, being gracefully caught up on one side only, and very fully gathered at the waist. There is a fashionable Swiss belt of velvet round the waist, a belt of the same in the centre secured by antique buttons—buttons handed down from past centuries being just the particular craze of the moment in Paris. The full bodice is braided, and has a pointed vest back and front, of brown velvet; a band of the woollen stuff, braided, encircles the throat. The sleeve has a puff of velvet outside the arm, and the vicuna appears to button over it, and is rather short. Frenchwomen wear shorter sleeves than Englishwomen, and prefer gloves without buttons, made very long, which ruffle over them or meet them. This simple style is one which is likely to be worn well into the spring. At the back the bodice comes to the waist, to which the skirt is fully gathered, and is sufficiently long to show the velvet on the under-skirt; the Swiss belt ends at the seams under the arm, and round the neck the braiding is continued to the depth of six inches. The bonnet is worn without strings, stands up well over the face, and is made of the same material as the dress, but the untrimmed under-brim is lined with velvet. It is the Empire form, and like the large spoon-shaped hats, is intended to be put on at the back of the head, with a tuft of feathers curling on the front, the material gathered in a double line from the forehead to the nape of the neck, and fulled on to the brim.

The hat worn by the seated figure is of felt, trimmed with feathers and velvet, and is quite simple in its style. The dress is of soft woollen; the plain used for the draperies, the skirt made of the same with horizontal bands woven in a chessboard design. The stripes going round the figure horizontally are newer far than the perpendicular lines.

Plain, close-fitting jackets have been worn so long that now there has been a very strong and decided effort made to introduce something new, and one of the most successful attempts is the one illustrated. It fits at the back and slightly at the waist, where it is fastened with handsome clasps. The basque is long and double, and the fronts have two Figaro jackets, one shorter than the other, superposed on the original jacket; every edge is braided, and also the cuffs on the close-fitting sleeves, the result being a really handsome indoor garment.

Some of the new fur-trimmed jackets end in two points like the short mantles, and others have a cape in the front, which reaches to the shoulder-seam, and there falls like an over-hanging sleeve of oblong form. Some of the handsomest mantles have distinct oblong sleeves of rich passementerie which reach to the hem of the mantle. Nothing so dressy as the Louis XV. jacket has been introduced lately, but it is chiefly reserved for handsome velvets with embroidered waistcoats and the buttons of the period. It meets over the bust in a point, and is then cut away so that all the beauty of the waistcoat is discovered, as well as the soft silk sash loosely knotted in front. The sleeves are of the coat order with the deep turn-back cuff. The basques in front are long enough to display a flap-pocket, but barely reach beneath the waist at the back. Old modes of all kinds would seem to be resuscitated in France just now, and no woman is supposed to be well dressed if she neglects the picturesque element. I have just seen a cloak which is a counterpart of what our grandmothers wore, except that it has not the slit which they used to have for the hands to slip through. It was made in bright watercress-green cloth, and lined with shot silk, being gathered very fully at the neck, falling in folds to the feet. There is a very large collar, and the whole recalls some of the German students' cloaks of years ago. It is a very pretty style.

The newest matelassé, which is certainly now the favourite material, has the flowers standing out in bold relief, and many coloured mantles of this fabric are to be worn.

Very rich brocaded silks with satin grounds are being used for the more costly dresses, generally showing gigantic patterns like those we have hitherto associated with furniture, and of architectural origin. Firs, palms, and real blooms of huge proportions are thrown on to some of the handsomest grounds, but these are treated in a realistic style.

YOU LOVE ME STILL.

(*See Frontispiece.*)

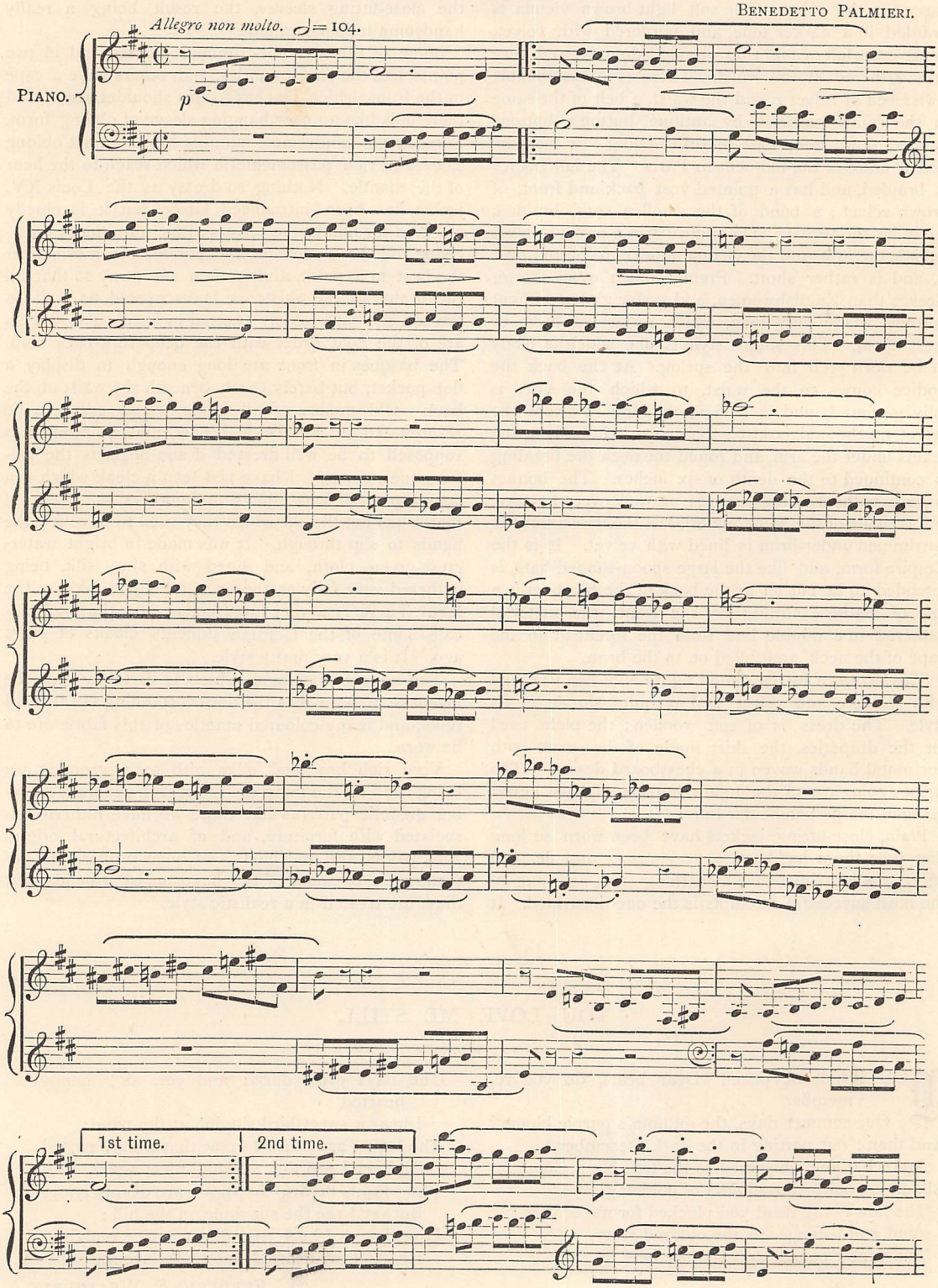
YOU loved me once! Dear heart, do you remember
Our summer days, the autumn's purple bloom?
And then! our parting in the dark December,
And what you whispered in the trembling gloom!
All, all is gone! those hours of golden glory;
The flow'rs are dead you plucked for me of yore;
I stand and listen;—'tis the old, old story,
The winter comes, and you are here no more!

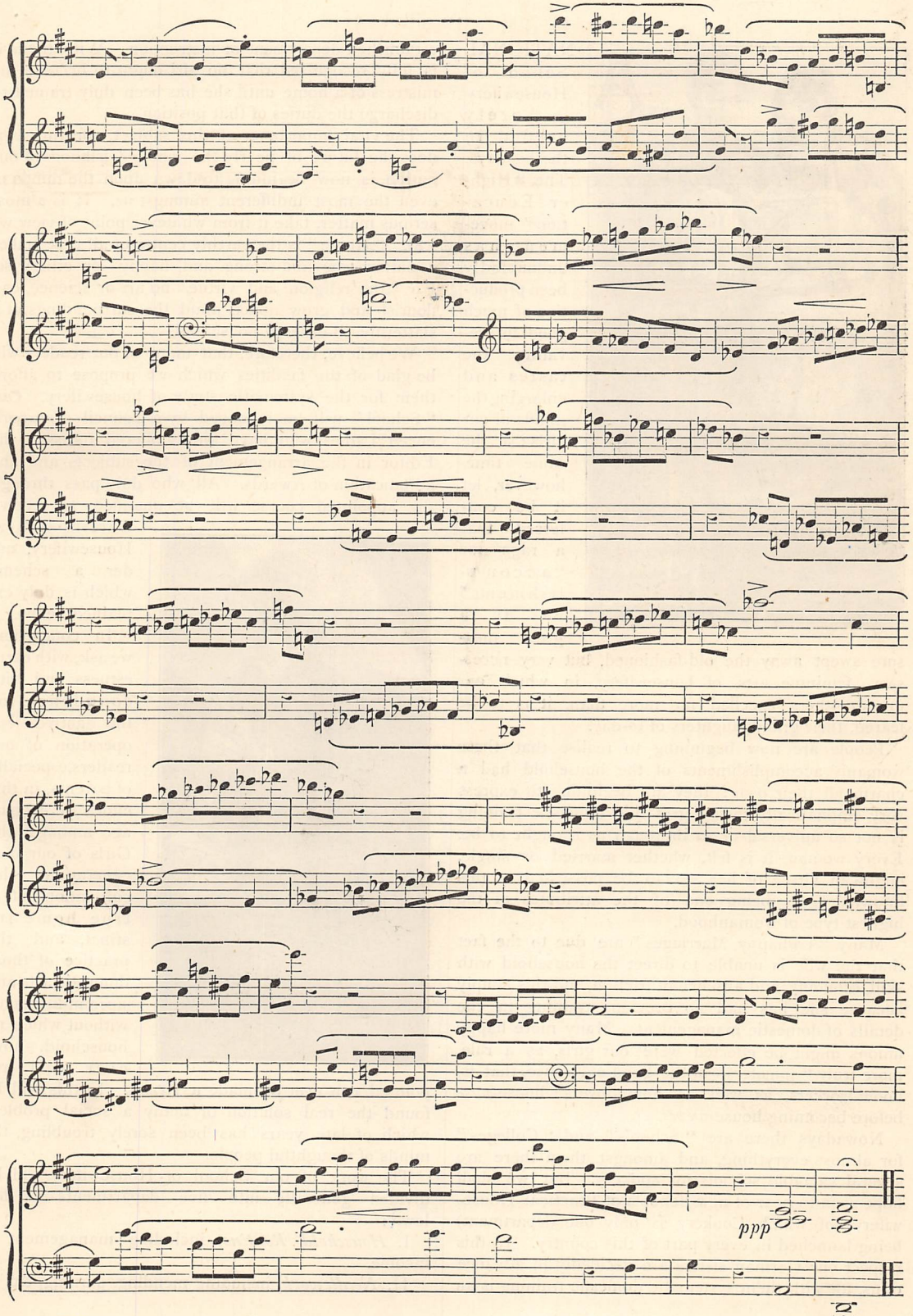
The days grow dark; and yet, ah! happy-hearted
I hear a sweet bird singing at the pane;
The leaves are dead, I know that we are parted,
And yet I feel that we shall meet again.
The wind is drear; the snows are deeply lying,
But yet I see the sunshine on the hill;
Love, love! I hear your distant voice replying,
Heart of my heart, I know you love me still!

FREDERIC E. WEATHERLY.

Canon-Etude.

BENEDETTO PALMIERI.

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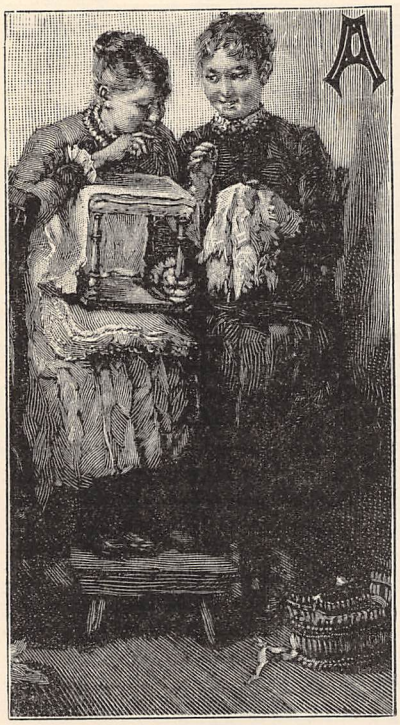
OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.



A NATIONAL School of Housewifery is sorely needed in these days. The "Higher Education" movement has undoubtedly been productive of much good in elevating the tastes and enlarging the minds of our girls; at the same time, however, let it be confessed that a rage for "accomplishments" has in a great measure swept away the old-fashioned, but very necessary, feminine arts of housewifery, in which our grandmothers excelled far more than, it is to be feared, their granddaughters of to-day.

People are now beginning to realise that these womanly accomplishments of the household had a charm all their own; they are beginning to express very emphatically their regret that domestic training is not so universal or so thorough as it ought to be. Every woman, it is felt, whether married or single, ought in virtue of her sex to be possessed of this knowledge, as being one of the attributes of the highest type of womanhood.

Many "Unhappy Marriages" are due to the fact that the wife is unable to direct the household with skill, economy, and absence of friction, and this simply because she has had no previous training in the details of domestic management. Many more happy unions might be effected were our girls, as a rule, more truly "spinsters" in the good old sense, that is, home-workers, as well as home-lovers; house-*wise* before becoming house-*wives*.

Nowadays there are "Schools" and "Colleges" for almost everything, and amongst them there are several valuable schools for cookery. But we shall hope soon to hear of new Schools of Practical Housewifery (of which Cookery is only one department) being launched in every part of this country. In this respect our German sisters are decidedly in advance of us, for with them systematic domestic training is an established department of instruction. With them it is fully recognised that no girl ought to become the mistress of a home until she has been duly trained to discharge the duties of that position.

The vital importance of this subject, affecting as it does the future of nearly the whole Girlhood of our nation, is now beginning to dawn upon the minds of even the most indifferent amongst us. It is a most serious matter, take it from whatever point of view we will. "Home" is the earthly centre of all that makes a nation true and strong and happy—or otherwise. No "true religion and virtue," no art or science, can flourish and grow apace amid the surroundings of a slatternly, ill-ordered household.

We believe, therefore, that many of our readers will be glad of the facilities which we propose to afford them for the systematic study of housewifery. Our "School" will be managed by a Council of experienced Ladies, who have kindly offered to assist the Editor in the arrangement of the subjects and the adjudication of Awards. All who duly pass through the appointed course will be qualified to receive Certificates in Housewifery, under a scheme which is duly explained below.

In conclusion, we ask, with earnestness and with confidence, for the active co-operation of our readers, especially of parents, in this effort to encourage amongst the Girls of our own generation the cultivation of a true home instinct, and the practice of those domestic arts and accomplishments without which no household, however well appointed, can ever be made a HOME. In this will be found the real solution of many a social problem which of late years has been sorely troubling the minds of thoughtful people.

The work of our School of Housewifery will be divided generally into five departments as follows:—

I. *Household Routine*, including management of income.

II. *Needlework*, including mending, darning, &c.

III. *Hand-labour*, such as bed-making, house and furniture cleaning.

IV. *Cookery.*

V. *Household Accounts.*

The following will be the curriculum for our winter session :—

I. *Household Routine.*—Under this heading candidates are invited to send in to the Editor not later than December 18, 1888, a scheme or time table of work for each day in the week : 1st, for the mistress ; 2nd, for the cook ; 3rd, for the housemaid ; or, instead, for mistress and general servant. Also the routine of the nursery.

Secondly, a Bill of Fare for three meals a day for one week, on a food allowance of £3 a week. The family to consist of six adults, including domestics, and three young children. Wines or other alcoholic liquors not to be included. This latter scheme must be sent in to the Editor not later than March 10, 1889. For each of these schemes a Prize of One Guinea is offered for the best, and Half-a-Guinea for the second best.

II. *Needlework.*—A specimen of each kind of stitch, &c.—*e.g.*, hemming, stitching, herring-boning, button-holing, button-sewing with linen, bone, or cloth-covered buttons, stocking-darning, &c. Each specimen should not exceed twelve inches in length and breadth, and may be worked on strips of linen, or other material suitable in each case. The time taken over each specimen must be duly certified and corroborated. Specimens cannot be returned. The whole to be sent in to the Editor not later than January 10, 1889. A Prize of One Guinea is offered for the best set of examples.

III. *Hand-labour.*—Under this heading the student will be required to go through a course of practical experience, extending over three months, in the following particulars :—(*a*) Bed-making. (*b*) Washing, starching, and ironing of small articles, to include a gentleman's collar and a lady's lace handkerchief. (*c*) Cleaning and polishing of glass and silver. (*d*) Stove and hearth-cleaning. (*e*) General dusting and tidying. Candidates will have to provide a certificate of having diligently and successfully practised in each of the above divisions for the space of three months at the least. Such certificate must be signed by two or more matrons, and countersigned by a minister of religion. A Prize of One Guinea is offered for the best specimens of laundry-work in Division *b*. These certificates may be sent in with the specimens of work in Division *b* not later than the last day of June, 1889.

IV. *Cookery.*—A 1 lb. loaf of household bread to be made and sent to the Editor so as to reach him by the first post on February 11, 1889. Each loaf must have *attached to it* a stout envelope containing the recipe for its preparation and the declaration required by the General Rules. No communications regarding the loaves will receive any attention except those attached to them. A Prize of One Guinea is offered for the best specimen.

V. *Household Accounts.*—Candidates will be required to prepare a specimen of household book-keeping, a week's accounts, including washing-book, and a balance-sheet, the weekly sum to be dealt with being left to the discretion of the candidate. A Prize of One Guinea is offered for the best, and Half-a-Guinea for the second best specimen. The work must be sent in not later than April 10, 1889.

In every case where a Prize is offered, or work submitted, the Competitions and Examinations are subject to the General Rules given below.

The names of successful candidates in each department will be published from time to time in our pages (owing to the exigencies of our printing arrangements, it is impossible to do this in less than three months, as a rule), and Certificates of Graduation will be presented to all who have completed the above course to the satisfaction of the Examiners. Those who specially distinguish themselves in any one or more departments, shall be classed as having graduated in Honours.

We trust our lady readers will do their best, by their own example, and by encouraging others to enter the lists, to make our School instrumental in raising the general standard of efficiency amongst the housewives of the present and the future.

GENERAL RULES.

1. Every reader of this Magazine is eligible to compete for all or any of the Prizes offered.

2. The Editor cannot undertake to answer inquiries having reference to the treatment in detail of the various subjects. *The descriptions given are sufficient for the purposes of the Competitions, and the rest is left to the judgment and discretion of the competitors.*

3. Each specimen submitted must have inscribed on it, or otherwise securely attached to it, the name and postal address of the sender, together with a declaration that the work is *original and entirely the sender's own*, to be signed by the author and countersigned by some other trustworthy person, *i.e.*, a magistrate, minister of religion, or householder, with the postal address in both cases.

4. The Prize works will become the property of the proprietors of this Magazine.

5. Should the two best works in any Competition prove of equal merit, the Prize may be divided at the discretion of the Editor. Any Prize may be withheld in the event of no specimen being thought worthy of that distinction.

6. The Editor will not be responsible for loss or miscarriage of any work, and all letters or packets must be *prepaid*.

7. *The Editor cannot undertake to return MSS. or specimens* sent in for competition.

8. Every specimen must be sent *before* the date named as the latest day, addressed—The Editor of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C., and must have the words "National School of Housewifery" written on the *top left-hand corner* of the envelope or wrapper.

THE COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

The Editor is glad to be able to announce that the following well-known writers on domestic subjects have kindly consented to act as advisers and referees :—PHYLLIS BROWNE, MISS CHARLOTTE M. MASON, ARDERN HOLT, MRS. E. CLARKE, and MISS LIZZIE HERITAGE.

A GLAD SURPRISE.

BY KATE EYRE, AUTHOR OF "FOR THE GOOD OF THE FAMILY," "A STEP IN THE DARK," ETC.

SHE was so accustomed to being petted, flattered, fawned on. She knew she was generally spoken of as the *rich* Miss Forrester; while occasionally she had heard herself described as the *pretty* Miss Forrester. She was not in the least spoiled by the homage paid her; possibly, because the epithet calling attention to her possessions was so much more frequently prefixed to her name than that which was descriptive of her person.

During her first season, she was just a lovable English girl, charmingly frank and free from affectation. She was interested in everything she saw; gracious to every one who tried to please her. And at the end of the season she was still heart-whole. She had been asked in marriage by many. At first this had greatly disturbed her. She had read, somewhere, that a true woman never permits a man to make her an offer of marriage unless she be prepared to regard him as her future husband. But she, Nellie Forrester, had received offers from many men for whom she had no warmer feeling than that of natural kindliness. Alas! she thought, how could *she* be a true woman? This was a very distressing reflection.

At length a way out of the difficulty suggested itself, which, while it did not impugn the truth of what the great writer had said, was highly satisfactory, in so far as it exonerated Nellie from all blame in the matter. She would henceforth regard the offers, to which she had been forced to listen, as having been made to the *rich* Miss Forrester, whose wealth was alone to be held responsible for them. She need not, therefore, upbraid herself, seeing that no luckless lover had ever pleaded in vain to the *pretty* Miss Forrester.

When the London season was over, Nellie returned to her old home in the country with her maiden aunt. There was a tacit understanding that until Nellie married she was to spend part of each year in town with her sister, Mrs. Travers. Nothing was said to her about this hoped-for matrimonial climax, Mrs. Travers well knowing she would resent any plain speaking on the subject. Still it is but reasonable to suppose she knew with what object her sister's doors were so hospitably thrown open to her.

Not, however, in a crowded reception-room, but in the more congenial atmosphere of her country home, did Nellie learn the sweetness of love's young dream. It was while she wandered down shady lanes, and inhaled the scent of new-mown hay, that she grew to love Sir Linley Beville.

He was staying at the Manor, and an introduction to the prim Miss Forrester's charming niece followed as a matter of course.

Not one syllable of love had been breathed between them when Sir Linley's visit came to an end. There had been a pretence of teaching Nellie botany; that was all. She had stumbled over the hard words, and laughed at her own blunders, and they had been very merry, very happy together.

"Good-bye, Miss Forrester. I shall do myself the pleasure of calling on Mrs. Travers as soon as she is in town," Sir Linley had said.

Nellie had hastened to assure him her sister, Gwen would be very glad to see him. "And so shall I,' she had added, with charming frankness.

He had held her hand while he made his polite little speech, and she had not attempted to withdraw it. Perhaps she was unconscious of its detention.

True to his promise, Sir Linley Beville lost no time in calling on Mrs. Travers. That discreet young matron received him very graciously. He was not rich, but he was of good family, appeared to be a most amiable young man, and if Nellie liked him, well—there was no objection to her marrying him.

And then followed that which generally does follow when a man and a maid, moving in the same social circle, are mutually attracted. They met everywhere, crossed each other's paths so naturally, that it would almost have seemed as if their constant encounters were due to some unrecognised force, which drew each to the same spot, rather than to design on either side.

They sat together in corners, as far away as possible from unsympathetic eyes, and talked—it must be admitted—the veriest nonsense. He was an English gentleman, a landed proprietor, a man of sound common sense, if not of brilliant attainments. She was fairly educated, and did not lack intelligence. And yet if any one of the conversations, in which each found so much delight, was set down word for word, the most insatiable reader of love-stories would not have the patience to wade through it. But in the most trivial remark, the most commonplace utterance, lurked the growing consciousness that each was all in all to the other. They were troubled with no doubts —at least not then. He did not hasten to speak, and she was not impatient to hear, the decisive word which should force them to make public avowal of their love. The slight uncertainty was so intoxicatingly sweet, as it gradually gave place to confidence in the mind of each, that they almost dreaded to break the spell, lest the realisation of their love-dream should fall short of the anticipation.

Oh, happy, foolish, never-to-be-forgotten days!—Who cannot look back at some such period in his own life, to regret it can never, never return, even while he smiles at its absurdities?

Nellie was, however, too great a matrimonial prize

for her numerous suitors to allow their rival to go in and win without making many an attempt to steal a march on him. The poor little heiress began to get thoroughly out of patience with these pushing young men. They were so intensely stupid; they never seemed to know when they were *de trop;* which, truth to tell, was nearly always.

After a time, the persistency with which these persevering admirers dogged her footsteps did more than annoy Nellie; it greatly distressed her. She began to grow suspicious of human nature. If so many were false, why should she be so firmly convinced of the truth of one? Might it not be that he was only a cleverer actor than the others? What was there in her to attract a man like Sir Linley Beville? For to Nellie her lover was her *beau ideal* of an English gentleman. She studied her face carefully in the glass, and was fain to admit that the reflection which met her earnest gaze did not justify her in believing in the sincerity of those who spoke of her as the *pretty* Miss Forrester. She could have substituted any number of less pretentious epithets wherewith to describe her own face: nice-looking—bright-looking—even interesting-looking, but no, *not* pretty.

"NELLIE LOOKED PENSIVELY AT THE FLOWERS" (*p.* 55).

She grew more restless day by day. At length she began to wish Sir Linley would speak.

"If only he would tell me the old, old story," she thought, "which I am so tired of hearing from other lips, I should, perhaps, know from his manner of telling it if I might dare to trust him. Oh, it is dreadful to have grown so suspicious! I think Gwen should have told me that every unmarried man to whom I was introduced would propose at the end of three weeks; and then I should have known better than to have subjected myself to such humiliation."

In thus thinking Nellie was certainly unfair to her married sister. It was true Mrs. Travers had whispered no word of warning into her ear; but it had not taken Nellie long to discover the disadvantages of her position, and her first season in town could have been her last, had she so willed it. Mrs. Travers would have been grievously disappointed, and would probably have given vent to her disappoint-

ment in no mild terms ; but there the matter would have ended. Poor Nellie was, however, rapidly getting into that unhappy frame of mind when to blame somebody or something is imperative.

On the evening of the day on which Nellie had murmured these unavailing regrets, Mrs. Travers was at home to a select few of presumably intellectual friends. A gentleman had promised to read a paper treating of a subject upon which he was a recognised —one might almost say, *the* recognised—authority. Mrs. Travers had had much trouble to secure him, and she could hardly keep her satisfaction from becoming indecorous, as, in the few words of welcome which she addressed to each guest, she introduced the great man's name at least three times in every minute.

Mr. and Mrs. Travers were hopelessly plebeian ; they did not possess any reliable information about even their more recent progenitors. Still, as they were wealthy, and their present surroundings were irreproachable, they might have forced their way among the aristocracy, notwithstanding this lamentable ignorance, had they really striven to do so. Their ambition did not, however, lie in this direction. Mrs. Travers did not greatly desire to see a noble duke seated at her hospitable board ; nor would she have been unduly elated had she extended her hand in welcome to an archbishop. No, her *rôle* was intellectual supremacy. She and her husband were desirous of identifying themselves with the most advanced thought of the day. They liked to feel that many of the literary and scientific lions, who graced their select gatherings to discuss the leading intellectual topics of the day, would with one accord have made excuse, had they been invited to the houses of the merely fashionably great.

At first Mrs. Travers was very doubtful whether her "intellectual treats," as she called her Thursday evening receptions, would be approved of by Nellie, for the girl had never affected to be clever. The young matron's mind was, however, soon set at rest on this point. Never having pretended to any distinctly intellectual acquirements, Nellie was free to confess her ignorance. This she did with such charming *naïveté*, that even the most pedantic thought none the worse of her for it ; while several old gentlemen, whose learning was believed to be something well-nigh inconceivable, were often observed to pause in an animated discussion, to address a few appreciative remarks to the bright-looking girl, who was at all times so pleasingly unaffected.

Of late, Sir Linley Beville had taken to coming regularly on Thursdays. Mrs. Travers did not ask him why he had so suddenly developed an interest in matters literary and scientific, nor did he volunteer an explanation. There were also other young men besides Sir Linley whose attendance was undoubtedly due to Miss Forrester's presence.

On this particular evening, Sir Linley approached Nellie, and began speaking to her in that confidential tone which of late he had assumed towards her.

"Is it very bulky, Miss Forrester? I can't manage to get a good look at it ; he keeps twisting it round and round."

He was alluding to the paper which the man of science was about to read.

"Really, Sir Linley, I haven't noticed," replied Nellie, with just a suspicion of irritability in her tone. She was still smarting under a sense of the disadvantages of her position.

Nellie saw that all the guests were comfortably settled, and then she quietly took a chair herself. She and Sir Linley were generally so placed that they could exchange meaning glances if anything were said out of which the slightest fun could be extracted. This evening, however, Nellie seated herself at the other end of the room, and purposely kept her gaze riveted on the lecturer, until he had read the last word of his paper.

Then, after the usual somewhat formal discussion, during which all the guests kept their seats, the conversation became general.

Nellie went round, saying a word to first one and then another, and introducing those who she thought would like to know each other.

At length, when the people seemed to have "grouped themselves satisfactorily," as Mrs. Travers was fond of saying, Nellie felt that for the present nothing more was required of her.

Mrs. Travers' arrangements for her Thursday evenings were always of the simplest kind. She well knew that to attract the great thinkers of the day there must be no vulgar display of wealth. Only one large reception-room was set apart for the gathering. In it were expensive articles in plenty, but their presence was in all cases fully justified by their being either useful or artistically ornamental. One side of the room was partitioned off by means of softly-hanging silk curtains, behind which was placed a table covered with light refreshments.

Her duties over for the time being, Nellie sank wearily into an easy-chair, which was screened from view. She was aware two young men were talking just on the other side of the curtain, but she was in no humour to listen to them. Sir Linley had at last taken the hint her changed manner conveyed by absenting himself from her side. She was brooding over this, and was already inclined to upbraid herself for conduct that she felt must to him be unintelligible, when her thoughts were interrupted by fancying she heard her own name mentioned.

"My dear fellow, we may just as well condole with each other as quarrel, seeing that neither of us stands a ghost of a chance."

"It will place me in a vewy twying position if what you say is twue."

"Oh, it's true enough. And a lucky beggar he is, too, to secure such a prize as that! It'll just about set him on his legs again."

"Do you imagine his affairs to be in a cwitical condition, then?"

"His estate, I believe, is worth a mere nothing, and I should be very much surprised if it were not mortgaged to its full value."

"It's a most extwa'wdinawy thing the luck some men have!"

Nellie did not wait to hear the reply to this philosophical observation. She fled and took refuge in the library. She never could clearly recall all that happened afterwards. She remembered that her cheeks were burning with indignation, and bitter tears of resentment filled her eyes to overflowing. To be spoken of as a sort of machine patented to put men on their legs again! But they were all making a great mistake. They would find, when they tried to put the machine in motion, that it wouldn't work, and that they had only wasted time and dignity in oiling it so freely with flattery. And then—she could never tell whether he had followed her from the reception-room, or had merely strolled into the library by chance—but there, standing before her, looking down at her with kindly solicitude, was the "lucky beggar;" the man who had "secured the prize;" the one whom she was to "put on his legs again."

Of what followed she retained but the most confused recollection. She knew that she quite broke down, behaved like any silly school-girl, as she told herself afterwards in trying to recall the scene; that Sir Linley used endearing terms in speaking to her, which even in her distress, and her determination to be henceforth a prize which no man should secure, thrilled her with momentary joy; she had a hazy idea that once he attempted to caress her, but that must have been when her tears were flowing most freely. She knew she openly accused him of mercenary motives, and the pained expression that swept over his face lived in her memory for many a long day. Hazy and confused as her recollection of the interview was, she remembered every word of his parting speech.

"I have been mistaken in you, Miss Forrester. I thought you were so unspotted by the world that you would believe my love for you to be disinterested. I did not wish to be precipitate. I should not have spoken to-night had not the sight of your distress surprised me into saying far more than I intended. I knew that if I asked you to be my wife, my conduct might very possibly be misunderstood by outsiders, but I did not think *you* would misconstrue it. However, in wishing you good-bye, I will promise to trouble you no more."

Then he went, leaving behind him, as Nellie firmly believed, the most miserable girl in all London.

She passed a wretched night, and rose in the morning feeling so depressed and generally out of sorts, that she would gladly have remained in her room, had she not dreaded being questioned as to the cause of her despondency.

No, she would not give way; she would do her best to put a bold face on the matter. There was nothing she would dislike more than being pointed at as a love-lorn maiden. So she prepared to accompany her sister on a shopping expedition, which had already been planned, trying her hardest to look as if nothing unusual had happened.

She supposed Gwen would have to be told she had refused Sir Linley. While they were out together would be a good time to introduce the subject. She would state the bare fact, and unless Gwen were observant enough to discover how distressed she was, she would say nothing more.

Nellie did not, however, find it at all easy to introduce the subject. Mrs. Travers' whole heart was in her shopping, and she had no idea that only by a great effort could Nellie bring herself to take any interest in her sister's purchases.

At length Nellie thought she would make a desperate plunge.

"Oh, Gwen, last night——" she began hurriedly.

They were passing a florist's as Nellie spoke, and Mrs. Travers interrupted her to exclaim—

"Nellie, do just look at those flowers! Did you ever see anything so exquisite? I *must* order some."

Nellie looked pensively at the flowers, as her sister completed her purchase. She was thinking of the days when Sir Linley had tried to teach her botany. The sight of the flowers changed the whole tenor of her thoughts. She would not, could not, bring herself to believe that the man whom she had learned to love when he and she had been "far from the madding crowd," and the sordid influence of fashionable life, was less noble than she had then thought him to be. She would not tell her sister what had occurred the night before, lest it should prejudice her against Sir Linley. She had sent her lover away from her, and she felt he would never return, but she would at least reserve to herself the sorry comfort of believing he had really loved her, and that she had nothing but her own perverseness to thank for her present very real unhappiness.

As the two sisters resumed their walk, the florist's assistant looked after them with much interest. She knew them well by sight, and had heard what a rich young lady Miss Forrester was. The poor girl had a sick mother and a number of younger brothers and sisters. She was "keeping company" with a young man whom she dearly loved, and who was most anxious to make her his wife; but she did not know how long it would be before she could, consistently with duty, leave her mother and the little ones, for her earnings made a considerable addition to the family purse.

"How nice it must be to be rich!" she thought, as she watched Nellie's retreating figure. "But there, the minister says it ain't right to envy people. Still, it does seem hard sometimes to think some should be so rich and others so poor."

That afternoon Sir Linley called. He was shown into a room full of visitors, and during the quarter of an hour he stayed he took but little notice of Nellie. Although she had told herself again and again he would never renew his offer, it was with much dismay that she heard him tell Mrs. Travers he intended starting for Norway in a week's time, and, as he had much to arrange before his departure, he feared he should not have the pleasure of seeing her again until after his return.

After that, Nellie took to studying the geography of Norway. It was the only thing that interested her,

for in truth she was very unhappy. She tried, however, to hide her distress, but she could not help thinking her sister and brother-in-law noticed the change that had come over her. They were so very, very good to her, showing their care and solicitude for her at every turn. And then their eyes followed her about with such tender, regretful glances. Often, when she entered a room unexpectedly, they would suddenly cease speaking, as if she had been the theme of their conversation; and once she was almost sure she heard them mention Sir Linley's name. She had ceased to care for society, and they did not urge it on her, seeming almost relieved when time after time she asked to be left at home.

"Sir Linley Beville."

Nellie started. Surely her ears must have deceived her. But no, there was Sir Linley shaking hands with Mrs. Travers, when Nellie believed him to have started three weeks before for a six months' tour in Norway. He had come, too, out of calling hours, which was another extraordinary proceeding. However, he was evidently no longer interested in *her*. He just greeted her, and then addressed himself almost exclusively to Mrs. Travers.

"THE FLORIST'S ASSISTANT LOOKED AFTER THEM" (*p.* 55).

Then, without any apparent reason, without even so much as a word of apology, Mrs. Travers walked out of the room. Nellie could almost have called after her to come back.

"I thought you were in Norway, Sir Linley." The remark could hardly be said to be original, because Nellie had already made it twice before. However, she could think of nothing else to say, and anything was better than an awkward silence.

"I did get as far as Christiania, Miss Forrester." This again was information which Sir Linley had furnished for the third time that afternoon.

"Why did you return so unexpectedly?" No sooner had Nellie formed the words than she realised what a fatal mistake she had made.

Sir Linley rose from his seat and stood before her.

"That is just what I want to tell you, Miss Forrester." There was no hesitation, no awkwardness about the man. He had evidently come of set purpose, which he meant to carry through.

"I wonder where Gwen is?" said Nellie.

"Mrs. Travers has very considerately left us alone, so that I may explain the purport of my visit. When I asked you to be my wife, Miss Forrester, you attributed to me, if you remember, interested motives, and I, stung by your injustice, declared I would trouble you no more. I have since thought, however, that I took you by surprise, that you were much agitated, and may, perhaps, have said things which you did not wholly mean. I have now come to assure you, on my word of honour as an English gentleman, that I love you as a man should love the woman he asks to be his wife. It is true I am not rich; still, I am in a position to surround my wife with every reasonable luxury. If you say that you still doubt me, or that you cannot bring yourself to love me, I will trouble you no more; but if——"

"Oh, Sir Linley, why are you so harsh to me?"

"Harsh to you, my darling—harsh? Oh, you little know!"

She certainly had no cause to again complain of his harshness. He called her by every endearing name he could think of; he threw his arms protectingly round her, and gently drew her head down on his shoulder, stroking her hair fondly as she stammered out her little explanation:—

"They said your estate was mortgaged, and that you only wanted to marry me so that I might set you on your legs again," she said, half laughing, while the tears got into her voice.

"The information supplied by 'they' was certainly not of an exceptionally reliable character, as never before have my affairs been in so prosperous a condition as they now are. But, Nellie, supposing I *had* wanted setting on my legs again, would you have begrudged part of your large fortune for such a purpose?"

"You would be welcome to every farthing of it now. It wasn't the money that I minded then, but I thought ——Oh, Linley, don't you see what I mean?"

"But you will never think so any more, dearest?"

"Never, never. I won't even have my money settled on myself. I won't have it tied up tight, as the lawyers say. It shall be yours, all yours, to do exactly as you like with."

"Yes, I think that will be best, Nellie."

"Linley, dear, I want to tell you how glad I am you have come back to me. I was such a miserable girl all the time you were away; and now I don't think I ever can feel really unhappy again."

Sir Linley's answer need not be chronicled.

Notwithstanding Nellie's declaration that she did not think she could ever feel unhappy again, she certainly looked so about six weeks later, when she came into her lover's presence.

"Why, what's the matter, Nellie?" he cried—startled by the gravity of her expression.

She put her hands on his shoulders—a favourite attitude of hers—and looked tearfully into his face.

"Linley, I have something terrible to tell you. I haven't any money at all. It is all gone, every penny."

"Who has been telling you this?" asked Sir Linley sharply.

"It is quite true, dear. Mr. Thorne, my solicitor, says so."

"But I was particularly anxious that you should hear nothing of this for the present."

She looked perplexed as he spoke.

"Do you mind *very much?*" she asked anxiously, while her lips quivered. "I will try so hard to be all that you would wish your wife to be."

"I would rather have told you myself that which you have now heard from others."

"But did you know about it, then?"

She held her breath as she waited for the answer to her question.

"If I hadn't known about it, I dare say I should have reached the North Cape by this time."

"Then when you came back to me you knew I was absolutely penniless?"

"Precisely. But you took me for your future husband, offering to give me entire control over the whole of your fortune. I am satisfied, and more than satisfied, to take the will for the deed. Do you mind much, my darling, now that your riches have taken to themselves wings and flown? For the future you will have to depend on your husband, and that, in my opinion, is the right order of things."

She thought a moment.

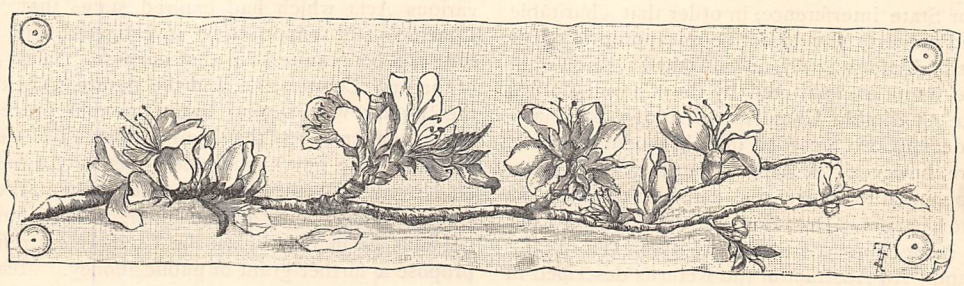
"Linley, if I had not lost my money, you would never have come back to me?"

"Dearly as I loved you, I could never again have asked you to marry me while there was any possibility of your thinking me a fortune-hunter."

She looked up, smiling brightly.

"Then, Linley, I'm glad it's gone. My money never brought me a day's real happiness, while you——"

"Will do my best to make your life as cloudless as your face is now."



THE CHARITY COMMISSION: ORIGIN AND WORK.

BY GEORGE HOWELL, M.P.—FIRST PAPER.

HE annals of legislation with respect to charitable bequests, endowments, and their uses, form a long chapter in the history of English Law. A simple record of the various statutes enacted from time to time is most instructive, as showing, among other things, the growth of public opinion in this country as regards the administration of the estates and funds of the numerous foundations, endowments, and charities bequeathed to the poor, and for various specific purposes, by "pious benefactors" and others, at remote periods of our history, and during successive generations, down to the present time.

As early as 1601, the Statute of Charitable Uses was passed (43 Eliz., c. 4) "to redress the misemployment of landes, goodes, and stockes of money heretofore given to charitable Uses." By this Act "the Lord Chancellor or Keeper of the Great Seal of England," and "the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster," for the time being, were empowered to appoint Commissions under the Great Seal of England, or Seal of the County Palatine, "to enquire as well by the Oaths of Twelve lawful men or more of the County, as by all other lawful ways and means," into "all and singular such gifts, limitations, assignments, and appointments aforesaid, and of the abuses, breaches of trust, negligences, misemployments, not employing, concealing, defrauding, misconverting, or misgovernment of any lands, tenements, rents, annuities, profits, hereditaments, goods, chattels, money, or stocks of money heretofore given, limited, appointed, or assigned, or which hereafter shall be given, limited, appointed, or assigned, to or for any charitable and godly Uses before rehearsed." The said Commissioners were further empowered to make orders and execute judgments and decrees, as to the faithful employment and disposal of the funds and property for charitable uses and intents, according to the tenor and purport of the intent for which given by the donors and founders.

There can be no mistaking the real object of the statute of Elizabeth. It is obviously clear that gross abuses had been discovered, and that a necessity existed for State interference, in order that charitable funds and property should not be misappropriated or misapplied. Unfortunately, no published records exist as to the inquiries instituted by the Commissioners under the Charitable Uses Act of 1601; but many of their decrees are recorded in subsequent Reports. There are, however, "A Report from the Select Committee appointed to inspect and consider the Returns relative to Charitable Donations for the benefit of Poor Persons, made pursuant to Act 26 Geo. III., c. 58" (1788); and "An Abstract of the Returns described in the above Report," published in 1816. Much valuable matter is to be found in these early Reports.

The next general Act concerning charities was the 58 Geo. III., c. 91 (passed June 10th, 1818), "An Act for appointing Commissioners to inquire concerning Charities in England for the Education of the Poor." No reference is made in this statute to the 43rd of Elizabeth, c. 4, or to any action taken thereunder. The Commission constituted under this Act was appointed directly by the Crown; the Commissioners so appointed being required "to inquire into the amount, nature and management of Charities connected with the Education of the Poor," and to report half-yearly to the King and Parliament. The powers of such Commissioners were subsequently extended to other charities, and were continued by further Acts. Between the date of their appointment and the close of the year 1834, the Commissioners issued twenty-eight elaborate Reports; a General Index to the first fourteen Reports, 1826—27; a Return of Proceedings in Chancery, 1828; a List of Counties reported upon, and not reported upon, 1828; and a Return of the Expense incurred by the Commissioners in 1824. Besides which, two independent returns were published in 1820: (1) "A Return of Rents and Profits of Messuages, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, belonging to any Hospital, School, Almshouse, or vested in Trustees for Charitable Uses"; and (2) "Amount of Stock or Dividends belonging to any Corporation or Society of Persons, or of any Trust established for Charitable Uses." Twenty-five other Reports, dealing with Educational matters specifically, and some with Charitable Donations and Endowments incidentally, were also issued from 1816 to 1835. The total cost of this Charity Commission to May, 1835, was £208,527 13s. At that date the Inquiry had been completed in twenty-eight English and six Welsh counties; in several counties the Inquiry was still incomplete.

The 58 Geo. III., c. 91, and the four continuing Acts, expired on August 15th, 1834, and with such expiry the powers of the Commissioners appointed under these Acts came to an end. But the Inquiry was not completed, and therefore another Commission was constituted, under the 5 and 6 Will. IV., c. 71, in 1835. The preamble to this Act, after reciting the various Acts which had expired, states that "many Charities still remain to be investigated, and further time will be required for that purpose." The powers of the new Commission, and the nature and extent of the Inquiry, were similar to the one that preceded it, but in some respects the Commissioners had extended powers. The new Commission met for the first time on November 11th, 1835; Lord Brougham, the Chief Commissioner, being in the chair. The Inquiry was not finished in 1837, when the Government refused to propose a further grant of public money. Meanwhile

two further Reports were issued—the twenty-ninth Report in 1835, and the thirtieth Report in 1837 ; also, in 1835, an Analytical Digest was published of the Reports from 1832 to date. Altogether, up to June, 1837, no fewer than thirty-eight volumes of Reports were issued, some consisting of two, others of as many as six parts. There was also issued in 1835 a Report from the Select Committee on the evidence in the several Reports from the Commissioners of Inquiry concerning Charities in England and Wales, and on the means of completing the Inquiry. The fifteen Reports on Educational matters issued in these two years did not specifically deal with Charities, and only incidentally with Endowments—chiefly in Ireland. The additional cost of the Commission of Inquiry to the end of 1836 was £24,456. The total annual income of all Charities, so far as ascertained in 1834, was £428,311 7s. 7d. ; of which £111,460 4s. 9d. was applied to Education, the remainder being applied to various purposes, according to the objects for which given. By the end of 1837 the number of grammar schools reported on was 700 ; of endowed schools (not classical), 2,150 ; and of Charities not attached to endowed schools, 3,390. The income of grammar schools reported on was £152,047 14s. 1d. ; of endowed schools (not classical), £141,385 2s. 6d. ; and of other Charities given for, or applied to, Education, £19,112 8s. 8d. The investigations were ultimately completed ; the total number of Charities inquired into being 28,000 ; the number of Reports issued up to 1849 filling thirty-eight folio volumes. The Inquiry did not extend to the Universities nor to the City of London. A Royal Commission was appointed in 1849 to examine the then completed Reports of the Commissions of 1818 and 1835. The first Report was published in 1850, the second in 1851. These elaborate Reports form the basis of all authentic information as to Charitable Trusts ; in some instances additional information has been obtained by subsequent investigation, during the preparation of schemes by the Commissioners.

The Reports made by the several Royal Commissions, and by the Select Committees to which they were referred, recommended that the duty of exercising the then existing system of protection over Charities—hitherto inadequately discharged by Courts of Equity—should be transferred to a permanent and independent administrative authority, which should differ from the Court, not in the scope of its powers, but in the continuity and vigilance of their exercise. Courts of Equity had for over three hundred years exercised some kind of jurisdiction over Charities, but the sole object of their interference was to see that "the charitable intent of the givers and founders of Charities" was adhered to ; with that view the property of Charities was protected, and the Court assumed some control over the persons charged with administering the property. Generally speaking, the main object of State control over Charitable bequests still is the promotion of the intentions of the donor or founder ; but Parliament has wisely enlarged the scope of State interference in recent years.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

The Graphophone.

The graphophone of Professor Graham Bell and Mr. Summer Tainter is a similar instrument to the phonograph. It also records and reproduces speech, music, or other sounds on wax, by means of a vibrating diaphragm and stylus. But the two contrivances differ in detail from each other. The phonograph has been designed to suppress all vibrations proceeding from the working of the mechanism, thus leaving the voice or other sounds recorded as clear and distinct as possible. In the graphophone a simpler and probably less expensive apparatus has been arrived at, which, as shown in Fig. 2, resembles a sewing machine, and is worked by means of treadles. The wax which receives the record is a black composition, smoothly spread over the outside of a pasteboard tube (D, Fig. 2), which slips on a revolving barrel. Over the surface of the wax is mounted a cutting stylus, actuated by the vibrations of the diaphragm in such a manner as to cut a record of them in the surface of the wax along a spiral line as the tube or cylinder revolves on the barrel. Fig. 1 illustrates this cutting action of the stylus, and the hilly trace it leaves behind it as a record of the sound. It will be readily understood that another stylus travelling over this groove again will be obliged to follow its undulations, and will thus be able to set another

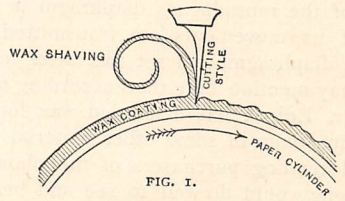


FIG. 1.

diaphragm into vibrations, reproducing the original sounds. In Fig. 2, A is the recording diaphragm mounted over the wax tube. Flexible branched speaking-pipes, with mouthpieces, B B, convey the sound of the voice to the diaphragm, A, which vibrates under it, and having a cutting stylus on its under side,

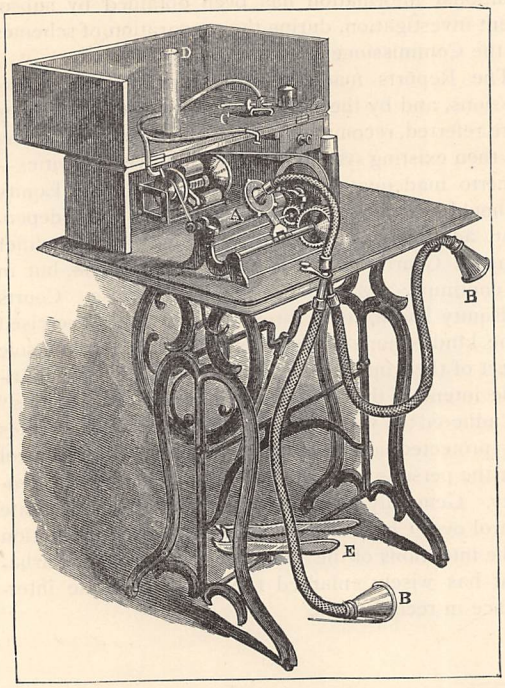


FIG. 2.

impresses the sounds upon the waxen surface as it revolves underneath. The revolution of the record is performed by working the treadles, E, seen under the machine. When a record is completed, the diaphragm, A, is detached, and a second, or reproducing diaphragm, with branched hearing-tubes, C, is substituted. The hearing-tubes being applied to the ears, the cylinder with the record impressed upon it is set so as to revolve under the stylus attached to the reproducing diaphragm, so that the stylus travels over the groove or sonorous trace, and causes the diaphragm to reproduce the original sounds. The reproducing stylus is a small curving piece of metal attached by a cord to the centre of the reproducing diaphragm in such a manner that its movements are transmitted to the centre of the diaphragm, and set the latter in vibration. We may mention here that, according to latest accounts, Mr. Edison has discarded wax for taking the record, in favour of some other material not yet disclosed. Intending purchasers of the phonograph or graphophone would do well to see and hear both instruments before deciding which to have.

Cellular Clothing.

Under-clothing of every kind is now being made of a cellular cloth, whose fine meshes form an extremely porous material, permitting a free circulation of air about the skin, and at the same time affording a ready outlet for the secretions. For cyclists especially this new material is admirably adapted, while its lightness must make it very valuable for summer in our own country, and for general wear by colonists in newer and more tropical lands.

Some Novel Christmas Cards.

The most striking feature about the cards for this season seems to be the introduction of embossed borders to cards printed on flat surfaces by Messrs. Hildesheimer & Faulkner. The embossing is frequently done in several colours, generally all lighter than the prevailing tones of the picture they surround, and the effect is very delicate, and needs to be seen to be appreciated. Among the photographic opal souvenirs issued by this firm are some very tasteful new designs, which are sure to commend themselves to those who like their "cards" to be at once novel and artistic. All the cards issued by Messrs. Hildesheimer & Faulkner are remarkable for the eminently high character of their workmanship and careful finish. The "Gem" series of "Visette" cards issued by Mr. J. F. Bennet, are furnished with an opening for the sender's card, surrounded by pretty designs printed from steel plates in soft tints, together with appropriate mottoes and wishes. The chief novelty in Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons' collection for this season is a beautiful reproduction of Raphael's masterpiece, "The Madonna Sixtina," of the Dresden collection, which is quite as successful as the companion reproduction, two or three years ago, of the "Blenheim" Raphael, now in the National Gallery. Other most successful reproductions issued by this firm are those of Correggio's "Nativity" and Murillo's "Infant St. John," though these are on a smaller scale than the magnificent Raphael. Autograph cards, embossed in bronze and silver or in delicate tint designs, and pretty little booklets are also issued by Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons. Space will not allow us to more than briefly mention the cards, properly so called, issued by this firm; but we notice among them some pretty developments in the use of metallic colouring, and some quaint shapes such as shells, palettes, bells, and ovals. But all alike, whatever be the size or shape, are admirable in their colour and finish.

Milk Jelly.

The following recipe for making milk jelly, a diet for invalids, is given by a contemporary. Heat a quart of milk with a pound of sugar, and after the latter is dissolved, continue heating at a boiling temperature for ten minutes. Then cool it well and add, slowly stirring, a solution of one ounce of gelatine in a cupful of water. Next add the juice of three or four lemons, and three wine-glassfuls of wine, brandy, or other liquor. Stand the glasses containing the mixture in a cold place to set the jelly. The milk must be quite cold before the other ingredients are added, in case it should curdle.

The Excelsior Geyser.

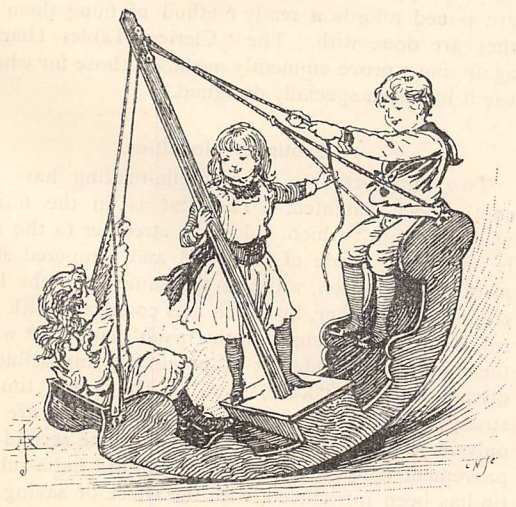
The great Excelsior Geyser, of the Yellowstone Park, in the United States, is again active. It is situated in the middle geyser basin, close to Fire Hole River; its pit or crater being 320 feet long and 200 feet wide, the aperture or vent being about 200 feet in diameter. Since 1880 this geyser has been quiescent, the waters resembling a boiling spring. But this summer it has been spouting to heights of 100 to 300 feet, hurling up on the discharge stones and boulders weighing from 1 to 200 lbs. The Fire Hole River has, in consequence, risen two feet in level. The Excelsior Geyser is believed to be the most powerful yet discovered.

A COLLAPSIBLE LIFEBOAT.

Safety Stirrups.

A new stirrup, which provides an absolute guarantee against being dragged, has recently been patented by Mr. P. G. Shadbolt. There is nothing peculiar in the appearance of these stirrups at first sight, but closer observation shows that the strap ring is fitted into a spring clip, which opens only laterally, and consequently is kept securely closed so long as the stirrup is perpendicular. But in the event of the rider being thrown, the strain on the stirrup, should the rider's foot remain in it, would at once release it from the strap, and so lessen the danger. This simple appliance seems to offer a ready means of safeguard in riding a horse that is at all likely to throw one.

A Nursery Yacht.



The woodcut illustrates a nursery boat or yacht for the use of children, which has been devised by Dr. C. R. Illingworth. It is broad in the middle, so as not to capsize, and the ends have projections which prevent its tilting too far. The motion is produced by means of ropes and pulleys, which the children work in the manner shown, and it is arranged that each child pulls on the opposite end of the boat, and thus has great purchase. Half a dozen can use it at once, and their safety can be further insured by strapping them in. The boat is likely to attract and amuse children more than the time-honoured rocking-horse.

A Collapsible Lifeboat.

The illustration shows one of the collapsible lifeboats of Mr. J. W. Shepheard, recently exhibited at the Glasgow Exhibition. Its length is 28 feet, breadth 8½ feet, depth 3½ feet, weight 11 cwt. 2 qrs., and when folded up it occupies a space about 11½ inches wide. Nevertheless, when expanded, it can carry sixty persons. Three of such boats could be packed under the ordinary lifeboat of a vessel hanging in the davits. The boats are very strongly built, the woodwork being lined with galvanised angle steel. The frame is covered with canvas coated with watertight composition, and in the bottom is a framework floor to walk upon. It should be mentioned that the Cunard Company have ordered several of these boats for trial.

A Singular Phenomenon.

A correspondent writes :—"I have been staying for a few days at Sutton-on-Sea, a small village on the Lincolnshire coast. On Friday morning last, September 14th, when walking along the shore, I noticed that the waves of the incoming tide, as they receded, left a loose, blackish, irregular line along the sands—a line pushed farther up as the tide advanced. It extended for the three or four hundred yards I examined, and probably much farther in either direction. On close inspection, it was found to consist of myriads of small brown-black beetles (weevils of the *Apionidæ*, I think). Amongst them were scattered many butterflies and moths of the commoner kinds, and a few ladybirds. A singular feature of the case was that while the major part were dead, a large proportion were still living, showing their life by feeble motions, and those rescued and placed on a dry sur-

face began to creep about. But while I found living beetles and butterflies and ladybirds, I did not find a living moth. For two days before, a brisk south-easterly wind had been blowing, accompanied by bright sunshine during the days, and clear nights. This wind would, of course, blow from the coast stretching from Holland up to Denmark; and the tide, at that part of the Lincolnshire coast, sets in from about east-north-east. Supposing then that they were blown off, or were migrating from, the littoral countries of the German Ocean, as they doubtless were, and that their strength gave way before reaching the opposite shore, and they therefore dropped into the sea—the mystery is, how any at all should survive their thorough washing about in such crisp, curling waves. But so it was. I showed them to a friend who came to see me the same forenoon, and he was as surprised and as interested as I was."

The Jupiter Light.

A new and powerful light for workshops and out-of-door operations is shown in our illustration. The "Jupiter" lamp consists of a shallow pan, A, having two funnel-shaped covers, B, over it; one of the funnels acting as the burner. Crude petroleum, creosote, or other cheap hydrocarbon oil, is contained in the pan at a constant level; the source of supply being the reservoir, C, below. To light the lamp a small quantity of spirit is poured on the oil in the pan, and kindled, and the funnel covers put on. By means of a small pipe, air at a pressure of 20 lbs. per square inch is admitted to the pan near the surface of the oil, and supports the combustion of the spirit. The inner funnel, or cone, gets red-hot and vaporises the oil, which ignites, and produces a bright jet of flame from 10 to 15 inches high, and 3 to 4 inches in diameter. This flame induces a draught between the two cones, which thus supplies the greater part of the air required for combustion. There is said to be no scattering of oil drops or spray round this lamp, as in some others of the same sort.

Petroleum as Poison.

A German doctor reports that a form of skin disease exists amongst the working classes of the petroleum districts of America, which is traceable to the oil, and especially to the heavier oils. He also found that swallowing petroleum produced an affection of the stomach and kidneys, and hence he proposes to class petroleum as a poison. The inhalation of the vapour only seems to have a prejudicial effect on persons otherwise in feeble health.

For the New Year.

An unfailing sign that the Old Year is dying is to be seen in the appearance of diaries and calendars "for the New Year." Among the first in the field are the well-known Letts's Diaries, now published by Messrs. Cassell & Co. Between the pretty and useful little "Waistcoat Pocket Diary," in its tasteful Russia case, three inches long and only a little more than an inch broad, to the large foolscap diary, interleaved with blotting paper, are many gradations of size and shape, but each is represented in this excellent series in a form alike durable and attractive. It would be impossible to refer to every one of these useful publications in detail, but among the most popular will certainly be the "Waistcoat Pocket Diary," the "Gentleman's Diary," and its companion volume, the "Ladies' Diary." The "Monthly Diary," where each month's entries are made in a separate part, to be carried in a wallet, is very handy; and the lettered box in which the parts are issued affords a ready method of filing them as they are done with. The "Clerical Tablet Diary," again, must prove eminently useful to those for whose use it has been specially designed.

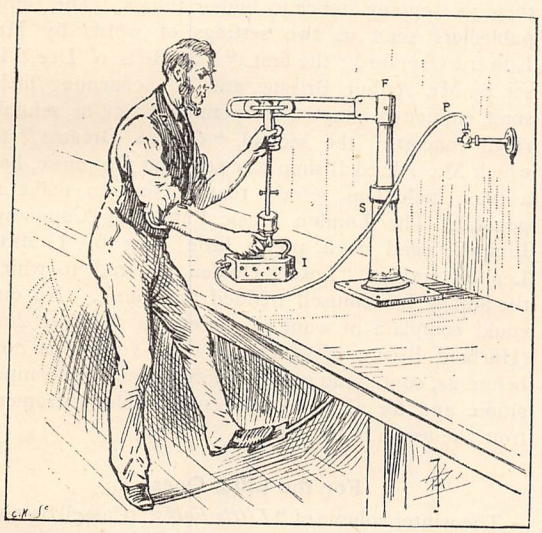
A Group of Novelties.

Two improvements in umbrella-making have recently been patented. The first is in the frame, where the "git," which holds the stretcher to the rib, is now being made of hardened and tempered steel instead of soft iron, while at the same time the fork end of the stretcher, by which it is connected with the rib, is narrowed somewhat, the result being that when the umbrella is folded it is practically impossible to distinguish any "knee," and at the same time a stronger joint is formed. These new frames are not only very light, but also very durable. The second improvement is in the ferrule, where a hard india-rubber tip has been introduced, with the effect of saving the frame from jarring, and at the same time rendering the umbrella noiseless, when used for a walking-stick. —A "Dinnerette" is the name given to a new mat which has lately been devised for the use of children at table. The mat really consists of a prettily designed piece of American cloth inscribed with a

suitable motto, and decorated with a little picture likely to please children at first. Its use should certainly save the table-cloths, and that we believe is its object.—Some chemically prepared wicks are now being made for use in all kinds of oil lamps. The method of their preparation is not made public, but the form in which they are sent out, ready cut in lengths for use, is certainly an improvement on the old-fashioned method. It is claimed for these new wicks that their burning quality is thirty per cent. higher than that of the ordinary wicks.

An Ironing Machine.

The engraving represents an ironing machine, that consists of a flat-iron, I, heated by gas conveyed to the burner by the flexible rubber pipe, P. The iron can be moved in every direction by the operator, as



shown, and the requisite pressure is applied by means of his foot bearing on a treadle under the table. The frame, F, which supports the iron, is fitted in a spring socket, S, allowing the tool to be raised or lowered, and the wheels in the bracket allow it to slide to and fro. The machine packs into a space of 24 inches by 12 inches, and weighs only 250 lbs. The iron does not consume more than six cubic feet of gas per hour. The pressure brought to bear on the iron can be varied from 1 lb. to 300 lbs.

A Pneumatic Gun.

Trials have recently taken place, in New York Harbour, of a pneumatic gun made by M. Zalinski for the Italian Government. The gun is forty feet long, and made of cast iron in sections. The mechanism for pointing is worked by hydraulic power. The shells are six feet long, and contain 600 lbs. of explosive gelatine. They have iron wings, and are capable of travelling two miles. The range is controlled by varying the air pressure which propels the shell. Three of these guns are, it is stated, to form the armament of the *Vesuvius*, a new vessel built for the United States Government at Philadelphia.

A Curtain Stretcher.

This new stretcher consists of a light wooden frame easily taken to pieces and packed away in a small compass, but which fits together to provide a ready means of tightly stretching curtains at home quite as well as they can be done by professed cleaners. The construction is extremely simple, and there is nothing about the apparatus calculated to tear the curtains, provided, of course, that ordinary care is exercised in its use. A great advantage attaching to the employment of this apparatus is that irons are unnecessary.

Free Libraries, and How to Procure Them.

Nothing in the progress we have made in the last half-century has been more remarkable than our advance, as a nation, in the number and value of the public libraries open to rich and poor alike, free of direct charge. No doubt this advance has been due to some extent to private munificence, but the working of the Free Libraries Acts has certainly given a great impetus to the movement. Of late years Mr. Thomas Greenwood, F.R.G.S., has devoted much of his leisure to the consideration of this question, and the best means of furthering it. The result of his experience he gives us in "Free Public Libraries" (Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.), and the work is one that we can heartily commend to any of our readers who may be interested in the extension of facilities for the spread of pure and wholesome literature. Hints as to the organisation, fitting up, arranging, and working of large or small libraries will be found here, as well as useful statistics of the work already done in this direction. Mr. Greenwood is also the author of a companion work on "Museums and Art Galleries" (same publishers), in which he deals with his new topic in the same practical and helpful manner, describing what has been done, and showing what is yet to be accomplished.

Some Christmas Books.

In the preparation of books for Christmas gifts, our well-known contributor, Mr. F. E. Weatherly, is to the fore as usual. Messrs. Hildesheimer & Faulkner have issued three from his pen, entitled "Nursery Land," "Sunbeams," and "The Good Shepherd." It is hard to say whether words or pictures are more pleasing in these tasteful little volumes, both are so excellent. The same publishers are responsible for quite a number of little booklets got up in exquisite taste, with every advantage of colour and good workmanship. Perhaps the prettiest is "The Honeymoon" to which Mr. Weatherly again supplies the verse, and Mr. Yeend King and Miss Alice West the illustrations. Another and more ambitious undertaking is an illustrated version of "Here's to the Maiden of Bashful Fifteen," illustrated by Alice Havers and Ernest Wilson, which is a really attractive rendering of the fine old song.

Ballads of Home.

"Sent Back by the Angels" is the title which our friend, the Rev. Frederick Langbridge, gives to a collection of ballads of home and homely life, which Messrs. Cassell & Company have just issued. There are some poems in the volume very suitable indeed for recitation or reading at popular entertainments at this season of the year. There is a wonderful pathos about some of these ballads, notably about the "Lay of a Cracked Fiddle," and the poem from which the volume takes its name.

Choruses and Songs.

Four books of original choruses, written for use in public schools by Mr. H. F. Henniker, are published by Messrs. Hutchings & Co., and the excellent work they contain should make them deservedly popular. "Warriors and Chiefs," the fourth book, is very good for male voices alone. "Old Time and the Maiden" (same publishers) is the title of a piece by Mr. T. J. Lynch, to which Mr. Richard Harvey has linked a *rechauffé* of several familiar airs. Another piece by the same composer, which he calls a "musical recitation," is a quiet and pathetic setting in a somewhat novel form of a little poem by Mary Sorges, entitled "I am Tired." "Lurline" is one of a set of operatic selections for the violin and piano, arranged by Guido Papini. "Laughing" is the appropriate title of a laughing song, in which Mr. Cecil Traherne has set his own words with a melodious refrain and a pleasing refinement. "My Bonnie Fishermaid," and "The Love Watch," are both of them effective songs of moderate difficulty. "The Soudan March," by Agnes Gill (Boosey & Co.), is a fairly attractive little piece, admirably adapted for juvenile performers. Messrs. Paterson & Son send us three songs set by Hamish MacCunn, a clever young composer, who has done and is doing excellent work. All three are carefully and skilfully written and eminently singable. They are entitled "The Ash Tree," "At the Mid Hour of Night," and "I will Think of Thee, my Love." Now that the violin is to be found in the hands of so many young people, two works by M. Pierre Perrot, which are issued by the same publishers under the titles of "Andante and Allegretto" and "Two Short Movements," cannot fail to be welcome. The Allegretto movement is especially bright and pretty.

A Book for Boys.

Probably the most complete book of games is that which has lately been issued by Messrs. Cassell & Company, under the title of "Cassell's Book of Sports and Pastimes." Games for the playground, the field, and the lawn are fully described, and hints are given, not only for playing these, but also for swimming, cycling, and boating. Indoor games, from children's games with tops, and the old-fashioned round games, to recreative science, bagatelle, billiards, and chess, are all fully described, and rules and hints given for their playing. It would be hard to imagine a book more likely to be popular with boys than this. Fathers and uncles should look out for it.

Some New Music.

The winter evenings are pre-eminently best fitted for concerted music, so we are glad to welcome Le Thiere's four "Books of Duets" for violin and piano, published by Messrs. Duff & Stewart. The duets are easy pieces, which will be found useful by players of moderate abilities who are anxious to use them as stepping-stones to higher things. The same publishers send us two settings of words by Mr. Edward Oxenford: the first, "The Bells o' Dee," is set by Mr. Arthur Briscoe, and is a charming little song, eminently adapted for penny-reading or school-room concerts; the second, "Golden Dreams," to which Mr. Alfred Bishop has supplied the music, has a most melodious refrain that is sure to make it popular. The London Music Publishing Company, Limited, send us a pretty little song by Lindsay Lennox, entitled "Love's Golden Dream," to which the author has himself wedded the music. No one could complain of want of variety in *Musical Bits* (Harberd Bros.), of which the third volume is now before us, containing every variety of musical composition, and for almost every conceivable instrument from the organ to the banjo.

For the Little Ones.

The winter volume of "*Little Folks*" (Cassell) is now before us, with its attractive coloured frontispiece and its bright illustrations throughout. Any one who is on the look-out for a present for some little relative or friend, could not do better than secure a copy of this. "School Girls," by Annie Carey, is a pretty story for girls, but which has a melancholy interest in the fact that its author died before the book was ready for publication. This story and another, "Bunty and the Boys," by Helen Atteridge, a writer whose work is certainly not unknown to the readers of the Magazine, are both published by Messrs. Cassell & Company. Miss Atteridge's story is very bright and is intended for the little ones, some of whom may remember it as it appeared in the pages of "*Little Folks*."

AMATEUR FREE UNIVERSITY.

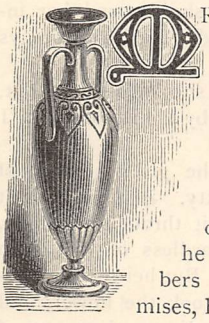
The Editor hopes to announce the award in the Domestic Course (October portion) next month. The MSS. in the Literary Course (Story Competition) are now under active consideration.

MR. TRENCH OF BRASENOSE.

THE ROMANCE OF A LONG VACATION.

By MARY L. ARMITT.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.



MR. TRENCH'S interference, in the alarming state of affairs that had so suddenly sprung up in the students' seclusion, was not without effect, if it was not altogether the effect he desired. The very next evening after the discussion, George Tindall carried out his expressed intention. When he had watched the younger members of the upstairs party off the premises, he sent up his card to Mrs. Langton, and went to beg her acceptance of the fish he had caught that afternoon. He took the step without consultation, and his companions were left downstairs.

Mr. Trench sat by one of the windows reading the newspapers that had just arrived. His immobile face was well marked against the light, and gained in shadow even greater impressiveness than usual. His was a countenance and presence that seemed to portray a powerful personality. His tall form, his regular features, the straight black brows that guarded dark and watchful eyes, the silent-looking mouth and jaw, adorned with a short, close-trimmed beard, made up a whole that was one of distinction, and which had seldom failed to make an impression.

Just now, his interest in the news seemed less keen than usual. He turned his paper for change of topic, shifted his position, and finally laid down the sheet and looked across at his companion.

"Really, Arthur," he said, "since George has persisted in making this call, I see no way but to back him up. I shall go upstairs and see Mrs. Langton. Will you come?"

Arthur was quite willing, though very much surprised at the proposition, and the two presented themselves at the door of the upstairs parlour, to beg for an introduction. The room within which they speedily found themselves was large and comfortable, and was enlivened by the many knicknacks that women love to gather round them. Bunches of wild flowers filled every available jar; sketching materials and half-finished sketches lay here and there, while a finished one was pinned against the wall; and a larch-bough, slung about a picture-cord, seemed to have lately served as a subject. But these details were not noticed so long as the occupants of the room demanded attention. George was found entering heart and soul into the task of ingratiating himself with two middle-aged ladies; and though he looked as if he might be glad of some help, he had already succeeded with one, at least. Mrs. Rogers—who was a widow like her friend, though she wore no widow's weeds—was beaming upon him; her red face was expressive of the highest good-humour, and as she turned to be presented to the tutor, her looks plainly said, "Now *that* is a nice young man."

But Mr. Trench made her only a stiff little bow. She was just the sort of stout person he detested: the personification of fussy, stupid middle age. He turned to Mrs. Langton, and on her invitation took a seat by her. Besides the exigencies of the case, she suited him better. Her manner was dignified and quiet, and matched the sadness that lurked in the controlled lines of her full-lipped mouth. That was the only feature of her fine face that could be called ugly. The straight outlines of nose and forehead seemed to betray pride; but her eyes, like her daughter Jean's, were frank and friendly. Her countenance altogether, uniting intelligence with reserve, pleased the tutor; for he was possibly near enough middle age himself to understand something of the beauty of an intellectual mind, chastened by the experiences of life, and tinged by the flavour that sweet and bitter years have left behind. And she, there was no doubt about it, in spite of George's charms, was relieved by his appearance on the scene.

"I am pleased to see you," she courteously and frankly said. "My daughters told me that they had met you last night. And I was quite concerned lest they had taken the boat which you had meant to use."

"Not at all," he replied, with a smile. "It is partly to apologise for our conduct that I have come up to-night. My young friends, George and Arthur Tindall, were so exceedingly anxious to row the young ladies, that I am afraid they were not particular enough in inquiring if they were wanted."

"Oh! as to that," she granted, with an answering smile, "I am sure my girls were very pleased to be rowed; and perhaps it is their fault to show when they are pleased. It is the fault of youth. You will know, Mr. Trench, how time teaches us to hide gladness as well as sorrow; but we cannot expect it in young people. We must wait till it comes. But I was all the more obliged to you," she went on, "for adding yourself to a party"—here she threw a quick and smiling glance at George, now absorbed with Mrs. Rogers—"in which I am sure high spirits and good humour would be more conspicuous than discretion."

As Mr. Trench made some trifling reply, he acknowledged to himself that Mrs. Langton had penetration, and viewed the matter apparently in the right light. Yet it was odd to hear his own sentiments more generously and gently echoed by this mature woman. The apology for her girls' indiscretion was nicely done; and her mention of his presence and the implied need for it betrayed a recognition of the dangers

of the situation, which offered some sort of surety for the future. Still, it implied that he was quite on the same platform as herself, and able to view the doings of the younger generation with the same calmness and toleration; and he did not know that he felt altogether like it. He was conscious of some latent irritation, whether in the permanent or momentary situation he was not sure. Of course, he was in charge of the boys, and had thought it proper to give them a lecture; but he was not so very old, after all. He thought he could appreciate the charm of a fresh, buoyant nature about as well as that young dog, George, who carried everything before him, and called forth the leniency of dignified and sensible mothers, even.

The subject, any way, had better be let alone now that they understood each other, and he allowed the conversation to drift into indifferent and impersonal channels. However, when a pause came, he had his eye fixed so markedly on the sketch pinned roughly against the wall, that Mrs. Langton felt obliged to speak of it, as he had meant.

"Ah!" she said, following his eye, "you are looking at my daughters' work scattered all about. They are very untidy, I'm afraid. But that little bit has just been done by Lillie, the youngest; and Jean has stuck it up, to gloat over it, she says, any spare minute. She is very fond of her sister's painting, and really loves to exaggerate her own pleasure in it, I believe. But Lillie indeed has the most talent of the three."

"It looks very good," Mr. Trench remarked, eyeing the water-colour more closely, though without rising. "Do they all paint, then—your daughters?"

"Yes, they all paint," she repeated lightly. She paused, and then went on in the clearer, prouder tone of intention: "It is fortunate, indeed, that they can paint; for since their father's death they have earned money by it. Maria is practically the cleverest; she sends all her designs to the Middleborough School of Needlework, and Lillie's flower pieces always find a ready market. However, we think landscape will be her real *forte;* and we were anxious this year to find a quiet spot for our summer out, that would afford her subjects."

Mr. Trench murmured something that sounded artificial and complimentary. He was trying to appear neither surprised nor interested. "And your other daughter," he added to the murmur—"what is her speciality?"

"Jean?" Mrs. Langton responded with an unconscious smile, breaking up the polite reserve of her face; "Jean can do almost anything, but nothing best. Certainly she is quicker at massing and grouping than either of her sisters; but she can never carry out her own ideas. They are too large, I am afraid; and she always ends by disappointing herself."

But here she was interrupted, for the door opened, and the Langton girls walked in, their faces glowing with fresh air and exercise. They were certainly surprised to find the three gentlemen in their parlour, being entertained by their mother and Mrs. Rogers. Though they greeted them with polite decorum, Maria, who saw them for the first time, put on the invincibly superior air she wore with strangers; Lillie was gravely and sweetly polite; and Jean, prominent as she ever was in the group, seemed disposed, beyond a friendly smile at George, to bestow very little attention upon them. When she had stopped in surprise to speak to them, she had been on her way to her mother; and now, after a pause, she pursued her intention. She carried in her hand a few lovely sprays of fresh forget-me-nots.

"See, mother," she said, as she held them out, "they grew in a nice damp nook by the stream, and I picked them for you."

It was a pretty action, as the girl's homage of thought to her mother was pretty. And perhaps it required some courage to carry it through naturally, in face of—or rather openly regardless of—the keen looks of the man who stood by. But her mother was not regardless, if Jean was; she took the flowers and laid them on one side, as if this little attention—one of many, perhaps—might have been dispensed with for the present. And she went on talking to the tutor, while Jean retreated to a distant chair. But Mr. Trench's eyes followed the girl as he mechanically replied, and he wondered how long this quiet and pensive mood of hers would last. Was it put on, or part of herself? or a cloke, perhaps, for her mother's eyes? Her mother certainly was undemonstrative, and possibly severe. However, he checked himself by considering that this call had better be concluded, if only for the boys' sake.

So the departure was made almost at once, and in a rather stiff fashion, in spite of the attempts at warmth and geniality on the part of the Tindalls and Mrs. Rogers. And the girls came to understand that their mother was not altogether pleased with the circumstances that had led up to this occurrence. She said little, however. It was Maria who insisted on the ridiculous youthfulness of "those boys" and the pedantic manner of their tutor; while Mrs. Rogers declared that Mr. Trench was the most disagreeable man she had ever met.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

IT was on a lovely day early in July that a waggonette and pair of horses drew up before the solitary lodging-house of Tyn-y-bran. George Tindall drove it up from the hotel, where he had superintended the harnessing; and Mr. Trench and Arthur stood waiting in the garden. The landlady and the maid then came out, with great baskets of provisions; and next a message was sent to the ladies upstairs to tell them everything was ready. A joint excursion to Llyn Lyder, one of the grandest points of scenery in the neighbourhood, and which none of the visitors to Plas Tan-y-craig had yet seen, had been decided upon. It was George who had suggested it; and after he had artfully gained Mrs. Langton's consent, it was he who had arranged it all. He had, indeed, been having for some days what he considered a very slow time. That call, which he had

meant should promote general goodwill between the two parties staying in the same house, seemed to have had a slightly opposite effect; for there is, perhaps, though he did not know it, nothing more deadening to the spirit of friendship than to establish it formally on a ceremonious basis. He had had several opportunities, certainly, for conversing with the party of ladies; he had once even been lucky enough to encounter and escort home its younger members; but how to enjoy intercourse with them without the constant and watchful intervention of their mother and Mr. Trench, had become a question to be considered. However, this time he had taken bold measures for his own enjoyment, which he believed had been ruthlessly balked, and he waited for the ladies, when he drew up his horses and jumped down at the gate, with pleasurable anticipation. The two younger ones did not appear immediately, and the rest exchanged greetings in the garden, congratulating each other on the fineness of the day, and displaying either subdued high spirits or a gracious willingness to be pleased. George kept on the outskirts of the group, manifestly waiting, and then Mrs. Langton said, "Maria, see what the girls are doing. We are waiting for them."

"It will be Jean, I know, who is not ready," the elder sister carelessly remarked; "and Lillie will be staying behind with her."

It seemed to have been so; for when the girls came running downstairs a few minutes later, Jean exclaimed, "I am so sorry, mother, but the right gloves would not turn up. I wanted the boating ones, in case we went on the lake."

Then she greeted the gentlemen with a joyous ease that was pleasant to behold. George came last, with outstretched hand, and pleasure shining in his eyes.

"Come," he said, making his way through the gate with her before the rest, "and look at the horses. Wretched beasts they are, but the best I could get."

"Oh!" answered Jean, patting the shiny coat of the one next to her, "I think they are very good horses. They seem fresh, at all events."

"I am going to drive," George remarked, "and you will sit in front with me."

"That will be very nice. Mother," she said, as she moved back towards the main group, "I would like to sit in front, if no one else wants the seat."

"There is room for three, is there not?" asked Mrs. Langton, who was now following Mrs. Rogers into the inside of the conveyance. "Perhaps Lillie will join you."

But the third place on the box seemed a post not greatly wished for. Lillie, in spite of her mother's suggestion, quietly got into the carriage, and Arthur followed her. George turned his head round when he had the reins in his hands, and airily asked Mr. Trench if he would come up there.

"Thank you, no," answered the tutor, who had been valiantly assisting the middle-aged ladies; "I think I prefer the interior."

"Maria, you come," begged Jean; and wise Maria, who was troubled by no particular predilections, and liked a good view of the scenery, went to the front.

It was a delightful drive, to Jean and George at least, with the fast-trotting horses before them, the fresh wind blowing in their faces, and with the laughter and talk of pleasant companionship to beguile the way. It seemed to Mr. Trench, as the sound of their mirth was wafted back into the carriage, that most of the enjoyment of the party was to the front. He modified his opinion a little when he looked at Arthur's strong face and Lillie's sweet, placid one, though neither of them had much to say; and also he was bound to admit, an exception must be made to garrulous Mrs. Rogers, who, being short of a listener, was at this moment pouring forth on him a flood of delighted small talk. But, for himself, he found the process hot and wearisome; and he did not think Mrs. Langton was much more than tolerant of the circumstances.

Jean, meanwhile, had taken a backward survey of them.

"Oh, look!" she whispered mischievously to George, "Mr. Trench is bored to death. Mrs. Rogers is talking to him."

George laughed in the cruel fashion that is peculiar to youth when regarding the miseries of maturer years. "Serve him right!" he remarked. "He ought to have a bad time now and then, to let him know what it feels like. And he might cut Arthur out with Miss Lillie."

"How fast you make the horses go!" Jean said, as she admired her Jehu's skill in driving.

"Not half so fast as I would like. Yet that's a mistake, for I don't want to get to the end. I would like to drive you all day."

This was all very well, Jean thought, but she was not sure that the sentiment was not a little too outspoken even for her. But the end, as far as the driving was concerned, came before long. At a point where a mountain torrent fell into the main valley, which so far had been followed, the conveyance was left at an adjacent farmstead. The party then proceeded to climb the path by the side of the torrent. This led to a cottage, in the neighbourhood of which lunch was to be eaten, in the hopes that it could furnish such necessities as they might be short of. A boy from the farm below was procured to carry the luncheon baskets up the short distance; but he could not manage them all, so the men of the party had to help. The girls were anxious to help too, and there was a good deal of laughter and fun over their obstinate efforts to get a share of the load. Maria really did carry a bundle of knives and forks that she extracted from one of the baskets; Lillie was wisely allowed by Arthur to grasp one handle of his basket, of which, however, he took care to bear the weight; and Jean hovered around them all like a sprite, pretending to pilfer from behind, since no one would give her a share; and at last, by way of revenge, retreating to the side of the farm-boy, and carrying part of his burden. George only laughed, but Mr. Trench with a determined air moved after her as if to interfere. Mrs. Langton noticed it, and checked him with a smile.

"Leave her alone, Mr. Trench," she advised. "Jean

is a very wilful girl; and it is as well to let her tire herself with her load."

Fortunately the climb, though steep, was a short one. Mrs. Rogers, red and panting, sank upon a seat outside the cottage, and declared she could not have gone a step further, even for her lunch. The young people spread their meal on a flat grassy plateau they found by the stream, and placed the bottles to cool in its foaming waters. There, with the wild and barren mountains about them, they ate and drank and were merry, and lingered chatting when the meal was over, in the scattered groups in which they had settled. Arthur was telling in an undertone—for he never spoke for an audience—of the superb sunshine of Australia, of its birds and plants; Mr. Trench was regaling the ladies with anecdotes of the Oxford boating, in which great interest was professed; and Jean and George, a little apart, were exchanging glances and whispered words. Jean, though her replies were kind to the young man who lounged on the grass near her, was restless; she seemed abnormally conscious of possible criticism; and there was an exaggeration in her words and gestures that betokened an uneasy mind. She was not quite satisfied with the situation. George sympathetically felt that her mood was changed, and after looking round to see that they were not observed, he leaned forward, and said, with the gentlest note she had yet heard in his voice—

"Come up to the tarn with me, Jean."

It was the first time he had used her Christian name alone, and they both knew it. The girl threw back her head with something like a haughty gesture, and answered—

"We will wait till the rest go, if you please."

George felt suddenly in disgrace, and plucked silently and savagely at the little blades of grass below his hand. Jean was conscious for the first time that she was playing with edged tools—that she might be running a risk where she had imagined herself secure. It occurred to her now that the young man to whom she had so frankly extended the hand of friendship, and with whom it pleased her to make great demonstrations of it, might not view the matter in quite the same light as herself; that he might not be aware, for instance, of the exact position of those barriers of maidenly pride that, in spite of her girlish freedom, hedged her in. And if he thoughtlessly stepped beyond them, where would be their comradeship, so pleasant and so sincere? where would be the sport in laughing to derision, by action and proof, a foolish fear, an insulting suspicion? If George were not to be depended upon, the situation might present difficulties she had not anticipated.

With these thoughts disturbing her mind, it occurred to her that it might be best, when a general start was made, to seek refuge with Maria, and so avoid George. But she dismissed this idea as cowardly, and George, who felt he did not wholly understand her, and was wishful to make up their little difference, began to give her an exclusive and quiet attention, that was more significant than the laughter and ease of their former intercourse.

It was a diminished party that set forth to find Llyn Lyder, for the two elderly ladies decided that they had already done sufficient climbing for that day. Mrs. Langton, however, seemed reluctant to part with the rest.

"Be sure you are not late at the farm," she enjoined. "Do you think there is time, Maria, to get up to that waterfall above the tarn that you want to see?"

"Oh, lots of time, mother. And we have no train to catch."

"Well, then, you might as well go, I suppose. I rely upon Mr. Trench to see that you do not get into dangerous places."

"Quite right, Mrs. Langton," he assented. "I will take charge of the party, and be responsible."

"Thank you; then I shall feel easy," the mother smilingly yet markedly said.

Jean looked across at her elder sister with a whimsical glance, as much as to say, "Fancy Maria being taken charge of by a man!" But no one detected her amusement except George, and his instant eye-response drew them together again with a sense of pleasant communion.

When the little party reached the tarn, which was at no great height, a pause was made. As they stood to admire, before turning their steps along its margin, Maria said she would like to devote a few minutes to taking a hasty pencil sketch of the outlines. They all agreed that a short rest would be pleasant, as the climb had been steep; and when Maria turned a little out of the path and round a rocky knoll to gain a better view, they followed her, and seated themselves about.

The scene was impressive enough. The little lake, even in this cheerful summer sunshine, lay black and desolate-looking in its basin. On two sides it was shut in by lofty precipices, whose height and abruptness hid the slopes of the great mountains behind. The rill that fed it, which they were to reach, fell over steep rocks; the lower part of its course was hidden from their point of view, but some distance above, its descent was plainly visible in short foaming cascades, and the one huge waterfall it was their object to visit. Perhaps the grandeur of the prospect was not fully appreciated by the little band of people now seated within the gloomy recess. Except Maria, they were all more or less pre-occupied; and were thinking too much about themselves and each other to be truly receptive in mood. Jean, though she looked at the rocks and the tumbling stream in the distance, seemed to be absorbed in minor considerations.

"Oh dear!" she sighed, "what a pull it will be! And I have left my stick behind me. How I wish I had got it!"

"Where did you leave it?" asked George; "at the cottage?"

"Yes."

"Then I will go down and bring it. I shall be back before Miss Maria is ready."

This little dialogue was listened to by the company with some surprise. It occurred to Mr. Trench that Jean's wish, though apparently uttered with careless-

ness, was the result of intention; and that this unnecessary errand was dictated simply by caprice.

"Will you use my stick for the rest of the way, Miss Jean?" he proposed, with an unmistakable air of severity.

thought nothing at all of retracing their path on even a slight pretext. But to Mr. Trench it seemed odd that Jean should wilfully banish George from her side, as she appeared to have done. He was convinced she had meant him to go for her stick; and what was

"JEAN AND GEORGE WERE EXCHANGING GLANCES AND WHISPERED WORDS" (*p.* 68).

"Oh dear, no; thank you," she politely and chillingly replied. "I can do without any; Mr. George need not go."

But already the athletic and cheery George had turned to the descent. Arthur called after him to bring the field-glass, and then, not seeming to be heard, followed his brother, and disappeared likewise down the path. It was not, in fact, more than a step for either of these robust and hardy youths, and they

her purpose? He looked across at her with an involuntary and penetrating glance. Jean's colour rose under it; she turned aside her head, and plucked a bit of wild thyme that grew on the rock beside her, and pressed it between her ungloved hands to make it yield its scent.

"How long you are, Maria, with your sketch!" she then remarked, with some impatience. "Come, Lillie, let us stroll along the lake till she finishes."

Lillie obeyed her, and they too rose, walked round the knoll, and disappeared.

Mr. Trench and Maria were now left alone. She continued her sketch, while he took from his pocket a paper he had brought with him, and, not wishing to appear unsociable, detailed to her such items of news as he thought might interest her. In this way a considerable time passed without observation; but at last, when the voice beside her had been some minutes silent, Maria remarked, "The Tindalls are a long time in returning."

"But your sisters are not here, either," Mr. Trench replied in level tones.

"No; but they are somewhere just out of sight, I expect. We could soon call them."

And again they relapsed into silence. Maria was interested in her sketch; she supposed her companion was interested in his paper, since he betrayed no signs of impatience, and did not seem anxious to look out for the missing members of their party. Still, when some time longer had elapsed, she thought it necessary to speak.

"How long they are!" she said. "My sketch has long since passed the point I meant to carry it to. I am only going on with it while we wait for the rest."

"You might as well go on," he answered her, "for we cannot start without them."

But Maria's impatience grew, if Mr. Trench's did not. In a few minutes more she laid her pencil down. "I should not like to wait much longer," she said, with the air of a woman who knows her own mind.

"But we have no control over that," he philosophically remarked.

"If they are not here directly we shall not have time to reach the waterfall," she said.

The man beside her remained, to all appearances, perfectly cool. "I shall have to tell you, Miss Langton, that I think they don't mean to return. George and Arthur have had time to make the distance to the cottage four times over."

"But there are the girls," Maria cried, in sudden consternation.

"Yes, there are your sisters," he repeated; but he looked down, and added nothing more.

There was a moment's pause, and then Maria said in a practical voice, "Well, if you think they are not coming back, it is not any use waiting for them. We might as well go on."

But the tutor, it seemed, had a mind of his own in the matter, after all. "I think not," he answered. "I am sorry indeed if you should have to give up the expedition, but I at least must stay here. It was a tacit understanding, though it was not spoken, that they re-assembled here for the start. I shall remain here until the others appear."

Maria apparently had not quite the same notion; she thought that if the other members of their party had broken or misunderstood the agreement, it was no use their adhering to it to their own detriment. But she saw that her companion was determined, and she began to suspect that there was repressed feeling below his apparent coolness. So again they waited: she in silent impatience, and he in motionless quietude on the grass. All at once, without changing the direction of his eyes, he exclaimed, "Ah! there they are."

"Where?" cried Maria, who saw no moving object near, and who was short-sighted.

"There, up by the waterfall, close to it. They have come into sight just above the spot where the stream disappears from view. Four small figures, climbing upward."

"Four?" asked Maria. "Are the girls there too?"

"Decidedly."

"Oh, this is too bad! Let us go after them at once."

But again she was checked. "Excuse me," the tutor said, "but I should prefer not. What is the use of following them, since they have chosen to go alone? You would, besides, be greatly hurried, and in the end be much later than the time we fixed with Mrs. Langton. Indeed, we might as well go down at once, since we now know where they are."

Maria turned to look at him; she was certain now that it was displeasure that was gleaming under his drawn brows. The conviction helped her to moderate her own feelings, and she adjusted her thoughts to a less personal direction.

"No," she objected. "If it is no use following them, I shall remain here, or rather on the path they must pass, which we have unfortunately been out of sight of. We have been abominably used, but I must wait for my sisters."

"I don't see the necessity, when they have purposely evaded you."

Maria's colour rose. "Not purposely," she said; "you are mistaken about that. There has been some misunderstanding, that is all." (Her manner compelled Mr. Trench to acknowledge that she was sure of her sisters' honesty, at all events.) "And until that misunderstanding has been explained," she went on, "I shall not go down to my mother."

"You will leave her to infer that your sisters and the Tindalls have been in our company all the afternoon?"

The suggestion was not pleasant to Maria. "Everything that has happened will be told to my mother," she said, with a certain clearness of purpose that he could not but admire. "But, first, I must understand it myself. Therefore, if you please, we will wait."

She moved round the knoll in sight of the path, and he followed her in silence.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

IT was nearly an hour later when the wanderers got down to the spot where the two silently awaited them. The magnetism of looks is surprisingly rapid in its workings; or possibly there is a consciousness mysteriously communicated before looks are given or taken. There was tacit reproof in the attitude of the waiters; there was tacit guilt in the haste of the oncomers. They did not appear so happy as wrong-

doers, as a rule, show themselves to be. Lillie, oddly enough, was walking in front with George, trying to keep up a blithe conversation, in face of his evident taciturnity; while Jean, grave and disturbed, kept behind with Arthur.

It was the youngest sister who was the first to break the silence of what threatened to be an awkward situation.

"Oh, Maria!" she exclaimed, as she came near, "why did you not come on? We have been the whole way."

"How could we come on, when we had to wait here for you?" her sister replied, with a little natural irritation.

"But did you not understand? Jean and I strolled on, expecting you to follow."

"You did not say so. We waited for you and the Tindalls until we saw you up by the waterfall, and then it was too late to follow."

Lillie looked genuinely distressed. Whoever had been the arranger of this little scheme, she at least had been an innocent participator in it. "Oh, I am so sorry!" she helplessly ejaculated.

"Well, George," Mr. Trench remarked, turning his eyes from her, and speaking for the first time, "I hope you have enjoyed your expedition. You have effectually deprived Miss Maria of hers."

It was strange; but George, too, seemed rather crestfallen, considering that he had had the pleasure he planned; there were no signs of concealed triumph about him. He now endeavoured to make honourable amends. "I am awfully sorry, Miss Maria," he said; "it was a stupid blunder from beginning to end."

"But how did you come to make it?" his tutor asked sharply.

"Easily enough. When Arthur and I got back near the lake, we saw Miss Jean and Miss Lillie beginning to climb the stream. We thought you had all agreed to go on, so we struck across after them, without going round to where we had left you."

So George, too, was innocent of connivance. He had not previously arranged to go back on a made errand in order, by a détour, to reach the younger girls alone. Jean solely was responsible for what had happened, it seemed; and it was she who failed to come forward now with apology or excuse. She had not yet spoken, but stood where she had first joined the group, a little apart. Maria seemingly was satisfied with Lillie's explanation, as she demanded none from Jean; but Mr. Trench, conscious of rising irritation, kept his eyes studiously from the direction in which his thoughts were busy.

There was a strained sense in the situation that all were aware of, though some of them were in doubt about its origin. Maria proposed that they should begin the descent; Lillie, amiable and sympathetic, tried to end it more effectually by pouring oil on the troubled waters. She stepped nearer to the tutor, and spoke gently—

"Mr. Trench, I think we ought to apologise to you—Jean and I. We have spoilt your pleasure, too."

But he, conscious of Jean standing silently behind her, not attempting to join in with her expressed sorrow, answered her in a cutting tone, that was meant to reach further than her ears, "Don't trouble to mention it, pray. So long as your sister was able to carry out her intentions, we must all rest satisfied."

Lillie fell back discomfited, and the party commenced the descent. But she kept near Jean, and spoke to her whisperingly on the first opportunity.

"Jean, I am certain Mr. Trench is very angry."

"Then let him be angry," Jean answered defiantly; but her voice was not perfectly steady.

"Hadn't you better tell him you are sorry? I do believe he thinks you did it on purpose."

"He is at perfect liberty to think what he likes. He is always suspecting people of horrid motives, and I, for one, am not going to bow down before him, and humbly enlighten him."

The stormy nature of Jean's speech, and her looks, surprised Lillie; but she felt it only fair to say, before she passed on down the path—Arthur was obviously waiting a little below—

"Ah, well, it must have been very provoking, being left behind with Maria."

Jean, indeed, was having a bad time of it. She was perfectly aware of having seemed to do what she had not meant in this instance, though it was very like what she had meant, and even designed, on previous occasions. If Mr. Trench suspected her of an attempt to get George's society without the restriction of his own presence, was it not, after all, what she had encouraged him to think? what she had avowedly desired him to think? In this case, when accident had favoured the illusion she wished to foster, why was she not pleased and satisfied? Why, when she had sought to rid herself of George for awhile, and he and Arthur had appeared, to her surprise, without the others, had she felt so dismayed, so trapped? She had declared there and then that they must go back, and she would have done so but for the united remonstrances of the rest, who asserted that they were now close to the waterfall, and they might as well see it. It was really of no consequence that Mr. Trench should understand how it all happened; he had better please himself with any fabrication he liked to invent.

Jean pursued her own thoughts, disagreeable though they were, and she was able, as the foot-path was narrow, to keep to her own society. She even crossed the little brawling stream with which the path kept company, on pretence of reaching a fern, in order to escape from the rest; and she followed it a little way on the other side. She noticed that Mr. Trench was now in the rear of the descending party, but he seemed not to have noticed her. When she stopped, however, to re-cross the running water, and found that it was not easy at this point, he turned.

"Ah! don't give yourself a splashing for the sake of refusing my help," he called to her, as he saw her evident desire to be over before he could reach her. She waited then; and he came towards her with the feeling that his opportunity had come, if he liked to use it, and he felt very much inclined that way. It is not

"'SEE WHERE HE COMES SAILING AND SINGING TO HIS HALF-WAY HOUSE'" (*p.* 73).

comfortable to suppress all signs of one's wrath; and it is comparatively pleasant to inflict it on the object who has aroused it.

"It is unfortunate that George is not at hand," he remarked, as he approached her. "Oddly enough, he is somewhere to the front, where, no doubt, you have instructed him to be."

The shaft told; the painful red quivered for a second in Jean's face, that was before pale and disturbed. He held out his hand, and after a moment's hesitation she put hers into it, and sprang across. She seemed only anxious now to move down the path again, without look or speech. Yet, as she passed him she lifted her eyes, and then, with a sudden resolve, she stood still.

"Mr. Trench," she began, in rather hesitating accents, "an apology or explanation offered to some one else often seems only an insult to oneself. But I have put myself in the wrong, and I will make it."

"Pray don't trouble," he observed, in a cool, provoking tone.

But Jean went on regardlessly—

"I am sorry for what happened—that Maria and you were left behind. Perhaps it was my fault, but I did not mean it."

"You did not mean to leave us, I suppose?" incisively.

"I expected you to follow."

"And you did not send George down on an improvised errand?"

Jean felt hard pressed. "Oh, yes, I will tell you, I did; I wanted him to go. But don't you see that I expected him and Arthur to come on with you, when we should have got the start?"

Jean had been standing with eyes down-dropped, restrained, though eager, in attitude and speech. Now, in face of a moment's pause without an answer, she glanced up, and met again the searching gaze from the dark, angry eyes of the tutor. A swift red came into her face, and her own eyes lighted up as if in answer to a challenge.

"Ah, you don't believe me!" she cried. "Don't say another word, please: I understand." And she turned in haste to the path.

"Stay," he said in a quick voice, "now you are misunderstanding me. I do believe you. But look this way. I could believe anything you told me if you looked straight at me as you said it. If I hesitated now, it was only that I didn't comprehend that part of the transaction to which you have confessed intention. It seems so very unlikely."

"That is not your affair," said Jean, restrained again.

"I suppose not. And I must not ask more?"

"No."

"I must be content with what you have told me; and I am to suppose that you mean it to be open warfare, not secret, between us; that you mean to take no unfair advantage of your enemy in the tactics you pursue?"

A little of the old gaiety began to creep about the corners of Jean's mouth, but she again answered with a monosyllable—

"Yes."

"It is to be warfare, however?"

Once more her head went up in the old defiant gesture; the old spirit looked out from her eyes.

"Do you think anything else is likely, or appropriate, between you and me?" she asked, in a fine, expressive tone.

"Ah, well!" he said, and he followed her down the path, which she had instantly turned to as if to prevent further speech.

It was annoying to Arthur, who was a little distance before with Lillie, that they came on when they did. He had just checked his companion with the delight of a young naturalist.

"Look, Miss Lillie, at the tree-pipit. See where he comes sailing and singing to his half-way house, the wych-elm that leans across the stream."

"His half-way house to what?" Lillie inquired.

"To the little home he has built somewhere in that bank where you see the wild thyme flowering. Do you know, he seems to me the most lover-like bird of England in his song? He woos his mate with a perpetual cry of 'Sweet, sweet.'"

It was something in the look of Arthur's brown eyes, rather than his speech, that made Lillie's cheeks rosy. Being vexed with herself, she made a mental assertion that this "boy" was becoming ridiculous.

"I don't think it says 'Sweet,'" she remarked with a prim air—for now the bird was dropping again through the air with spread wing and open throat—"The note is something like 'Itz,' or 'Switz.'"

But Arthur only laughed at her.

"Now, don't pretend you have no imagination," he said. "I know you have, when you do such lovely sketches. Oh! here are Mr. Trench and Miss Jean. What do you think, sir, the tree-pipit says? We are trying to make out."

Though both the tutor and Jean offered suggestions, they neither of them made Arthur's, and he did not reveal it to a larger company.

So in friendly discourse about the notes of birds, and the words and phrases into which they have been distorted, the descent was finished. And when the little party came upon George and Maria, who had reached the bottom before them, the account these two were giving to the waiting *chaperons* of the afternoon's proceedings seemed unnecessarily gloomy.

"We have had a chapter of accidents," Mr. Trench concluded the matter by saying, "by which Miss Maria and I have been spared a tedious climb, and she has been enabled to make a charming sketch."

And after that they drove home.

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

SEEING, READING, AND THINKING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY, THOUGH MARRIED."

WHAT is the relative value of seeing, reading, and thinking as sources of education? Every man who is not absolutely blind thinks that he can see, and yet it is difficult to find a true seer, or one who can and who does use his eyes.

"The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness." In this respect, at least, people are "mostly fools"; but some are more foolish than others, making the tour of Europe, as Dr. Johnson said, and seeing less than others who have only travelled in the Hampstead coach. We meet globe-trotters who must have blindfolded their eyes before setting out on their travels, or they never could have gone so far and seen so little.

Nurses frequently remark that a child "takes great notice." There is no better test of intellectual capacity. Nothing pleases a clever child so much as picking up new flowers, watching new insects, and collecting pebbles and shells. This delightful exercise of the powers of observation should in all ways be encour-

aged. Parents and teachers should by their sympathy lead children on to an exhaustive examination of the things they pick up in their daily walks, making it their ambition to say respecting everything they find all that can be said.

"Look at that beautiful flower. Notice the colour, number, and form of the petals, and the shape of the stalks and leaves."

In this way Charles Kingsley taught his children, or, rather, made them teach themselves. One of his guests was surprised when his little girl ran to him, exclaiming, "Oh, daddy, look at this delightful worm!"

There is no insect that may not give delight if we allow it to draw out our powers of observation. Many of us now regret that when young the fable of "Eyes and No Eyes" was not instilled into us. There is no greater mistake than to allow the powers of observation to fall into atrophy from want of use. "The world's no blank" to him who goes through life with the seeing eye, but it *is* a blank to him who, having eyes, sees not

> "The beauty, and the wonder, and the power;
> The shape of things, their colours, lights and shades;
> Changes, surprises."

In every business and profession powers of observation are required. The physician has only a few moments for making a diagnosis, and it depends upon the way he uses his eyes whether it is or is not a correct one.

A friend of mine, a medical student, was so convinced of the necessity of cultivating the power of rapid observation, that when in our college days we went for walks, he used to train himself by taking in at a glance the things in the windows of the shops we passed, and then telling me all he saw. A general, if he cannot observe rapidly and correctly, may give a command that may cause the death of thousands of his own men.

Every advantage in this world has a corresponding disadvantage, and one of the disadvantages attending the fact that in these days every one can read is that people now see things through the eyes of writers rather than through their own eyes.

The discovery that the present age is more addicted to a cursory use of the eyes of the body as well as of the eyes of the mind, is only one more proof of the evils latent even in the most carefully acquired progress. Before printing was invented and cheapened, the perceptions of mankind were kept bright by the difficulty of obtaining information. Few are the civilised men who can detect the slight changes in the objects around them with the unerring instinct of the old American Indians.

We allow our powers of observation to grow weak by not using them; and this is why the Arab can tell the number of approaching horsemen, where a modern Englishman barely sees a speck on the horizon. Those whom we call savages can find a road by remarking the bent twig and other indications, while we require to have sign-posts, with the way printed on them.

Never did a man go so near destroying the intellect of his son as the arrogant, unreasonable, imperious, and much over-rated man, the great Earl of Chatham, as he is called. "Courage, my son," said he, in one of his letters, when the poor lad was complaining of the enormous variety of topics urged on his attention: "Courage, my boy; remember there is only the Cyclopædia to learn."

Our young people, having to cram from cyclopædias for competition in omniscient smattering, have neither time nor inclination to see men and things for themselves. They only look at them through books—that is, through the eyes of other people.

> "We are slow, very slow, in discerning
> That book-lore and wisdom are twain."

The limited idea of education which confines it to knowledge gained from books is far too common, and it is high time that we should recognise the truth that the function of books is supplementary, and that they form an indirect rather than a direct means to knowledge—a means of seeing through other men what we cannot see ourselves.

Southey tells us that, in his walk one stormy day, he met an old woman, to whom, by way of greeting, he made the remark that it was dreadful weather. She answered philosophically that, in her opinion, "*any* weather was better than none!"

Some may think that any reading is better than none, but we cannot agree with them. When reading is substituted for thinking, it injures rather than benefits the mind.

A famous leader of thought was once questioned as to the literature he preferred. "I do not now read," said the philosopher; "I only think;" and the remark, properly comprehended, contains the expression of a great truth in mental science.

As it is not what we eat, but what we digest, that nourishes us, so it is not the amount we read, but the way it is read, that is of importance. "We are," says Locke, "of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections (of readings); unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment." The use of reading is to aid us in thinking, and not to be a mere passive amusement. When it is desultory, it does harm by relaxing the power of attention, which of all our faculties most needs care.

Good readers are not common. A good reader is one who knows how to use books. He always reads with a purpose, re-reading special passages, and marking them so that he can easily refer to what he wants; "as a soldier can seize the weapons he needs in an armoury, or a housewife bring the spice she needs from her store."

Coleridge's classification of the various kinds of readers shows us the sort of reading that is useless or injurious, and the only sort that really educates the mind. He said that some readers are like jelly-bags—they retain only what is impure and refuse. Another class he typified by a sponge: these are they whose minds suck all up, and give it back again, only a little dirtier. Others, again, he likened to an hour-glass,

and their reading to the sand which runs in and out, and leaves no trace behind. Others are the good readers, and these he compares to the slave in the Golconda mines, who retains the gold and the gem, and casts aside the dust and the dross.

In these days of book-making, every one who cares for the health and development of his mind should acquire the art of skipping—that is, the art of noting and shunning that which is bad, or frivolous, or misleading, or unsuitable to one's individual tastes and needs. It is of paramount importance to acquire the art *not* to read, for, as one modern writer says, "Every book that we take up without a purpose, is an opportunity lost of taking up a book with a purpose; every bit of stray information which we cram into our heads without any sense of its importance, is for the most part a bit of the most useful information driven out of our heads and choked off from our minds."

We conclude with some of James Russell Lowell's words of humorous wisdom on the subject :—

"We are apt to wonder at the scholarship of the men of three centuries ago, and at a certain dignity of phrase that characterises them. They were scholars, because they did not read so many things as we. They had fewer books, but these were of the best. Their speech was noble, because they lunched with Plutarch and supped with Plato. We spend as much time over print as they did; but, instead of communing with the choice thoughts of choice spirits, and unconsciously acquiring the grand manner of that supreme society, we diligently inform ourselves, and cover the continent with a network of speaking wires, to inform us of such inspiring facts as that a horse belonging to Mr. Smith ran away on Wednesday, seriously damaging a valuable carryall; that a son of Mr. Brown swallowed a hickory-nut on Thursday; and that a gravel bank caved in and buried Mr. Robinson alive on Friday. Alas! it is we ourselves that are getting buried alive under this avalanche of earthly impertinences! It is we who, while we might, each in his humble way, be helping our fellows into the right path, or adding one block to the climbing spire of a fine soul, are willing to become mere sponges, saturated from the stagnant goose-pond of village gossip."

PHYSICAL TRAINING FOR GIRLS.

BY BARBARA FOXLEY, FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF NEWNHAM COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

WHEN Elizabeth Bennet walked a few miles along a country road to visit her sick sister, the gentlemen thought it an extraordinary instance of sisterly affection, while the ladies hardly concealed their opinion that her conduct was eccentric, if not indelicate. Few people now-a-days would blame the conduct of Miss Austen's charming heroine, even though it resulted in a heightened colour and muddy petticoats. But the physical training of our girls is often sadly neglected. I wish to-day to give a few hints on this subject to parents and teachers. We may classify it, for convenience sake, under the heads of Formal Training or Drill, and Informal Training or Games.

I. *Drill.*—Most teachers would include some drill exercises in their scheme of work for their pupils; but this drill is very often imperfect in method and deficient in quantity. There are two characteristics of a good method: first, it must be adapted to those for whom it is intended; and secondly, it must give, as far as possible, a systematic progressive training, not merely to one set of muscles, but to the whole body.

To many persons Drill suggests the drill-sergeant. It is not for me to criticise the bearing of the British soldier, yet I must say that the stiffness and angularity of military deportment do not come up to my ideal of *feminine* grace and beauty. Neither can I think it desirable to entrust any portion of a girl's education to an illiterate, and possibly vulgar, man. But there are other objections to military drill for girls: it does not fulfil the conditions I laid down as essential to a good method of training. It is a system intended, not to develop the muscles of a growing girl, but to turn the raw recruit into the smart soldier. The exercises are too violent for our purpose, and they do not even profess to give anything like a complete or progressive training.

At the other extreme lie the calisthenics of the dancing school. Very pretty they are, and useful in their own way. I may mention specially the graceful Spanish exercises in use in many schools, which are very helpful in cultivating grace and elegance; but all such exercises need to be supplemented by something more systematic and more complete.

Yet another way of supplying the demand for physical training is to go to a boys' gymnasium, and order a similar set of apparatus for the girls. Now, all apparatus needs very careful using if it is to be really helpful, and many of the feats which come quite easily to a boy, accustomed to live an active life, are absolutely dangerous for his sisters; besides this, the initial expense and the large space required make this method very often impracticable.

But is there no system of drill at once practicable and scientific? There are various methods, prepared

by men of undoubted scientific knowledge, and tested by experience. Among these, Ling's Free Exercises take the first place. They are no new thing; their Swedish inventor died in 1839, and since then they have gradually made their way on the Continent and

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in this country. The system is a very simple one; it can be mastered by any person in sound health who will give a little attentive study to it. Dr. Roth's small book on this system, "Gymnastic Exercises without Apparatus," contains enough for some years of school work. The exercises are arranged in tables for class practice, and there are diagrams with full explanations, and warnings as to faults to be avoided. With this, or some similar manual, any teacher could sufficiently master the system to practise it with her girls.

As to the time which should be devoted to this subject, I can lay down no fixed rules; it must necessarily depend on the circumstances of each case. But I would suggest that some time, however short, should be given to it every day. Constant practice is most essential, and even ten minutes a day is enough, if well used, to produce very good results; and the teacher will find this daily practice much more satisfactory than a longer lesson given once or twice a week.

Such a system as this is well calculated to develop and strengthen the muscles. But in girls we look for grace and elegance, as well as strength; for this purpose the Swedish drill should be supplemented by musical drill. The earlier tables of exercises in Dr. Roth's book can be advantageously practised to music, and to these may be added the Spanish exercises alluded to above. The music should be strongly marked in rhythm, and of a lively character. Singing, too, may be introduced in marching, &c. Such lessons can hardly fail to be interesting, and I would specially commend them to teachers for use on wet days, when outdoor exercise is impossible; their effect on spirits and temper, both of pupils and governess, will be found quite magical. Doctors tell us that such drill is one of the best remedies in many of the nervous disorders of children. It will be found, too, a help in the teaching of music, training the ear and cultivating the perception of rhythmic form.

II. *Games.*—The importance of play, as a factor in girls' education, is often overlooked. I do not wish to see games becoming the chief object in the life of our girls, but I do wish for more variety and activity in the play-hours. In some schools cricket and football have been introduced without the girls becoming rough or hoydenish, and I have never heard of any accident occurring in such games. But whether or not we introduce these particular games, we must give our girls something to encourage that accuracy of eye and precision of hand which we observe in their brothers. Tennis, battledore and shuttlecock, the old-fashioned "Les Graces," played with small hoops flung from sticks, the American bean-bags, rounders and the countless ball games, skipping, swinging—there is no real lack of variety if only we will avail ourselves of it. If the teacher will set the example of joining in games, and will take an active part in their organisation, she will generally find her pupils ready to second her; they will soon get over the notion that it is either childish or unladylike to play, and they will come, in time, to take as keen a delight in active exercise as their brothers do.

DUMB-BELL DRILL.

Finally, let me plead for good easy clothing for our girls. It should be warm enough, but light and loosely fitting. Tight stays and high heels should be ruthlessly excluded from the schoolroom, and flounces and furbelows discouraged as far as possible. Our girls should be stimulated to feel a pleasure and a pride in the exercise of bodily strength and skill, instead of being mere bookworms or mere fine ladies.

The gain both to health and to character which such a changed ideal implies is so great, that I am sure neither parents nor teachers will regret the time and attention which they may bestow on the physical training of their girls.

THE CHARITY COMMISSION: ITS ORIGIN AND WORK.

BY GEORGE HOWELL, M.P.—SECOND PAPER.

THE Charity Commission, as at present constituted, was created by the Charitable Trusts Act, the 16 and 17 Vict., c. 137 (dated August 20th, 1853). All former Commissions had been Commissions of Inquiry only; by the Act of 1853 the Charity Commission became an Administrative body, as well as a Commission empowered to Inquire. Previously to the creation of the present Charity Commission, it had been established by the decisions and practice of Courts of Equity that (*a*) Charities were entitled to special facilities of access to such Courts, through the medium of the Attorney-General, and otherwise; (*b*) No dealings with the *corpus* of Charity property could safely and advantageously be made without the approval of the Court; (*c*) No steps could be taken to facilitate the improved administration of Charities, other than those which might have been expressly prescribed by the founder, except by or with the sanction of the Court. It was notorious, in the early part of the present century, that the protection which the system in practice was intended to afford was not secured by it. The expense and delay of litigation, incident to a recourse to the Court, in order to procure the protection sought, was ruinous to the Charities, and often ended in failure. What was everybody's business was nobody's business, and so Charity property was exposed to fraud, to misapplication, or at best to neglect. Since 1855, Trustees are, by statute, forbidden to sell charitable properties, or to grant a lease for more than twenty-one years at a rental, except under the authority of the Commissioners, or of the Court, and with the express authority of Parliament.

To remedy the evils which had grown up, the several Reports, already referred to, specifically indicated those of the powers, up to that time exercised solely by Courts of Equity, which should be conferred upon the authority proposed to be constituted, with the object of securing the improved administration of all charitable property, without distinction, and which, it appears, was so obviously needed. These powers were: (1) To inquire into the administration of Charities; (2) To compel the production of, and when produced, to audit, the accounts of the expenditure of Charity Funds; (3) To facilitate the administration of Charities, both as to the development of the property, and as to the direct execution of the trusts, by supplementing the powers of Trustees when defective; (4) To secure the safe custody and due investment of the property of Charities; (5) To frame Schemes for adapting the administration of Charities to altered circumstances, whether of Charity property, of the locality, or of society generally; (6) To control, to facilitate, and to diminish the cost of legal proceedings taken on behalf of Charities. The principles thus formulated have formed the basis of the Charitable Trusts Acts, and other Acts administered by the Charity Commission, from 1853 to the present time. Trustees of Charities are bound by statute to render accounts annually to the Charity Commission; and the Commissioners can, and do, when necessary, call for vouchers, statements, &c.; but they do not, except under special circumstances, audit the accounts. The jurisdiction to make Schemes was conferred by the Act of 1860; but varying the objects for which charitable property was left, has only been exercised recently.

The Charitable Trusts Act of 1853 created the permanent authority needed, in the shape of the Charity Commission. To that Commission were transferred most of the powers formerly exercised by Courts of Equity. From time to time these powers have been extended, but generally not beyond the scope of those previously, and in some cases still, exercised by the Courts of Law. The two great objects of the Charity Commission are essentially remedial and protective: remedial, by supplementing the means provided by founders for giving effect to their intentions, where those means are inadequate to give full effect to the purpose of the foundations; and protective, by securing the property of Charities against waste and loss, and so preserving it for the purposes to which it was dedicated by the founders. In the exercise of those powers, whether by the Court or the Commissioners, Trustees of Charities have from time to time resented the interference, and called in question the jurisdiction, as being antagonistic to their interests, and restrictive of the powers entrusted to them by the will of the founders; forgetful of the fact that they are as "public

officers, invested with public powers and public duties," to use the words of Lord Lyndhurst.

The two classes of powers, more particularly, to which Trustees seem to object are: (1) The power of supplementing the action of Trustees as to (*a*) dealing with the *corpus* of real or the capital of personal estate, (*b*) the authorisation of acts of Trustees in the administration of income, for which the terms of their trust afford no warrant, and (*c*) the appointment and removal of Trustees and Officers; (2) The power of securing the safe custody and investment of the property of Charities, by (*a*) the constitution of Official Trustees with a perpetual succession, (*b*) powers of vesting real and personal estate without conveyance, and (*c*) provision for the custody of deeds and muniments of Charities. Yet these are the main preservatives of charitable property. Within the limits prescribed by the trust deeds, and sustained by the law, Trustees are the sole responsible administrators of the income of the Charity; but they have no power to deal with the capital, nor to vary, in the slightest degree, the prescribed mode of applying the income. On the other hand, the Charity Commissioners are in no sense the administrators of income; but they are constituted the judges of all dealings with capital, and of all variations of the prescribed mode of giving effect to the objects of the Charity. Doubtless the Charity Commissioners are hampered in various ways in preparing Schemes for the better administration of Charities: local prejudices step in; Trustees are jealous of their powers and privileges; and legal and technical difficulties often arise, which are not seen by those who complain of the action of the Commissioners, or of the delays which frequently take place before a Scheme is finally approved. Schemes under the Endowed Schools Acts, and the City of London Parochial Charities Act, have to be laid before Parliament, and approved by Her Majesty in Council; but not under the Charitable Trusts Acts.

The Act of 1853 was supplemented in 1855 by the Charitable Trusts Amendment Act, 18 and 19 Vict., c. 124; in 1860 by the Charitable Trusts Amendment Act, 23 and 24 Vict., c. 136; and by another Act, in the same year, dealing with Roman Catholic Charities. The principal Act was further amended in 1862, in 1863, in 1868—69, and by various other Acts dealing with Endowed Schools, Conveyances for Charitable Uses, Investments, Allotments, Enrolment of Deeds, &c. The most important of the later Acts passed was the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883—46 and 47 Vict., c. 36. Altogether, there are some forty-seven or forty-eight Acts of Parliament still in force, which the Charity Commission at Gwydyr House have to administer, or which affect directly the powers which the Commissioners exercise in one way and another. It is much to be regretted that the Government cannot see their way clear to consolidate all those statutes, in so far as their provisions apply to Charitable Trusts, Uses, Endowments, and the powers of the Charity Commission.

The Charity Commissioners have issued thirty-five Annual Reports since their original appointment, in 1853. In those Reports the general work of the Commission is set forth, in more or less of detail, but the "Schemes" prepared from year to year, requiring the approval of Parliament, or of the Queen in Council, are presented in another form. The Commissioners point out that the business transacted at the office is only very inadequately described in the Report. The applications for appointment of Trustees, or establishment of Schemes, have been as follows:—To the Chancery Courts, 1854 to 1887 inclusive, 654; to County Courts, 739; total, 1,393. Orders made appointing Trustees, or establishing Schemes, 9,619. The whole of the latter has been since 1860, under the Act of that year. Two applications only to the Courts have been made since 1880. Prior to the Act of 1860 the Commissioners could not appoint Trustees or establish Schemes, their power of intervention being limited to authorising applications to the County Court, or Court of Chancery, for such purposes; but under the Act of 1853 the Courts could not entertain proceedings instituted by Trustees unless authorised by the Commissioners, or, in some cases, by the Attorney-General.

The preceding figures show the judicial work of the Board, and indicate how large a measure of that work has been transferred from the Courts to the Charity Commission. In addition to the operations of the Commission judicially, the Report gives a list of the various orders issued, and their objects, under various Acts; from which it appears that the total number of such orders, in the last four years, was 11,854, or nearly 2,964 annually, on the average. The total number of orders authorising sales of real property, made since 1853, was 7,072 to the end of 1887—the purchase-money realised by such sales being £6,394,251 9s. 3d. The total sum, in Stocks and Investments, held by "the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds" at the close of the year was £13,825,202, divided into 14,729 separate accounts. Of the aggregate sum transferred, amounting to £16,139,017 18s. 6d., £2,853,815 18s. 5d. was re-transferred. The total number of returns of Accounts of income and expenditure rendered by Trustees to the Board during the past year was 31,229. Particulars of 511 previously unrecorded Charities were entered, the total number of distinct Charities on the register being 13,814. Some 1,352 other Charities are known to exist, but full information as to these has not yet been obtained.

The work in connection with the City of London Parochial Charities, under the Act of 1883, is being proceeded with apace. Statements as to the property belonging to the several parishes named in the First Schedule to the Act were published by the 13th of May, 1887, and of those named in the Second Schedule on October 1st, 1887. A large portion of the surplus has been provisionally set apart for the acquisition of open spaces in North London and South London, under Acts relating to Hampstead Heath and Clissold Park; and further sums are proposed to be granted for other open spaces at North Woolwich, Brixton, Vauxhall, &c. About £150,000 is proposed to be given to South London, for institutions similar

to the People's Palace and the Polytechnic, to each of which £2,500 a year have been provisionally appropriated. North London is to be similarly dealt with. But in each case the amount of grant will depend upon the sum subscribed locally for these specific purposes. It appears that the general financial result of the inquiries under the Act is as follows :—1. First Schedule : (*a*) Ecclesiastical property, £2,400 a year ; (*b*) General Charities, £10,500 a year ; total, £12,900 annually. 2. Second Schedule : (*a*) Ecclesiastical property, £37,000 a year ; (*b*) General Charities, £57,000 a year ; total, £94,000 annually. Aggregate totals : Ecclesiastical property, annual revenue, £39,400 ; General Charities, £67,500 annually ; grand total, £106,900 a year. A wise administration, or appropriation, of this large annual revenue will prove a blessing to millions of people in this vast metropolis. Such is the record of the Charity Commission.

MARIE'S BRIDEGROOM.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. BY THE AUTHOR OF "WITNESS MY HAND," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

DARK eyes, and darker hair ; a clear skin and ruby lips ; small teeth, and dainty hands and feet ; a saucy little nose ; a quick temper, and a warm heart—and this was Marie Liston. She was the eldest daughter of Colonel Liston, of Liston Grove, in South Carolina, and the young man to whom she was betrothed was Robert D'Arcy, a captain in the Confederate army. It was some time now since she had seen him, for the war was raging still, and no man could be spared from the gallant little army that was holding out so bravely against such desperate odds. Colonel Liston was away too, fighting under Lee, and only Marie and her sister Nina, and Jack, the youngest boy, were at home with Mrs. Liston.

It was not wonderful that when the Federals attacked Liston Grove they found it an easy prey, but Colonel Ormond, who commanded the assault, protected the ladies and poor little Jack, and treated them with all possible courtesy. There had been some sharp fighting, for the negroes on the estate had stood gallantly by the helpless women, and Colonel Ormond himself had been wounded in the foot. It was not a dangerous wound, but it obliged him to remain at Liston Grove, and Mrs. Liston and her daughters, who knew that they owed their safety to him, did their best to nurse their wounded foe. He was a middle-aged man, with a strong, kind face, and as he lay on the wicker couch in the piazza, playing interminable games of chess with Marie, it was difficult to realise that the Listons were prisoners in their own house, and that this kindly, pleasant guest of theirs held their fate in the hollow of his hand. But as Marie played the harmless game, she could see soldiers riding to and fro, and knew that the Federal troops were bivouacked in the woods round her home.

Marie was the only member of the little household who could play with Ormond, and very well she played, for a woman. But the most blatant advocate of woman's rights has never ventured to claim for her sex supremacy, or even equality, in the king of games, and to play against Colonel Ormond was reckoned a formidable thing even for a man. Miss Liston had played a good many games in the last ten days, had made her brilliant little feminine dashes that mocked her with illusory visions of victory, to be ruthlessly shattered by the colonel's next move, and then had lost heart and hope, as women do, and so missed the chance of using the opportunities that remained ; but out of all the games she had played she had not won one.

She was certainly not going to win this, for only her king remained on the board, while Colonel Ormond had a king and a rook, and was evidently only considering the quickest way of administering the inevitable mate. And meanwhile, what could she do? She could only move her unfortunate king backwards and forwards on the one line left him, as prisoners walk up and down their prison yards, or birds beat their helpless wings against their cage, or——Another simile occurred so forcibly to Marie's mind, that the tears rushed to her eyes, though she was far too proud to let them fall. Were not their own dear troops as hopelessly defeated? What was all their gallant resistance, what were their brilliant manœuvres, but futile struggles against the inevitable doom? They would fight to the bitter end, she knew, as well as she knew that the end could not be far off. She forced back her tears, and looked at Colonel Ormond impatiently.

"You *must* win!" she said. "What does it matter whether you do it in six moves or sixteen?"

He looked up with a smile, as one smiles at the petulance of a child.

"It does not matter much, certainly, except that if one has to do a thing, one likes to do it in the best possible way. But I beg your pardon for keeping you waiting; I was not thinking about our game, I'm afraid."

What was he thinking of? she wondered; but she did not ask him. No doubt he was considering how soon he could take his place at the head of his troops again, how long he would have to lie useless on a couch, with no better amusement than to play at chess with a girl. It was more than a week now since the colonel had limped into the house, and the hated blue uniforms had thronged in after him, and demanded the best room and the choicest viands for their colonel's use. He had not demanded anything for himself, Marie remembered, and what he had required for his men he had asked for with unimpeachable courtesy. He might have been an invited guest, instead of a conqueror, the girl thought, looking at the grave, kind face, half shaded by his hand. She knew—she felt sure—that he had laid aside his uniform out of consideration for her feelings. He had come unexpectedly upon Nina and herself one morning when she had been vehemently declaring her antipathy to the sight of the Federal blue, and though he had said nothing, she noticed that he did not wear his military tunic again. Nina laughed at the loose-fitting coat that replaced it, and which was more like an overcoat than anything else; but Marie did not laugh. She understood, just as she understood that but for this chivalrous foe the soldiers who were bivouacked in the woods round Liston Grove would have given the dear home to the flames. What she did not understand was her own share in the colonel's chivalry, or the feelings she had inspired in that grizzled warrior's breast. She resigned herself to waiting, and leant back in her chair till he should have decided on his move.

But, as Colonel Ormond had told her, he was not thinking of the game. He was thinking of Marie, and wondering if he should ever find courage to tell her of his love, and ask her to be his wife. Perhaps the way he put the question to himself decided the answer. Whatever Walter Ormond's faults might be, lack of courage was not amongst their number. He lifted his head from his hand, and looked at her so quietly, that she never even guessed how his heart was beating at the thought of what he had to say.

It was all over in five minutes. He had said his say, and had his answer, the only answer it was possible for Robert D'Arcy's affianced bride to give.

"Did you not know I was engaged? I thought you must have seen *this*," Marie said, pointing to her betrothal ring, with a touch that was a caress, while the colour mounted to her face, and the poor colonel felt that she looked more distractingly pretty than ever. What a fool he had been not to think of this, not to understand that so peerless a creature was not likely to be still unwon! Who had won her? he wondered. He would like to know, if only that he might set a black mark against his name. It was some young Southerner, no doubt, a fellow all moustachios, and swagger, and tobacco, and tall talk, thought the Northern colonel vindictively. The elemental passions are curiously alike, whether they beat under broadcloth or wampum, and no Indian brave could have started on the war path with fiercer feelings than were animating Colonel Ormond's breast as he asked if he might know his rival's name.

"His name is Robert D'Arcy," said Marie proudly. "He is not here—he is with General Lee."

Colonel Ormond's eyes glittered at the news. If this was so, he might yet stand face to face with his rival, and he told himself that if he ever did, only one should leave the field alive. He looked impatiently at his wounded foot, and wondered how soon he would be able to go forth against this hated foe, but naturally he did his best not to betray his feelings. He turned again to the chess-board.

"It is your move, I think," was all he said.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

MARIE endeavoured to imitate Colonel Ormond's composure, but before many moves had been exchanged the game was interrupted again. This time it was not the fault of either of the players. It was a mounted orderly, who rode up to the piazza, and handed the colonel a note.

Marie glanced at it carelessly. The colonel had so many of these notes in a day, and this was so short, it could scarcely be anything important. But short as it was, it seemed to excite him curiously.

He read it with dilating eyes and quickened breath, wrote a few hurried lines on the back of it, and returned it to the man; and then he looked at Marie with the strangest triumphant smile she had ever seen. There was something so grim, so deadly, so *fiendish* in it, that the horror of it seemed to paralyse her heart.

"Would you like to know what was in that note?" he asked.

"What?" she gasped faintly,

"They have found a spy in our lines, it seems. A man was seen trying to make his way through the woods here; he wore our uniform, but something made them suspect him, and he was searched."

"Well?" She did not know why, but her mouth was almost too dry and parched to speak.

"Well—he is a rebel officer, and his name is Robert D'Arcy!"

"Robert? *my* Robert!" she said, in a tone of rapture that made the colonel writhe. "Oh, Colonel Ormond, is he here?"

"Here? Did I not tell you he was a spy?"

"He is *not!*" she flashed out proudly. "If he was in your lines, he was only coming to see me."

"I don't fancy our men are in the humour for nice distinctions. They think he is a spy, you see, and as far as he is concerned, I suspect it will come to the same thing."

She was silent a moment, and then she looked at him with a dawning horror that made her tremble from head to foot.

"What are you going to do?" she whispered. She knew what was likely to be the fate of any man who was called a spy.

"That depends on you," said Colonel Ormond gravely.

"On *me!* How?"

"Listen, Marie, and I will tell you. This man, this D'Arcy, this lover of yours, has just one chance for life. If I do my duty, he will be shot at sunrise."

"Oh, you will not, you will not! It *cannot* be your duty to shoot an innocent man in cold blood. Colonel Ormond—*dear* Colonel Ormond——"

She threw herself at his feet, speechless with passionate entreaty; but the colonel's face was very dark and stern.

"Listen," he said again; "and try to understand. You ask for D'Arcy's life?"

"Yes, yes," she sobbed convulsively.

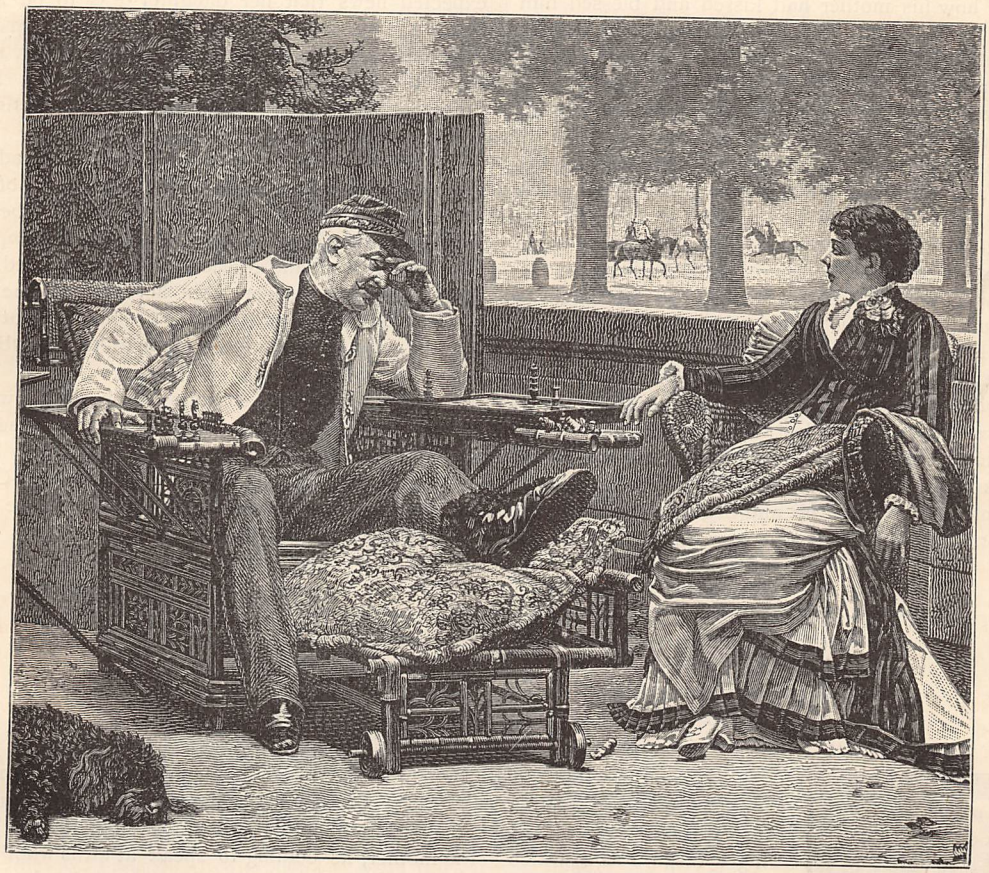
"There is only one woman to whose prayer I will grant it, and that is *my wife.*"

"Your——? You are mocking me," she cried bitterly. "You have no wife."

"No—I have not *yet!* It is for you to say if I shall have to-morrow. There is a chaplain with our forces—you have seen him, have you not?—let him make you my wife to-night, and there is nothing you can ask that I will refuse."

Marie gazed at him, dumb with incredulous dismay; but there was no relenting in his face.

"Leave me, and think it over," he said imperiously. "When I know your decision, I shall know if D'Arcy is to live or die."



"WHAT WAS HE THINKING OF? SHE WONDERED" (*p.* 80).

She got up and staggered blindly away; and the colonel let her go without a word. If D'Arcy's peril did not move her, nothing that he could say would.

"But, if I know her, it *will!*" he thought triumphantly, and he was right, though it was so long before her answer came, he had almost given up hope.

At last a pretty mulatto girl brought him a little pencilled note:—

"I will do anything to save him. May God forgive you the wrong you have done us both.—MARIE."

The colonel's first thought was unmixed exultation. The scheme that had suggested itself so suddenly that it seemed almost like the prompting of a voice outside himself—a whisper of the Evil One, he called

it afterwards in calmer and saner mood—the scheme that had flashed into his mind when he found Marie's lover in his power, was crowned with complete success. He sent a message of thanks to his bride, and then he sent a note to command the chaplain's attendance, and told his man to get out his full-dress uniform.

He looked at himself in the glass when he was fairly arrayed, and the sight of the familiar blue coat, a little the worse for wear, gave him a curious thrill.

He remembered the day he had put his first uniform on, and how his mother had kissed and blessed him with happy tears. He remembered even the words she had said—

"Wear it, my son, for your country and your God, and never stain it by any deed unworthy of a Christian gentleman."

A man could not lead the upright, God-fearing life that Walter Ormond had hitherto led, and be given over to do a mean and treacherous and cruel thing without at least some prickings of conscience, some whisperings of higher and purer counsels.

He was going to take advantage of his enemy's misfortune to *buy* his bride with the price of her lover's life! There was not a man in all the North who held slavery in greater abhorrence, and yet he was going to do a deed from which many a slave-holder would have shrunk with righteous aversion.

He turned impatiently away, and as he sat down, Marie's note lay so close to his hand that almost mechanically he took it up, and began to read it again. How brief it was, how candid, how brave!

How long he sat with the poor little bit of crumpled paper in his hand he never knew, but when at length he rose, and kissed it reverently, and put it in his pocket-book, the chaplain, coming into the room in answer to his note, thought that he had never seen a human face with such a beautiful expression.

They were a long time closeted together, and then the chaplain went back to the encampment, and brought Robert D'Arcy to the colonel's room.

No one knew of his presence in the house; not Mrs. Liston, troubled and bewildered with the unexpected news that her daughter was to be a wife before the sun went down; not Jack, shut up in his own room in sullen indignation that any Liston should stoop to wed a Northerner; above all, not Marie, praying for strength and courage, and counting the moments to her martyrdom.

It came at last, the inevitable hour she had been dreading, through what seemed an eternity of pain. The sun sank below the western woods, the bell that was to summon her sounded like the knell of hope, and liberty, and love, and Marie got up, and walked firmly downstairs. She never lifted her eyes till she stood in the little chapel attached to the house; but when she did, she thought for a moment that trouble had turned her brain.

For the bridegroom standing by her side was *not* Colonel Ormond. It was Robert D'Arcy himself, and the colonel was not to be seen.

"He asked me to take his place," explained Captain D'Arcy, in a hurried whisper, just as the service began. "He thought you wouldn't mind!"

HOW CHILDREN COME TO SPEAK.

THERE is a tale told by Herodotus of an Egyptian king who, desirous of settling a dispute as to which was the oldest people in the world, caused several new-born children to be placed in the custody of dumb guardians, and excluded from all human intercourse till such time as children usually begin to speak. At the end of two years—so the tale goes—these children came running to their keepers with the cry "Bekkos" on their lips; and this being Phrygian for bread, to the Phrygian nation was awarded the palm of antiquity.

Now, though I should be sorry to maintain, on the authority of Herodotus, that the experiment above mentioned was ever really tried, I have no hesitation in affirming that if it had been, there is no reason why the result recorded should not have followed.

For it must be borne in mind that, though the power of speaking any given language — English, French, or German—is clearly dependent upon the child's faculty of imitation and powers of articulation, taken in conjunction with the systematic teaching of the mother, its coming to speak at all is wholly independent of any instruction it may receive from those surrounding it.

The Egyptian children, if left entirely to their own devices, would before long have come to utter articulate sounds, and to attach definite meanings to them, and so ultimately would have invented, not Phrygian or any other known tongue, but assuredly a language of some kind or other. They would have done this just as infallibly as, if left to themselves, they would have come to hold up their heads, stand upright, and eventually to walk.

Strange to say, this truth has not been generally grasped, even by sagacious thinkers, for we find Buffon, the famous naturalist, expressly asserting that the child owes the power of speech to its mother, and explaining that animals do not speak because they do not remain sufficiently long with their mother to allow of her teaching them her language.

The slightest observation of the facts of infant life would have sufficed to dissipate such errors as these, but it is only lately that psychologists have penetrated into the nursery, and have begun their systematic observation of the growth of mind at the very cradle.

Among the first to do this was a philologist of repute, Mons. M. E. Egger, Membre de l'Institut, and the result of his investigations was given to the world in an admirable paper on "Le Développement de l'Intelligence et du Langage chez les Enfants," read before "L'Academie des Sciences Morales et Politiques" in 1871. In the beginning, says Mons. Egger, children make their wants known through the medium of noise —*i.e.*, inarticulate cries. For the first month of their existence there is no difference between the timbre of one child's voice and that of another, but about the fifth week the transition from the cry to the voice is distinctly to be noted, and language then has its beginning. From six months onwards, the infant begins in a haphazard sort of fashion to articulate various labial or dental syllables, keeping to one particular syllable, perhaps, for several days, and then going on to another. Little by little, out of the thousands of articulations he daily emits, he gets the control of some few, and being able to reproduce these at pleasure, makes them stand for his different wants or for the objects with which he is most familiar. Thus Darwin's child, when a year old, invented the word "Mum" for food, while a child observed by Mr. Pollock, at the age of thirteen months, said "Wah, wah" for a dog or a cat. Yet another child, observed by the present writer, invented the singular word "Buckee" to signify the want of something, and when shown anything and told to say "Please," would always respond with "Buckee."

In this way, then, the child invents for himself a language, as artificial indeed as is the language spoken by those around it, but one which is purely individual. For—and, as Egger points out, this is a fact worth noting—the sound by which one child chooses to express a given idea will not be the same as that which another child will choose, so that two children will employ two very different vocabularies, and, while understood by their nurses or mothers respectively, will not, except to a limited extent, be understood by each other.

Then Egger goes on to show how the particular language peculiar to each child passes into the language of the family and nation. Making a child speak, he says, is making it use the words which are in use among the grown-up people who surround it. This process involves a double effort on the child's part, for it not only has to *learn* our language, but at the same time to *un*learn its own.

The difficulty is all the greater because it is not sufficient that the child should understand the word in order to be able to articulate it. Children, as every one knows, will understand words and obey orders conveyed in short sentences, long before they can themselves articulate these words or arrange them in sentences.

Thus, a child observed by Mr. Sully would always turn to the well-known lithograph when the words "Cherry Ripe" were spoken, though his powers of articulation were as yet quite in abeyance. Darwin's infant understood his nurse's name exactly five and a half months before he invented his first word, "Mum;" while the son of Dr. T. Tiedemann, at an age when articulation is only just beginning, would indicate the position of things with his finger when asked where they were.

It is necessary, then, before the child can appropriate the language of the society into which it is born, that its vocal organs should have reached a certain stage of development—*i.e.*, that it should be physically capable of producing the words we seek to teach it.

But this is not all. It must also be able to reproduce these sounds at will. The mere fact that it can pronounce them with ease does not imply that it can call them up with ease. The infant to whom allusion has been made, who always said "Buckee" when an adult would have said "Please," persisted in this custom long after it was able to say "Please." It was most docile; it instantly substituted "Please" when urged to do so, but "Buckee" was under the control of its will, and "Please" was not, and so the former was the word which spontaneously came up.

After the power of articulating at will has been developed, further progress in language is found, as Taine points out, to turn upon an essentially human characteristic—viz., the aptitude for seizing analogies. With the growth of intelligence the child becomes capable of detecting resemblance in the midst of differences, and extends on its own initiative the application of the word it knows.

Taine's little girl was shown some birds two inches long, painted red and blue, on the walls of a room, and was told once, "There are kokos" (chickens). She was immediately sensible of the resemblance, and for half a day her great pleasure was to be carried round the room, crying out "Koko" at each fresh bird. Says Taine, "No dog or parrot would have done as much; in my opinion, we come here upon the essence of language. Other analogies are seized with the same ease. She was in the habit of seeing a little black dog belonging to the house, which often barks, and it was to it she first learned to apply the word 'Oua-oua.' Very quickly, and with very little help, she applied it to dogs of all shapes and kinds that she saw in the streets; and then—which is still more remarkable—to the bronze dogs on the staircase. Better still, the day before yesterday, when she saw a goat a month old which bleated, she cried 'Oua-oua,' calling it by the name of the dog, which is most like it in form, rather than by that of the horse, which is too big, or of the cat, which has quite a different gait."

Facts such as these amply prove that it is not because men have the power of speech that their intelligence surpasses that of animals. Rather, we may say that it is because the most brute-like man exceeds in intelligence the most humanised brute that language comes to be evolved at all.

Ada Heather Bigg.

THE GARDEN IN JANUARY.

LAST month we were discussing the appropriate subject of evergreens, and did our best to dress up "December" to make it look in some sort like the youthful "May." This month—more particularly as it is the first of the year—we shall devote ourselves to the more general preparation of the garden. Very necessary is it, we all know, to set aside an occasional day or two for "taking stock." And as this certainly holds true of the garden, we will pay a visit to every department in turn, decide what we intend to undertake this year, make our preparations accordingly, and examine perhaps, where we are able, the cause of any past failures.

We will suppose ourselves, then, at the outset to be making a survey of the most practical part of the garden—the kitchen-garden. And the very A B C of success here lies in a thorough and deep trenching

of the soil this month ; half-hearted digging is of no good in January if you wish to keep yourself warm, or if you want to get any warmth into the plants that you will afterwards set out in the soil you are now working. If you send the spade or the spud well home at each step as you advance, you will turn up the slug and other garden-pests that are hoping to burrow deep enough to get out of the way of the gardener and of the frost. And this very frost which, not unnaturally, we all of us dread so much, is in many cases, nevertheless, a valuable under-gardener. The value of its action upon the soil we are now turning up cannot be too highly estimated. Besides destroying the slugs that we bring to the surface, the clods of earth that we afterwards break up with our spade will turn out good pulverised soil, and make it fit to become the nursing mother of the seed that in March we entrust to its care; whereas unprepared soil is but a sorry step-mother, that will only let the seed take care of itself.

Notice next that row of winter spinach ; how is it that one or two of the plants appear to have no heart, and that the outside leaves look all coarse and withered? Very likely it is because one day the cook, wanting some in a hurry, came out and gathered it herself, and, captivated by the fresher and greener-looking *inside* of the plant, carried it off, instead of gathering only the *outside* leaves from *several* of the plants. Not far off, again, we espy a row of peas, and the small green tops are perhaps after a mild season just visible on the surface. Now, unless a careful protection is at once given to your peas, the whole will be sacrificed to the frost and the east wind, the slugs and the birds. On the cold side give them a little earthing-up, or a few twigs and small dead boughs scattered along will shelter from much of the wind, while the old remedy of wood-ashes, or a line of soot on each side of your row, will puzzle the slug ; the ashes could be spread lightly over the peas themselves.

Another turn brings us to the fruit-garden. At present, of course, we have merely a show of dead sticks—so, at least, would a superficial observer say. Not dead, but sleeping only, we know they are ; but the nature of the climate and season must entirely actuate our proceedings here in January. When no frost is about, fresh planting and removals may still go on with safety, and similarly pruning among the wall-trees ; but we must certainly shut up our knife when the frost comes ; still, an early opportunity should be taken to complete the pruning, as not infrequently we have a February like April, and our trees in bloom by the end of the month. A premature spring, however, is more often than not a terror to the gardener. Let us say, then, in passing, that in the event of early blooming among the wall-trees, they will certainly require some kind of protection at night with canvas or gauze. And we may find a good winter day's work in the orchard. Some gardeners advocate the washing of the bark of trees with brine, or some sort of preparation, to rid them of vermin ; others recommend water merely, projected with force against the stem by means of a garden engine. Dig, however, round the roots of all fruit-trees, whether in the orchard or among the wall-trees ; it is a delusion to suppose that any disturbance or slight breakage of the root of an *established* tree is injurious to its welfare. The writer well remembers four peach and nectarine trees that for one or two years proved a complete failure. In the winter of one year they were well dug round, the roots rather sharply pruned, and some rich manure put in ; the following summer they were breaking down with fruit, and the June thinning-out seemed quite alarming, but very necessary, as also very successful it afterwards proved.

Then our little greenhouse has to be looked through in its turn ; here, again, the season must actuate our management of it largely ; air must certainly be given daily—during the best of the day in frosty weather, and at other times and for a longer period during a milder season. Very little watering will our general stock under glass require in January ; just enough, very occasionally, to sustain the life of our dormant plants, and that, of course, must be of the same temperature as the house itself. Our stock of cuttings must be noticed, and any little shoot that displays a tendency to grow much ahead of its fellows had better be pinched off. In less than a month our greenhouse collection in every branch will be making an early spring start, and where we are somewhat cramped for room it requires no little device to find shelter for our plants until that fickle and fanciful maiden, the month of May, makes up her mind not to coquette with Father Christmas quite unexpectedly, when we are, perhaps, innocently engaged in bedding-out.

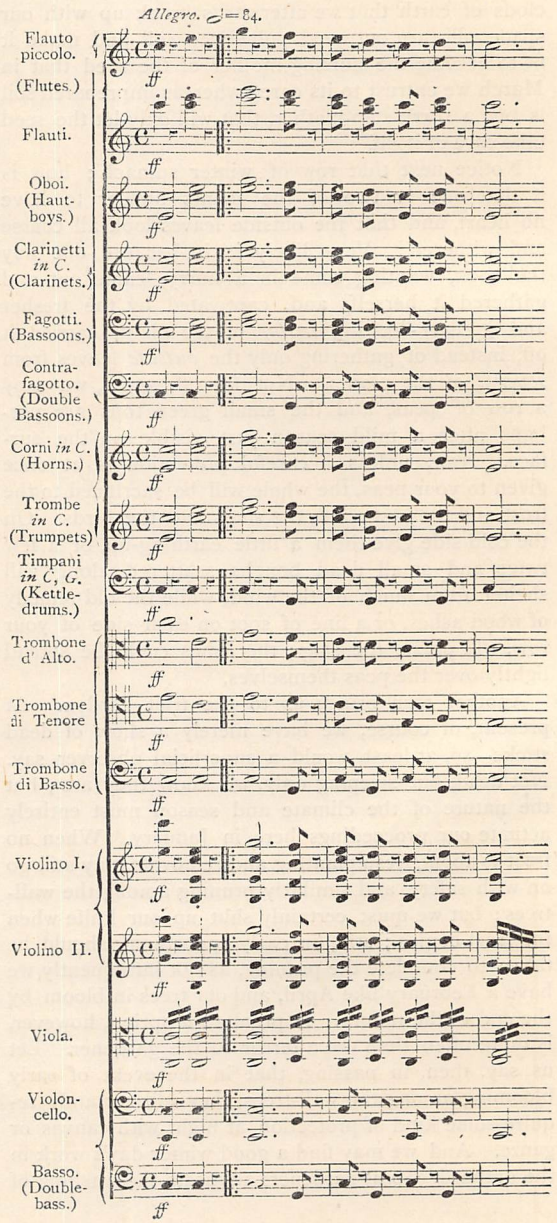
And then, lastly, our open flower-beds. These, if we have followed up the observations made last month, ought to be in their way gay even now ; while the winter aconite, and very soon the snowdrop, with close upon its heels the varied-coloured crocus, ought somehow to link the seasons together with one unceasing display of flowers of some sort. Not, of course, that we can expect our January exhibition to be quite so charming as that in July ; yet the dullest season has its bright side, and a little ingenuity will, with a little painstaking, give us a winter garden of which we may be justly proud. And, with most of us, the brightest side of our dull season is the month of our Christmas reunion, when our homestead is decked with variegated holly and the Christmas rose : this latter favourite, indeed, looks almost dirty when surrounded in our garden by the dazzling whiteness of the winter snow ; but, on our dinner-table, its gay petals are in favourable contrast with the red holly-berry, the pale green of the laurel, and the pretty modest blossoms of the laurustinus. A happy Christmas to all little fingers that can weave so bright a bouquet !

WHO REARED THE SYMPHONY?

ART in its generic sense covers a wide field, and embraces all that labour which is the outcome of cultivated mind and superior intellect. It is not wholly of the same order, though all good music and painting, sculpture, poetry, and prose may deserve the name of art. A glee or a ballad may be a work of art, but neither constitutes the highest form of vocal art. Such has to be found in the oratorio. Then there are many instrumental compositions—all art-work in its truest sense — but the crowning point is only reached by the symphony.

What is a symphony? Some will recall those charming little snatches of music which herald the voice-part in every song. The opening bars, intermediate and concluding parts, for one or more instruments in our church services and anthems, are symphonies. That which an organist improvises before a piece about to be sung is a symphony ; the virginal and bagpipe have been known by the name of symphony ; the overture was called formerly "Sinfonia." The Greeks had *σὺν φωνῇ*—a concurrence of several voices or instruments employed upon the same part. A symphony proper, however, is a great orchestral composition similar in construction to the sonata, embracing all instruments, and, in a solitary instance, even the human voice.

The story of the symphony covers the whole area of instrumental musical history ; for what is a symphony in the abstract, and apart from its ideal purport, but a huge result of the handling of every orchestral resource? As an art-form it belongs to the age of Classical art, which began with Bach and ended with Schumann. Its growth was steady and natural. As instrument after instrument was invented or discovered ; as the capabilities of every instrument became known ; as the taste for developing all instrumental resource grew ; and, above all, as it slowly dawned upon mankind that music had an ideal import, so the symphony grew. When Rinuccini, in his first opera *Euridice*, employed a harpsichord, guitar, viol, lute, and flutes, he was paving the way for the great tone-poems of Haydn, Beethoven, and Berlioz. Again, Monteverde's effort to invest scenes and situations with characteristic and dramatic colouring was a laudable step in the direction of realism in art, the greatest splendour of which is only reached through the medium of that perfect art-creation--the symphony. The symphony grew, then, in proportion as instruments were invented and pressed into its service, and as this longing after the expressible in music became more and more general. All early music that was not vocal was symphony—so comprehensive was the use of this term. The simple accompaniments to early music, the overtures, introductions, *ritornelli*, pieces for single instruments, ballet tunes, toccatas—all were included in the one term symphony. This lasted long, albeit there were forms which it was evident could be expanded indefinitely. Scarlatti [1650—1725] and Lully recognised this. The latter attacked the introductory movement, which was the symphony *par excellence*, and gave it so distinct a form that it became the

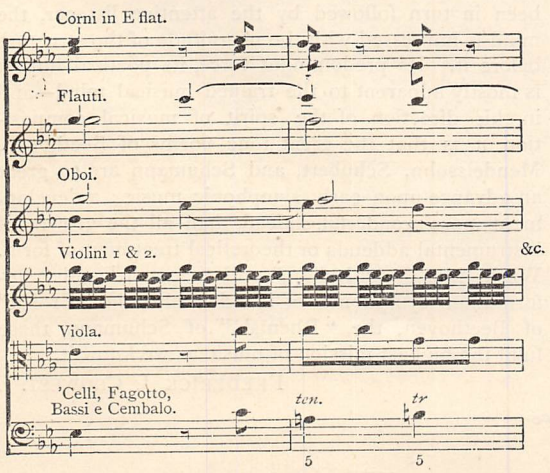


THE OPENING BARS OF THE ALLEGRO IN BEETHOVEN'S C MINOR SYMPHONY.

Overture. Scarlatti gave more decided character to the movements composing the overture, and from these two stages came the Symphony.

The direct form leading to the symphony was the Sonata of the seventeenth century, with Corelli's [1653—1712] name closely allied to it. Then came the Concerto, invented by Torelli, who employed the ordinary string quartet and the solo instrument. Wind-instruments were added subsequently by F. Benda and Stamitz. Some enthusiastic souls thought of doubling the instrumental parts, and thus a real approach towards symphonic *matériel* was secured long before tone-colouring and sound-illustration had made much stride. Here was the first stage of that instrumental art which was to culminate in the great tone-epics of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The musicians especially associated with this period are Gossec, Toeski, Vanhall, and Emmanuel Bach. Earnest workers they all were, but it was Gossec [1733—1829] who led the van. As we know the symphony, these progenitors of our immortal masterpieces appear crude indeed, but they show the status of the symphony in its early independent existence, when a public would not listen to the "Sinfonia avanti l'opera"—playing cards and the like till the acting began—thus forcing the composer to invest the overture with some counteracting interest. The musician succeeded, and from the moment that the overture began to serve as an index of the opera itself, the symphony as a separate musical form was assured.

The first period symphony, when it was as frequently called an overture, was scored for two violins, viola, and bass, two hautboys or two flutes, and two *cors de chasse*. The effect can be imagined; it cannot be described. The violins were always at work; at times the hautboys, or flutes, supported them; the viola did very little, while the bass had *carte blanche*, and could be added *ad libitum*. The Bachs—John Christian and Emmanuel—added much to the colour of the orchestra, besides improving the general style and form of the symphony. Their later scoring will be seen from the following extract from a symphony by E. Bach :—



After Gossec and Abel, HAYDN came—a heaven-born genius. With him dates a new era in orchestral music—an era of realism, when the tone-art soared to the highest summits to which it can attain as an exponent of the noblest thought and varied fancy of intellectual perception and magnitude. The age of the Titans of music will live in history as the golden period of the art in its creative aspect; for these great composers were not performers in the sense understood nowadays. They plied their genius and industry amid the hard and dry materials of theoretical arsis and thesis, and the men yet live more widely known than ever by their compositions.

The world's greatest symphonists have been the great masters themselves. HAYDN [1732—1809] decided the form for all time, and composed no less than 118 symphonies. Of these, the twelve "Grand," or Salomon set, which Haydn composed to the order of that celebrated *entrepreneur*, are best known and admired. They stand lustrous amid the firmament of instrumental art. "You will never surpass these symphonies," said a dear friend. "I never mean to try," was the characteristic reply of the wonderful composer, who possessed a singular faculty of gauging his own power. MOZART [1756—1791]—the ever-beautiful—composed forty-nine symphonies on the small lines of Bach's works, save the three famous musical epics—the E flat major, the G minor, and the C major, or "Jupiter," symphonies. They abound in that passionate expression of which he was so great a master. BEETHOVEN [1770—1827] reached the summit of even his stupendous genius in nine of these great tone-poems. SCHUBERT [1797—1828] composed a similar number to Beethoven, leaving the ninth—which promised to be, as Beethoven's was, his greatest—unfinished. Amongst these the seventh ranks first in popular favour. MENDELSSOHN [1809—1847] conceived some of the grandest orchestral creations the world of music knows. These symphonies, &c., are the C minor, 1824; the "Reformation," 1830; the "Italian," 1833; the "Lobgesang," 1840; and the "Scotch," 1842. SCHUMANN [1810—1856] composed a B flat symphony; the C major; the D minor; and the E flat, or "Rhenish" symphony—works of noblest order.

Here ends the line of famous symphonists. There have been others—Spohr, famous for his *Die Wiehe der Töne* ("Power of Sound") symphony; and among modern Germans, Brahms, Liszt, Raff, Niels Gade, Rubinstein, Hiller, and Moscheles. France has had famous symphonists in Cherubini, Berlioz, David, and Silas; Italy, in the playful Boccherini, Clementi, and Sammartini. Nor is England behind in this phase of modern art. Her composers who have done honour to the country in this form are Sterndale Bennett, Macfarren, Sullivan, Cowen, Mackenzie, Stanford, and Prout.

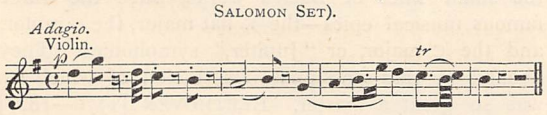
Haydn—whose first symphony was for two violins, viola, bass, two oboes, and two horns, and on the model of Bach's and Abel's symphonies—took the form into its second or "great" period. Instrument after instrument was requisitioned, until the general

acceptation of the scoring of a symphony now may be taken as follows :—

Flutes	with two parts music.
Hautboys	,, ,, ,,
Clarinets	,, ,, ,,
Bassoons	,, ,, ,,
Horns	in two to four parts.
Trumpets	generally two parts.
Trombones	two or three parts written.
Kettledrums	two tuned in fourths or fifths.
First Violins	all with their particular stave of music.
Second ,, ...	
Violins (Tenors) ...	
Violoncelli	
Double Basses	

Before him the light and trifling examples which composers would throw off in sets of six, had three movements: an *allegro*, a slow movement, and a *vivace* to end—all slighter and more meagre than anything listened to nowadays. As framed by Haydn the symphony has four large and massive movements, all well defined, of good proportion and large calibre: the first the *allegro*, the second an *andante* or *largo*, the third a *minuet* and *trio*, the fourth an *allegro* or *finale*. To the first of these is prefixed a short introductory *adagio*, as indicated in the following opening bars :—

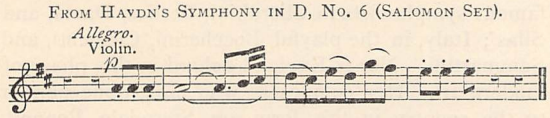
FROM HAYDN'S "MILITARY" SYMPHONY IN G, NO. 12 (GRAND OR SALOMON SET).



—first used by Haydn and subsequently adopted by Mozart as late as his forty-fourth, and by Beethoven in his first and second symphonies. Such is the orthodox form as left by Haydn, the greatest of all symphonists, and which even that heresiarch of music—Wagner—dared not to offend in the only symphony he ever wrote, the recently performed one in C.

Each of these movements has a distinctive character. After the slow introduction, the listener is before a great avenue of sound in the joyous *allegro*. Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart have been successful in this movement, and an estimate of their stupendous genius can be gained from the reflection that it is from such slender materials as the subjects contained in the following few examples that they build up their vast orchestral creations of perpetual music, scintillating with all the gorgeous colouring of orchestral combination and scientific device :—

FROM HAYDN'S SYMPHONY IN D, NO. 6 (SALOMON SET).

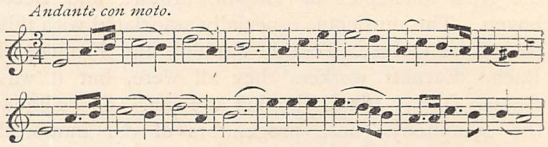


FROM BEETHOVEN'S C MINOR SYMPHONY.

FROM MOZART'S G MINOR SYMPHONY, NO. 48.

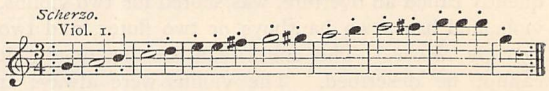
After the *allegro*, the second movement, the *andante* or *largo* (sometimes an *allegretto*, as in Haydn's "Military" symphony) comes in welcome contrast. A wonderful slow movement is that marked *adagio* in Haydn's "Oxford" symphony; while in the same composer's No. 8 is found a very characteristic *largo* in D. Mendelssohn was eminently happy in his *andantes*. Here is the subject of the well-known one in the "Scotch" symphony :—

SYMPHONY IN A MINOR—THE "SCOTCH" (MENDELSSOHN).

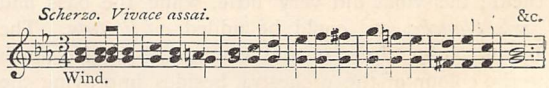


All can imagine the minuet, the stately and courtly old style movement. It was Haydn's favourite measure, in which no composer has approached him. One, indeed, has threatened its existence, but even the sprightly *scherzo* which Beethoven invented in its place wins its favour by an elegance equally marked, yet totally opposite to that of the minuet. What an irresistible "go" and elasticity there is in the following characteristic bars !—

FROM BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY, NO. 1, C MAJOR.



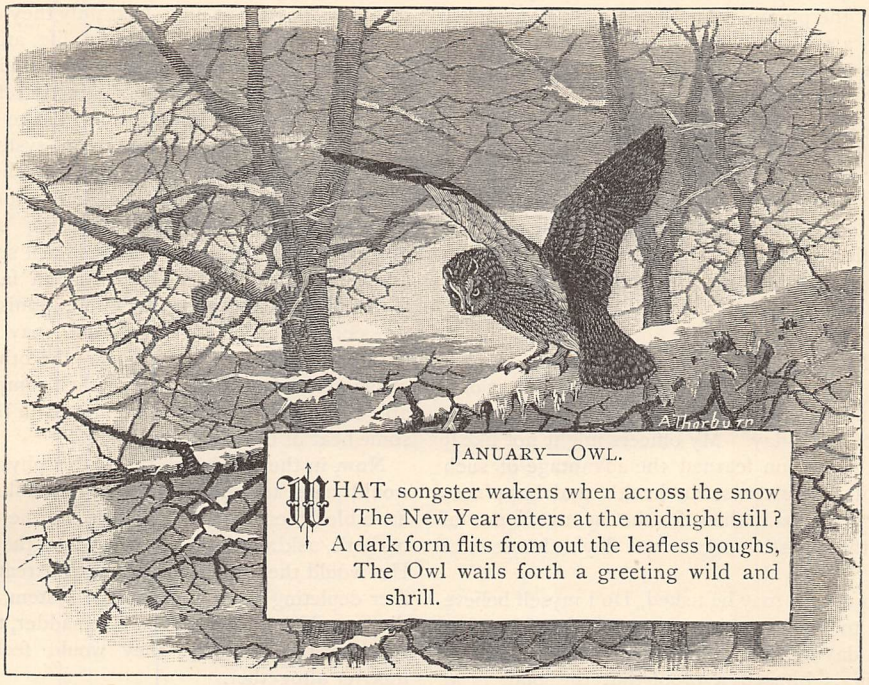
FROM BENEDICT'S G MINOR SYMPHONY.



Another *allegro* or *vivace*, in which the whole forces of the orchestra are employed, completes this vast musical structure. The great avenues of tone having been in turn followed by the attentive listener, the mind is impressed with the magnitude of the structure before it. Its predominant force, its poetical import is mostly apparent to the trained musical mind—and in this direction of the spirit of musical composition it is that the great tone-poems of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Schumann are so great an advance upon early symphonic music; a development more wonderful, indeed, than all the growth of instrumental addenda or theoretical treatment of form. Works like the "Italian," and "Scotch," and "Reformation" symphonies of Mendelssohn, the "Eroica" of Beethoven, the "Rhenish" of Schumann, these fulfil the highest mission of music as we know it.

FREDERICK J. CROWEST.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.



JANUARY—OWL.

WHAT songster wakens when across the snow
The New Year enters at the midnight still?
A dark form flits from out the leafless boughs,
The Owl wails forth a greeting wild and shrill.

A BANIAN DAY.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

WITHOUT anything approaching to the familiarity of the young man in the poem, who commences his impertinences with the remark—

"You are old, father William . . . .
The few locks that are left you are grey,"

I am always pleased to interview a man who is well up in years without being very old in appearance. The experiences of life—and the mode of living—of such men are seldom without their value from a physiologist's point of view. Moreover, men over seventy are, as a rule, not averse to admit the impeachment of old age. When about ten years older than this, they may even look upon it as a compliment. If still another ten years be added to their span of life, they really sometimes come to consider living as a matter of course, and forget they are old unless thoughtlessly reminded of it. I say "thoughtlessly" because I know men, and even women too, who, in conversing with the aged, constitute themselves downright *memo-mories*, if I may coin a word for the occasion. I do not suppose that even the oldest man in the world, whoever that may be, wishes to be constantly reminded that, figuratively speaking, he has one leg in the grave. An aged man may be excused for considering a person, whether man or woman, an unmitigated bore who alters their voice when talking to him, who either whines as if pitying him, or shouts at him as if he were as deaf as a door-nail.

I was chatting the other day with an old sea-captain (a wondrously hale, hearty, bluff and brown "old tar"), and happened to say—

"You are talking of things that happened a long way back, but you cannot be much over sixty."

"If you add twenty to that," he replied, "you'll be getting within hail of it."

"Indeed!" I said; "then I'm somewhat out in my guess. To what do you attribute your extraordinary good health, may I ask?"

He laughed. "Extraordinary good health, indeed! Why, I never had any. I've suffered from dyspepsia all my life—or, to speak more truthfully, I would have suffered, and would suffer from that complaint now, if I didn't always manage to steer clear of Scylla, without running foul of Charybdis. In other words, sir, I have what you might call a tell-tale stomach."

I must here explain that on board ship what is

called a "tell-tale" is an instrument consisting of a weighted brass clock-hand hung on a pivot, pointing to the arc of a circle, on which degrees are marked. When the ship rolls, it thus indicates the angle of deflection from the plumb. The captain by glancing at it can tell in a sea-way whether or not he is carrying a dangerous pressure of canvas, and can take in sail before finding himself on his beam-ends.

"Yes, sir, I've a tell-tale stomach; it is easily capsized, or put slightly out of order. It is to that I attribute my length of days, and the measure of health I do enjoy. A man who carries a tell-tale isn't likely to crack on too much, and it is better to ease off than to 'turn turtle.' Besides, in every ship I've had the honour to command, I have invariably insisted on a Banian day once a week."

"On a Friday, I suppose?"

"Yes, a Friday; just for fashion's sake. But on that day no meat was eaten; we were vegetarians out-and-out. Indeed, our Banian day often used to be very much of a fast-day. My officers might not like it at first, but they soon learned the advantage of such a plan; and the increase in health and happiness obtained, amply repaid them for the inconvenience of granting to the digestive organs one day's almost total rest a week."

Now the question may be asked, Do I myself believe that benefit to the system may accrue from keeping one Banian day in seven? Well, to begin with, this sailor-captain is himself a proof that the plan is at least a harmless one. But I am prepared to go a little further (because I have considered the question in all its bearings), and advance that thousands of people who are now suffering from so-called chronic dyspepsia, would find themselves benefited, and probably even completely restored to health, by what I may be excused for calling the Banian cure.

Let me say at once that I do not uphold this cure as a panacea for all the dyspeptic ills that human flesh is heir to, nor do I claim for it originality. I am quite content that it should be considered an old cure resuscitated, so long as some of my readers are willing to *adopt* it and *adapt* it. I may add that it is most likely to do good to that very large and ever-increasing class of people which includes the "only-middling"—people who are never over-well, nor ill enough to be defined as invalids; people whose state of health is undergoing constant fluctuations, whose condition ebbs and flows like the tide, goes round and round with the weather-cock, or up and down with Fitzroy's barometer; people who, like a bold Northumbrian friend of mine, are "not well enough to boast, yet scorn to complain;" which also includes the so-called or *soi-disant* nervous, as well as the excitable—those for whom life seems far too short to do all they wish in, and who never can do enough or go fast enough to please themselves; who are intemperate in their desires, and intemperate in their very work; who are always grumbling at the ways of the world; and who would desire nothing better than to have it all turned upside-down and made over again, so long as they were permitted to superintend. It includes, also, persons very much akin to these, who suffer from irritability of brain, temper, or from boredom, *ennui*, and languor—which last in nine cases out of ten is but another name for laziness. But can these latter be called dyspeptics at all? Certainly they can, for, more often far than not, their mode of life, and methods of eating and drinking, lie at the root of their misery. All cases of dyspepsia are not distinctly referable to the region of the stomach, remember, but to the head, the heart, the nerves, and muscular system generally. Let four men, for instance, dine together, and all be guilty of the indiscretion of eating a too heavy meal, without probably drinking anything stronger than ginger ale; three at least of these will suffer from disagreeable after-effects—dyspepsia, in fact—while the fourth will escape with the minor punishment of depression. But of the three, one may have acidity, flatulence, and liver disturbance; the other, irritability of the nervous system; and the last, simply a disagreeable feeling of fulness and woolliness in the head, with some heat of brow and eyes.

Now, in the good old times the physician or leech would have treated all three cases alike. He would have bled them, or sent them round the corner to the barber's, asking them to call when they came back. He would then have continued the treatment by further depleting them through the system, and next day they would be wiser men. Not sadder, though. Oh! no; on the contrary, they would feel lighter and merrier altogether.

Now then, while fully admitting that the treatment by active depletion is not applicable to the ailments of the present day, still, our dyspeptic troubles are similar in kind, if not in degree, to those which our forefathers (in the tankard-and-joint age) suffered from; the treatment itself should differ, therefore, in degree more than in kind. Hence my proposed adoption of the Banian cure in cases such as I have mentioned. Many who read these lines would, I know, be inclined to go much farther, and recommend the Banian system out-and-out. I should not like to say a word against vegetarianism, pure and simple; indeed I am neither altogether for, nor quite unfavourable to it. My own experience is that a purely vegetable diet would hardly seem to suit all classes in this country, even with the addition of eggs and milk. It suits the natives of India and Arabs well, as it suits the climate and the inherited constitutions of these peoples; but we in England appear to assimilate more easily, and with more genuine comfort of digestion, the blood-constituents as supplied to us from the animal and vegetable kingdoms taken together—though those of the latter should predominate.

Well, I do not think I shall be either contradicted or accused of excessive rudeness if I state boldly my conviction that over-eating is one of the greatest vices of the age. I cannot be contradicted, because society itself confesses to the sin—but society goes on over-eating, all the same. These very words—"Over-eating kills more people than over-drinking"—have become proverbial. Unfortunately, even as men consider all persons mortal except themselves, so they are inclined

to impute gluttony to any other corner of the table rather than their own.

But it is not those in health only who are guilty of intemperance in eating, but even the delicate and invalid as well, so prevalent is the notion that the system must be kept up, whether appetite suggests food or not. Some savages—the Patagonian tribes, for example—seem to have more sense than civilised beings in the matter of eating. They laugh at the white man's notion of having meals at stated hours, whether hungry or not. They eat when appetite dictates ; they abstain if they feel disinclined for food.

But I know many invalids who keep on eating all day, and a great part of the night. "Just a little now and then to sustain Nature ;" "Little and often"—why, these two hackneyed sayings fill more coffins than any one is aware of. Would that such invalids — nervous they always are, and no wonder — left Nature alone — half her time, at all events. She "kens her ain ken" far better than we can tell her. In other words, Nature has her own laws, and we can only break them at our peril.

"I do not think I eat too much," some one may say. But we are apt to consider quantity more than effect when cross-questioning ourselves on the subject of over-eating. Thus to the self-put question, "Do I over-eat?" comes as answer the question, "Let me see, now ; how much did I eat, and what did I eat, yesterday?" But if I dare put myself up as your judge, I should remind you that your feelings to-day and last night are the only witnesses of value in this case. How did you sleep? Calmly, sweetly, dreamlessly? Did you wake refreshed and buoyant? Over-eating causes heat of surface, and slight fever of blood ; not very appreciable, perhaps, but enough anyhow to cause you to turn more than once in bed during the night, and banish all the feeling of buoyancy from your waking hours, without which health is in reality an unknown quantity. Even over-eating in the minor degree during one day causes discomfort in the next—all the forenoon, at all events ; for the skin is too dry, the secretions are checked and retained, and languor and depression, perhaps even sleepiness, are the symptomatic results.

Enough said. Now, while strongly advising both the strong and the "only-middling" to live always temperately, I as strongly advise Banianism one day in seven. My cure, after all, depends on a policy of rest ; it is to be a real and true "at home" day for the system. Rest for the stomach, rest for the liver, the heart, and the brain. Rest for the body also ; but this is not imperative, and hardly necessary—so that the Banian day may be any day of the week.

I do not counsel abstinence from food entirely. Starvation for merely twelve hours would constitute a dangerous shock to many delicate people. But no meat is to be taken on Banian day, and only the very lightest of diet, and the least of that which can be done with. Supper itself is permissible, and even to be recommended ; but it should consist only of a few rusks, or a light biscuit, with a glass of peptonised milk.

As accessories to this treatment for indigestion, I recommend a mild aperient about once a week if necessary ; and in all cases where not contra-indicated in the judgment of the physician, the shower-bath or sponge-bath every morning, and a Turkish bath once in ten days.

AN UNSENSATIONAL GHOST STORY.

LIFE fulfils itself in many ways, and why should there not be a modern and unexpected side to an experience *en revénant?* There is certainly no law in that variously interpreted code which forbids ghosts to walk at midday, and with chills and chains and winding-sheets omitted. I set off to meet mine, at any rate, on the top of a tram-car, open-eyed, unshrinking, and unsuspecting, and fled from it in the broadest, sunniest light of one of the few summer days that fell to the share of 1888. It was a flat sort of straggling suburb to a seaport town from which that tram-car started, and to the memory that flashed back some quarter of a century along its track, the suburb seemed flatter than of old, its few green dimples smoothed away for the laying of the rail which stretched from the new station to the foot of the one big hill that the district boasted. "Will you walk over the hill or wait for the 'bus?" asked our conductor, as his passengers—a man with a pipe, another with a scythe, and two women laden with babies and baskets—preceded us down the ladder. Walk? wait? we did not know ; we lost his meaning for a minute —that matter-of-course inquiry had a magic in it. "Over the hill!" the words set all sorts of memories moving, jostling one another almost. "Over the hill!" it was the one excursion of our town-bounded youth, our one glimpse of a beyond, from a life shut in and shut out, as it seemed to us, by small stony streets, with a pervading flavour of stores and tarpaulin about them. An enchanted land lay "over the hill ;" a land of woods and streams, of wonderful wide skies, and waving cornfields ; a land where flowers grew and cows were milked, and where trees meant swings and birds' nests, and not woolly impossible "copies" to sketch from in lead pencil. "No, we would walk,' we told the bewildered conductor at last, feeling though, as the 'bus presently passed us, that had we been as honest as Uhland's hero, we

must have stopped it and paid our fare. "Take, oh, boatman, thrice thy fee," that conscientious traveller is said to have insisted, as he was ferried across the river,

> "For, unknown to thee,
> Spirits twain have crossed with me."

A whole troop went up that hill with us—in shadowy

"'YOU MUST KNOW ME,' I INSISTED AT LAST" (*p.* 93).

"gig," or slower "coach," or running, shouting by our side.

We rested at the top, refreshing ourselves with the old "view," and then walked slowly on, very sure that we needed no guide to the well-remembered way which led, skirting the copse and the hayfields, to the village, some two miles off. Yes, that was the road along which the trees met overhead, and the birds piped the overture to our summer *lobgesang*. But surely the avenue had grown curiously short; this was a mere clump of elms; and where were the hayfields? With all allowance for agricultural reports which spoke of this year's hay as "sodden," and recommended "silos," no rain could so entirely have swept away grass, no possible or impossible system of ensilage could transform haystacks into mean brick houses. "This Valuable Freehold Land to be Sold in Building Plots"—there it stood, an unmistakable board where in our memory stood a tree—*a* tree! a whole glade and tangle of trees! Could we, after all, have mistaken our way? We were reduced to asking a passer-by, "Was this the right road to Wotton?" "To Wottonville, did we mean? Yes, keep straight on for a mile or so, and we should come to the church and the hotel." Hotel! Here was another shock. Our wayfarer had iron-grey hair under his billycock hat, so we thought we might venture to ask after the avenue that had once bordered Captain Murray's transformed fields. "Murray—Murray—never heard the name; but the trees—oh, yes, they had been cut down twenty years back, when the new forts were built on the hill yonder."

Our next landmark was a cottage—Cross Cottage,

it was called—how the old names came crowding back!—where some cousins had lodged, adding thereby greatly to the delights of one holiday season. This must be it, close to the wayside, with the old quaint cross carved into the porch; but a smart glass conservatory now bulged at the side, and *Ste. Croix* in big gilt letters shone on the little white gate. The "mile or so" seemed short; the village, straggling down in shop and villa towards the ivy-grown square-towered church, had grown to meet us; and the post-office—which, we recalled, had even then the germ of a "store" in its diamond-paned windows—had now wondrously developed into a distinct and recognisable plate-glass type of the species. We went into the smart Wottonville Hotel, the modest Wotton Arms of our youth, for our much-needed cup of tea, which was brought to us in an æsthetic tea-pot, and with a willow-pattern plate-full of the most wafer-like bread-and-butter in place of the crusty loaf on its wooden platter and the yellow pats of former days. The elegant, emasculated repast nevertheless gave us courage for further quest of long-forsaken haunts, and turning down the lane we went in search of the game-keeper's cottage in the Park, which, summer after summer, a quarter of a century since, had let to us its front parlour, and, I believe, all its available bedrooms. And here time and change stood still. The Park, we heard, had passed into other hands: but the trees, unheeding, shimmered their green waving shadows as of old, and the stream sang its little siren song, and the wild pansies peeped up from the grass, and the brown earth gave forth its sweet smell just as in the day when the first story was planned by the brook, and the first dream was dreamed by the stile.

It was something of a shock to find the cottage shut up; to see the clematis clinging to boarded windows, and some geese run cackling across the grass-plot where we grey-haired folks had played. But the Park with its green restfulness was reviving, and we were passing out of the chief lodge gate in a peaceful, not to say complacent, "Don't you remember" sort of mood, when some one came out into the porch, shading her eyes from the sunshine with a gesture that seemed somehow familiar. The lodge-keeper in the old days had been a great crony of the children at the cottage, and though this portly personage bore but little suggestion in her ample lines of the comely figure we dimly recalled—yet, could it be her mother? we thought, and in another minute determined that it might well be herself, plus "the burden of many years," and, as the dame wished us good day, the slow, soft, country tones made us certain of her identity. Would the recognition be mutual? we wondered, we hoped, but the hope waned and the wonder grew as we fell into talk. "Yes, she had lived at that lodge nigh on five-and-forty year," she told us, "and had seen a many changes"—with an eye quicker to note change than likeness, was our inward comment. We grew impatient to be recognised. "You *must* know me," I insisted at last, and I took off my hat as I spoke; but, alas! the gleam of silver in the still thick locks seemed to have none of the stimulating powers usually attributed to silver. She shook her head with a polite persistency that was pitiful too, and at last, in despair, I named some of the old names. Then indeed came my reward, in shape of start and ejaculations, and pressing offers, as of old, of cowslip wine, and a hundred halting homely questions concerning the absent, the distant, and the past. "The boys? how were *they?* and where?" We could not tell her how, for us, that word had no longer a plural, but perhaps the kind soul guessed, for she took to stroking my hand in the old comfortable fashion, and "Oh," she presently all but moaned, "what changes time do bring! Oh, deary, *deary* me! And you did promise to be so pretty!" It was impossible not to laugh; and though it was in no sense my fault that I had not kept my word, I felt the unmerited reproach in her tones, and I doubt if ever laugh conveyed more genuine sorrow for quite involuntary sin. "No! I never *should* have known you," continued the old dame, every flower and ribbon in her cap nodding in mournful confirmation, as she stood surveying me; "deary, *deary* me! I can see you now, against that elder-berry-tree, with your long brown curls and your big blue eyes." And as she spoke I saw it too—standing up slim and straight in the warm sunlight—the ghost of my vanished youth. What was there in its bright brown hair and its honest blue eyes to scare one so? But I shivered, and fled from it, that poor slim little ghost, with quick farewell hurrying down the hill, to find the work-a-day world lying at our feet, some of its ugliness charmed out of it in the rays of the golden sunset.

K. Magnus.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

FIRST PAPER.

"EVERY mother should keep a journal." Dr. Pater said that in one of his lectures; and so much, at least, I can do. It is odd how things you appear to have forgotten come back when you want them. All this month past, and, indeed, before baby was born, things he said about the "Minds and Bodies of Children" are constantly coming into my head. John and I have been parents just a month. It is very wonderful when you come to think of it, that we two should have a human being—some day, please God, to be a man—all of our very own.

But there Dr. Pater steps in: it seems to me, by the way, he will come so often into my journal that he

must lift the latch and walk in without being announced. It will be easy enough to tell which is he, and which I. All the wise, learned, *general* things are his, and the little foolish remarks about my Oswald, as if he were the first baby ever born, are made by his mother. How nice "mother" looks written, and how pleasant it is to say!

But I am wandering already. I was going to write down, while I think of it, what Dr. Pater said about children belonging to their parents. That is the mistake many parents make: they think the children are theirs to do what they like with, and that how they bring them up is their own business, and concerns nobody else. Now, parents are really put in charge of their children, to bring them up for the good of the country, and, after that, for the good of the world. When you come to think of it, this is not unreasonable. A neighbourhood must be the better or the worse for every person in it, and the neighbourhood is but a bit of the country, as the country is of the world. But all that is a long way off. I am glad I am not a Spartan mother, to have my child taken from me at six years old, and really brought up by the State; but I suppose the Spartans must have had Dr. Pater's notion, that people do not belong altogether to their own families. I must think that out some day when there is no danger of headache.

Nurse is certainly right: baby is like his father. If he grows up as good a man as my husband, I think the country and Dr. Pater, and everybody else, may be satisfied; his mother will, for one.

* * * * * * * *

I am afraid this will not be a journal, after all—that is, if a journal should be written every day. It is eight weeks since I opened it, such busy weeks! Nobody knows how many things go wrong in a house when the mistress is out of the way. And then baby has been so delightful, and has wanted a great deal of attention, though he is as healthy as healthy can be. He certainly begins to take notice, and knows his mother quite well. But what droll mistakes the little fellow makes! I was standing with him at the nursery window just now, when he held out his arms and made great efforts to get the butcher's horse in the street below. He plainly thought the horse was near enough for him to touch, and small enough for him to hold. It is all very well to read in books or hear in lectures that the infant has no notion of size or distance, that large and small, far and near, are all one to him; but it is a different thing to see with your own eyes that a cow in a picture and a cow in a field are quite the same to baby. Such ignorance o the world we live in is beyond belief; and when you think that the little fellow's tongue must be trained to say words, and his ear to understand them, and that his feet must learn to walk—an art as new to him as tight-rope dancing would be to his mother—it is marvellous how much a child has to learn in the first two years of his life. If he only went on at the same rate, he should know all the languages and all the sciences, and everything else, by the time he is twenty. Can we help him, I wonder? We must do what we can, but Dame Nature will be his best governess, and she has the knack of making his lessons pleasant. Baby is as pleased as Punch when he can do a new thing, if it is only rattling a bunch of keys.

* * * * * * * *

Well, it is over, and glad am I that it is!

"Ma'am," said nurse, "if you don't take that blessed child up, I must, and will, if you was to give me notice this very night! No female with a heart could stand it."

"No, Jane, you shall do no such thing! The master knows what he is about, and we must do as he says." (It really was rather mean of John, though, to go and "look in on Chapman" when he knew the struggle was coming off.)

"Why, whatever does a gentleman know about babies, I should like to know? And there are you, ma'am, as white as a sheet and scarce able to stand, because you know the poor little dear wants his mamma!"

I made no answer, for I really did feel ill. The child was in his crib, screaming quite dreadfully; the door stood ajar, and Jane and I were listening. My secret fear was, fits! and I was just on the point of sending Jane to have a hot bath ready, when the screaming stopped; a few quiet sobs, and then the little fellow went off into a lovely sleep.

This is how it happened. I had always put baby to sleep in my rocking-chair or walking about the rooms, and tiresome enough it was. If a cinder dropped, or the door opened, or any one spoke, up he was, lively as a cricket, quite ready to begin life again for another day. I could see it fidgeted John, who wanted me to read and talk, or have a little music, as we used before baby came. So when I came down one evening, I said, not foreseeing the consequences—

"Do you know, John, Dr. Pater declares that children should always be put to bed in the dark and broad awake."

"Don't they scream, though?"

"He says they scream only because they don't like their habits to be broken. It is not that they really care about having their mother or nurse or a candle, and all that, but if you accustom them to these things it puts them out dreadfully to interfere with their habits."

"Whew! that's it, is it?"

"What have you there?" I said, when he came in to dinner next day with three or four dry-looking volumes under his arm.

"Nothing that would interest you, wifie;" and though he pored over them the whole evening, I did not take much notice, for it was my day for writing home, and dear mother likes to hear of all baby's doings. Now, this is one difference between John and me. I often know things in a general way, and never think of acting on what I know; but give John what he calls a practical notion, and he never rests till he tries it. Those heavy-looking books were about physiology, and that kind of thing. John meant to get to the bottom of infants' habits.

I had forgotten the whole subject—habits, and

heavy reading, and all—when, about a week later, John broke out with—

"Look here, wife, it all lies in a nutshell!"

The dear fellow does not like to be teased with little jokes when he has anything on his mind, so I just waited to hear what lay in a nutshell; he looked as excited as if he were on the edge of a great discovery, but kept me waiting for a minute to arrange his ideas.

"You were quite right about habits. His habits are the one thing an infant is attached to. To break him of a habit is like tearing a limpet off a rock. It is not that he likes or dislikes his mid-day sleep, for instance. But get him used to it, and it becomes his nature, because his body and brain shape themselves to the habit you give him."

"They say 'Use is second nature,'" said I, wondering why John was so excited.

"Yes; but, Annie, you don't see how much this means. Why, we can make anything of the boy! I had no idea so much power was put into the hands of parents. Don't you see, my dear girl, we have only to give him the *habit* of the right thing all the way through, and we shall have, at any rate, given him a fair start in life."

I confess I did not quite see, nor do I see yet, what there was new in all this. But then, it never occurred to me to act on it. It rather took my breath away when John went on—

"Now, about this 'getting baby to sleep,' for instance: the young of all animals, except man, put themselves to sleep, and sleep just so often and so long as is good for them; but the putting of 'Herr Baby' to sleep is quite a solemn function, during which the affairs of the house stand still. Why, it's the greatest piece of folly. It's pampering a little being who has come to us in a state of nature—treating him like some old Nabob who must needs be fed upon curry. No, I am not saying that you do give the child curry. It's the pampering I'm talking of. You may say he doesn't know; and neither does he. But it is not the things we know and think about that do us either harm or good. It's what we get 'used to.' This is what grows into us, body and mind, and makes us the creatures we are. Pamper an infant, say I, and he will grow up to pamper himself. Then, besides, all this soothing and singing, and the occasional sudden starts, have a bad effect on the child's nerves. It's like opium-eating: the more you have the more you want. The nerves refuse to do their own work if you do it for them, and the little shocks you cannot save a child from if you 'put him to sleep' do real harm in other ways. The thing is, I believe, to put the child in the proper conditions for sleep, lay him in a darkened and quite silent room at precisely the same hours every day, and the rest will take care of itself. Nature will see that he sleeps."

"Why, John, you're as wise as Dr. Pater himself, and a deal warmer!"

"That's because I'm new," said he, with a twinkle. "Don't you know it's the new converts to a faith who are ready to go all lengths."

I "felt in my bones" that John would have me put baby into a dark bedroom wide awake, and leave him there, whatever came of it. This was rather dreadful to think of, so I tried a little fencing.

"It's a pity we didn't *begin* on this tack with baby; for, as you say, to break a child of a habit is like tearing a limpet from a rock. As we've begun, I suppose we must go on."

John laughed barbarously. "Is it possible that this is all the boasted common sense of the best of women comes to? Why, don't you see that on your principle nobody can ever be any better than he is already, and that efforts to improve the world are sheer waste of time?"

I was beginning to get cross. "I'm not talking about everybody and everything, but about baby and his bed. And I don't see what you are driving at; one minute you speak as if habit were lord of all, and the next as if changing a habit were as easy as changing a pinafore."

"'Tis true, my dear" (I never can bear John to say "my dear," it always means that he is going to preach to me), "'Custom is King of All,' but then you, madam, are Queen of Custom. I never said it was easy to change a habit, but it can be done, and you can do it. It is not easy to break a habit, but it's very easy to form one. Well, the thing is, form a new habit, and the new habit itself breaks the old that runs contrary to it. Get the child used to the new way, and he will soon give up fretting after the old."

"And how long do you suppose it takes to get a child into a new habit?"

"Oh, a few days—a week at most. You begin to-morrow, and we'll see how long it takes. By the way, suppose we keep a little book of the habits we try to form in Oswald, and the length of time we are about each. What do you say?"

Well, I never really oppose John, and besides, I knew that he was only trying to carry out the theories I had thought so wise and wonderful in Dr. Pater's lectures. So with sinking heart I waited for baby's bed-time next day. What happened I have already written down. The next evening—it was the 15th of May—as Oswald's bed-time was approaching, John said in an innocent, casual sort of way—

"I must look up that fellow Brown, and see what he is doing with his aquarium. I think we must have one."

"No, John," I said; "I am not going to take the responsibility of such another scene as I had yesterday. If you intend your child to die in convulsions, you shall, at any rate, be there to see. Besides, who is to run for the doctor if you are out of the way?"

I could see John was in a fright; the "doctor" was too much for him. He was on the point of giving way with, "Well, have your own way; put him to sleep how you like," when something—conscience, I think—hindered him, and he only said—

"All right, I won't go out."

Of course I was pleased, but really it was a little aggravating—instead of the terrific screams of the night before, we only had a little quiet crying, which lasted off and on about ten minutes.

"Ah, the new habit is taking!" said John, with a look of glee, when I got down-stairs. I nearly wished he had gone to the Browns.

Well, to make a long story short, baby cried more or less for four or five nights, then followed a little whimper as I went off with the candle. But within a week the little fellow let me leave him with wide-open eyes, and never a fret; and in five minutes or so, when I looked in, there he was, smiling like an angel in his sleep. I took sides with John, for I didn't choose to have him triumphing over me about it. Besides, it really was a comfort not to have to go through what John called "the solemn function" of putting baby to sleep every evening, and I could see it was better for the child. Henceforth we mean to go in for bringing up Oswald according to science, which means, John says, according to nature.

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We are more intimate with the Browns than with anybody. Mr. Brown was John's friend before we were married, and Mrs. Brown is *nice*. All the same, she was a little trying. If she had been an experienced mother of half a dozen well-brought-up children, I think I could have borne it well enough; but as she had been a married woman only a year longer than I, I really did not profit much by the way she laid down the law both before baby came and since. I am a bit ashamed to confess it, but I do believe one reason why I threw myself so readily into John's notions about baby was that we should have something quite new to show Mrs. Brown when she came back from Wiltshire, where she has been staying with her mother. She returned last week, and on Wednesday they were to spend the evening with us. I thought a good deal beforehand about the effect our new ideas would have on her, but when it came to the point, Mrs. Brown was so simple and ready to learn that I forgot to "show off," and was only anxious to let her see how reasonable our plans were.

"Oh, how pretty you have made your nursery! Simple and plain though everything is, it might be a drawing-room, the colours harmonise so well, and the ornaments and pictures are so really artistic; and then the room smells so fresh. Is it that nice cool India matting?"

"Partly. We like it because it can be so easily taken up, and the room done out with a wet mop, if not scrubbed, while baby is out of the way. But John is very particular that the nursery should be bright and pretty, and that everything in it should be in good taste and good of its kind. He says that at no time of his life will Oswald take more notice of his surroundings than while he can do no more than crawl about the nursery floor, and that if we want the boy to grow up cleanly, orderly, tasteful, even artistic in feeling, we must see to it that the images stamped on his brain from the very first should be pleasing and harmonious. From the way John talks about the child's brain, you might think it was of molten metal, and every sight and sound a sort of die, fixing its image for ever in the hardening substance."

"Ah, that reminds me, I notice how softly and how correctly your nurse speaks; she has improved wonderfully in the last three months."

"Jane is a good girl, and really fond of us. So we just tell her all we know and think about the training of baby, and you can't think how good she is about it. She tries to improve herself for his sake, and it's quite an education for her. At first she laughed, and said, 'Law, ma'am, he takes no notice, bless him!' But now I think she would rather appear before her master with a dirty apron and a rough head than before his Serene Highness Herr Baby."

"All this is interesting; I had a loose notion that these little refinements of life were only noticed by grown-up people. But truly, if Mr. Jervis is right, the nursery is the most important room in the house. What a fine big rug you have before the fire! and what is that large screen for?"

"Ah! that's another notion of John's. You have no idea what an oracle he is becoming about baby-life. He says that even of those who survive, a third 'enjoy poor health' all their lives because they were so barbarously clothed in their infancy. The natural thing is, he says, that the child's skin should be freely exposed to the atmosphere, if our climate and habits would allow of it. As they do not, we make a compromise. We let him have a couple of hours every day in his skin (or nearly so), morning and evening, after his bath; and when he is dressed, it is in such clothes as shall interfere least with the free action of the skin."

"Oh, I see; you let him tumble about on the rug, before the fire, and put up the screen to shield him from draughts."

"Yes, and we have delicious games, roll him and toss him, work his arms and his legs, do everything but put him on his feet: that, you may well believe, we carefully avoid; it makes one's heart ache to see so many bow-legged, rickety children in the streets."

"And what have you model parents invented about his clothes? I noticed he had on a soft little woollen frock, and nothing starched about him. Ah, there it is, and all his little garments, hanging out like a doll's washing! You surely don't keep that line across the nursery all day?"

"Oh dear, no; it unhooks, and is wound round a reel in the morning. But there's reason in that, too; the child's skin is giving off the waste of his body all day long, and his clothes get saturated with this waste, even when we don't see what we call perspiration; so we just turn the little garments inside out and spread them on the line, that this waste matter should pass into the air."

"I suppose there's something in it; and one's own clothes really have a slight odour when they are being got ready for the wash. But children are so sweet and wholesome."

"All the same, a child's skin throws off waste, unwholesome to have about, just as ours does. But let us go down to the gentlemen. I'm rather foggy about the *raison d'être* of the clothes, and John will explain it better than I."

"Has my wife been boring you, Mrs. Brown, with

all our new lights about Oswald?" was John's greeting.

"Dazzling me, rather. I make my humble obeisance to such highly-illuminated parents. By the way, you are deputed to instruct me, Mr. Jervis, as to why Oswald wears nothing but woollens."

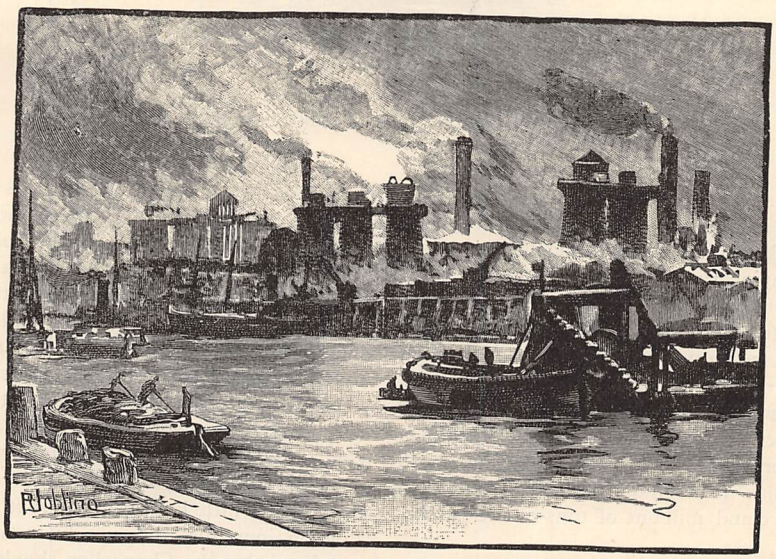
"Oh, that's easily told; a child's skin is punctured all over with little ducts for the purpose of letting out moisture and other waste of the body; woollens, being porous, allow free passage to all this *débris* of the body, which would clog the ducts if allowed to remain on the skin; also, woollens are absorbent, take up perspiration like a sponge, and so relieve the skin. Again, woollens are bad conductors of heat, do not allow the heat of the body to pass off suddenly and be succeeded by a sudden chill. You mothers are behind the times. Whoever saw men playing cricket or tennis in cotton or linen? and, worse than all, in *starched* cottons, where whatever there was of a porous nature in the material is stopped up? No, take my word for it, starch should be eschewed in the nursery, and 'Oo! a' oo!' as the Scotchman said, should be the only wear."

"Nice woman, Mrs. Brown," said John, as he was locking up.

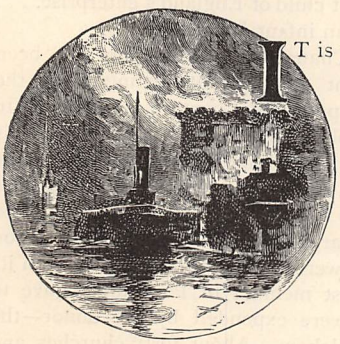
"Yes; but I hate to feel as if I had done nothing but boast the whole time."

"Don't be fanciful, my dear."

IRONOPOLIS AND ITS PEOPLE.



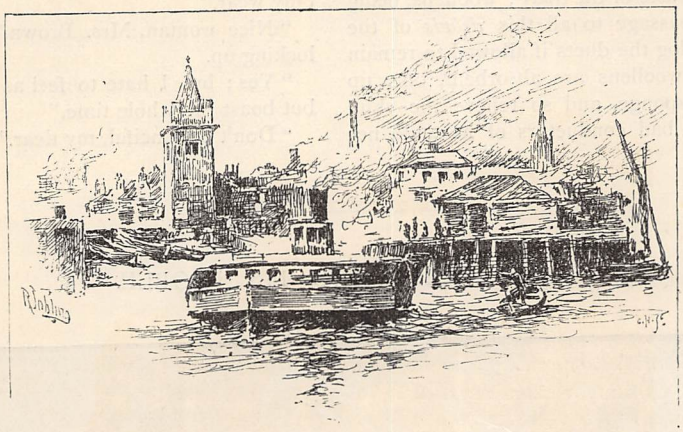
BLAST-FURNACES FROM THE RIVER.



BLAST-FURNACES AT NIGHT.

IT is less than sixty years since a farmer received at his hospitable table, almost within a stone's-throw of the river Tees, a dweller in a town some miles above. The guest told his host that he had heard that the Quakers at Darlington were about buying the farm to build a town. The farmer was incredulous, and added that it was as likely that it should be turned into a public-house. It was a solitary farmstead near the river; "the silence and solitude were only broken by grey-headed seals" in the river, or women with shrimping-nets on the banks. But on the spot was begun a town which has spread itself for miles; whose productions are in all parts of the world; whose market largely rules the price of iron; and whose people—gathered from many corners of the world—have abundant energy, pluck, perseverance, and belief in the future of the town in which they dwell. In the year 1830 a body subsequently known as the "Middlesbrough Owners" bought some 480 acres of land—farming land and salt marshes on the side of the Tees; and out of the purchase by Joseph Pease, Thomas Richardson, Henry Birkbeck, Simon Martin, Edward Pease, and Francis Gibson, sprang the town of Middlesbrough. The first house built—a modest

cottage—records the fact on a tablet in its walls ; the primal railway was extended to the place, coal staiths were erected, and on the basis of its trade as a little coal-shipping port the "new town" began its life fifty-seven years ago. It was for years a struggling little town, shipping its coals, building its oldest streets, it has built in its own bounds about two-score huge smelting furnaces, and all around it studded others ; whilst rolling-mills, steel works, plate-mills, engineering establishments, have arisen to use up some of the raw iron made in magnificent masses yearly. From the river the "new town" has spread out its streets,



FERRY-BOAT LANDING, MIDDLESBROUGH.

and dreaming of the potteries and other works which were its earliest employers of labour. It acquired little "steam-packets," ran them to the greater ports, erected small engineering works, built its little town hall, began a foundry of some moment ; acquired a trade in coal, in fuel, in pottery, and in engines ; rolled its iron, and having drawn to it two iron-masters of the olden type, one of the latter, after long search, discovered "a solid rock of ironstone, lying bare, upwards of sixteen feet thick." From the 8th day of June, 1850, the progress of Middlesbrough has been marvellous. It has quarried out of the hills and from the dales of Cleveland millions of tons of ore yearly ;

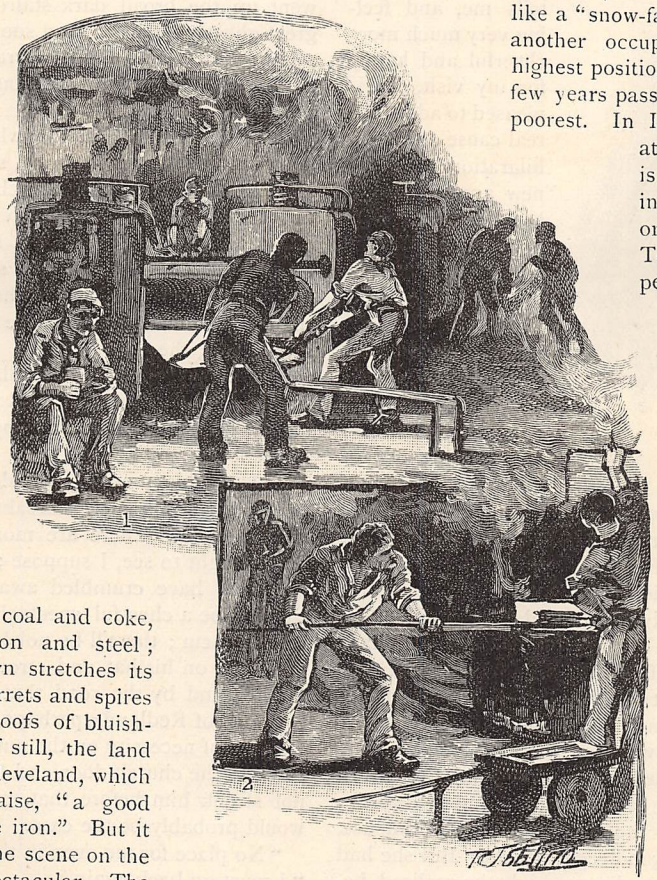
MIDDLESBROUGH MARKET.

south, east, and west. Three years after the "commercial discovery of the Cleveland ironstone" the town was incorporated ; in the following year the water-supply was commenced from a source which has since claimed one million sterling to expand it to the needs of the Tees-side towns ; and step by step, as the demand for iron increased, so increased the iron-works of this Yorkshire town, so increased its wealth, its extent, its population, and all the indications of corporate life, energy, and pluck. A quarter of a century ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, Mr. Gladstone, visited it, and remarked that the town was so little known in the south that a prominent London journalist did not know where it was, and wondered that the Chancellor should visit so obscure a place. "But," said Mr. Gladstone, "this remarkable place is the youngest child of England's enterprise. . . . It is an infant, but an infant Hercules."

The eloquent Chancellor's prediction has been verified. The slight growth that distinguished the little railway-made port half a century ago is small to that which Ironopolis has known. Its population is such that for every year of its life a thousand persons have come into it ; and what were the decaying little villages near have become, since iron blood entered into their veins, large towns. On its great Iron Exchange £28,000 were spent ; on the park which its first mayor and first member of Parliament gave to it nearly £30,000 were expended by the donor—the late Mr. Henry Bolckow. About forty churches and chapels give a local habitation and a name to the religious aspirations of Churchman and Nonconformist of many views and of more than one nationality. A palace has been erected for the home of the municipality; and the claims of philanthropy, of charity, and

of the sick and afflicted are duly recognised ; so that for two dozen years Middlesbrough has been building itself (for business, pleasure, religion, or duty) out into what was the open country near it at a rate that is surprising in this country.

The river steamers that ply on the Tees form possibly the best point from which to watch Ironopolis. In the day-time the course is through clouds of smoke that issue from tall chimneys, flaming forges, and huge furnaces that line the banks of a stream whose waters are impinged on by the slag-refuse from these vast smelting machines. From the banks of the river to the north are the salt works of South Durham, where weekly there are 3,000 tons of salt drawn up in brine from 1,000 feet below the surface to the boiling-pans on it. On the south the river is flanked by the furnaces, converters, foundries, and all the accessories of the iron trade ; the lines of railway are never weary of the rumble of the waggons of coal and coke, ore and limestone, iron and steel ; beyond these the town stretches its miles of streets, with turrets and spires rising from the long roofs of bluish-grey. And further off still, the land rises into the hills of Cleveland, which merit the Biblical praise, "a good land, whose stones are iron." But it is at night-time that the scene on the river Tees becomes spectacular. The river runs its course of dark water along banks where the huge slag-ball is falling in masses that are barely solidified, and retain a little of the colour of the heat yet ; by tall stacks of dark masonry, whose crest now and then sends forth a tongue of flame that irradiates the land all round them ; by iron-works, whence pencils of fierce light strike out, and down on the dark waters ; by huge "sows" of sand, where the livid white metal runs along to the furrows that give it the name of "pig ;" and by works where the Bessemer converter sends up into the startled air a sheet of flame that falls again into little particles, and dazzles the eyes with its brilliancy.



IRON-WORKERS.
(1) Rolling Plates. (2) Putting in the Heat.

The men who have made Middlesbrough have been drawn from many quarters—there are puddlers from the ancestral iron-works of Wales and Staffordshire, there are ship-builders from the Clyde, there are engineers from the far south, there are prosperous men from the ancient iron-working country of Sweden. Whoever, from near or far, had push, energy, and courage to speculate, seemed to make for Middlesbrough, and their fortunes were made — and lost. One of the pioneers of the trade entered the town a poor man, and in twenty-five years became actually a millionnaire ; but his riches, after his death, in other hands passed away like a "snow-fall in the river :" whilst another occupied in one year the highest position in the town, and in a few years passed away in one of the poorest. In Ironopolis life proceeds at a fast pace ; business is a rapid stream, bearing speedily on to fortune, or as speedily stranding. To see it at its best two periods are needed—the market-day, when pigs and ingots, plates and coke, coal and ore, are the articles bargained over on 'Change, and when the well-to-do merchants for thirty miles round meet ; and again on the Saturday night, when mining villages near pour in their crowds, and the streets become in parts masses of humanity jostling with rough good-humour to and from market or station. Into these mining villages gather many of the labourers, who find that class of mining comparatively easily learnt, and more remunerative than agricultural work ; and thus a stolid population drawn from many counties is attracted. Many dialects then mingle with that of the iron-workers of Middlesbrough, and the streets glaring with gas, and with a little of the halo that never ceases at night from the furnaces glowing in the air, with an abundant show of varied humanity in most of its phases, combine to make Saturday night in Middlesbrough one of the sights of the north which might give room for a longer sketch.

J. W. S.

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

IMPRESSIONS.

WHEN I was gone my little friend sat down and had "a good think," she tells me, and feeling very much more cheerful and happy for my visit, she is pleased to add. The real cause of her exhilaration was the new appeal to her heart, the new call upon her energy and faculties in behalf of the poor starving creatures on the Redlands estate. It was just what she wanted, said she to herself; it took her out of herself, and gave her something more deserving of solicitude than her own petty grievances. With so much to do, such serious questions to consider, it was really fortunate that she was alone at the Court and had no summer friends to entertain.

How strangely our lives are guided into unlooked-for channels—always the most unlikely things happening! Often and often she had built up romantic day-dreams about that Redlands estate—being still of an age to foster pleasant illusions—settling what she would do with it, if it were only hers, to reclaim it as her father had reclaimed Loecliff, covering the barren land with plenty, and rescuing the unhappy dwellers on it from misery and the prison and the workhouse, to set them up happily in decent homes. But she had never thought that her dream might be realised, because it was a dream. And now it really was to be. She might consider the estate already hers, for that application to her grandfather for permission was a mere form. As soon as his answer came she must begin work—not a day, not an hour, must be lost; the answer would arrive on Monday morning, and she must have her plans ready and in order to begin.

This reflection bringing Miss Sylvester to practical consideration of an immediate kind, she carried her lamp into the library, and set herself to read up all the information she could get upon certain subjects of primary importance in the undertaking. And here sat this excellent young woman in the stillness and silence of a lonely country house, when the last servant had gone to bed, surrounded by heavy encyclopædias and technical works, reading steadily on, with a pencil in her hand and a note-book by her side, long after the hour when most young ladies would have laid aside the most enthralling romance to seek repose.

At length it occurred to her that there was still something to be done in the church before service began the next morning; then she lit her candle and went up the broad dark staircase and into her own great ghostly bedroom, and soon afterwards laid herself down to sleep, and, I warrant, dreamt of nothing more frivolous than lime-burning, ensilage, and matters of that kind.

It looked damp and raw when she peeped out of her window the next morning, so she put on her old stuff dress to go into the church, for no one would be about at that hour. There having arranged the fresh-cut flowers she had brought from the conservatory, and taken a glance round to see that everything was as nice as she could wish it, she seated herself before the harmonium to try over the hymns that had been selected for the day.

About this time Lord Redlands came down from his room at the inn, glanced through the open door at the murky day, and, looking at his watch, said to himself—

"Detestable morning. Half-past eight. Nothing to see from the pier. Breakfast won't be ready for half an hour. There are monuments in the church that I ought to see, I suppose; though if my poor old ancestors have crumbled away with their fortunes, it will not be a cheerful spectacle. I'll go and have a look at them; there'll be nobody there at this hour."

He put on his hat and strode off to the church, up the hill, and by the road that skirted the park—the first lord of Redlands, perhaps, that had found himself walking of necessity on the outside of that park. He came to the church door, and found it fastened; it had not struck him before that, no one being there, this would probably be the case.

"No place for me even in the church," thought he; "I must go back again."

Just then his ear caught the sound of the harmonium within.

"Some one in there. If it's only an organist, I don't mind. One of the doors must be open; which?"

He walked round the church. There was a key in the little door of the tower; he lifted the latch and walked in.

Everything that Miss Sylvester undertook she did thoroughly and earnestly; this simple hymn was as serious a business to her as a chorus of Handel; bending over the closely-printed book, and softly humming the melody to the accompaniment she played, she took no notice of the door being tried, and saw nothing of Lord Redlands until he was almost before her, as he walked slowly down the nave, with

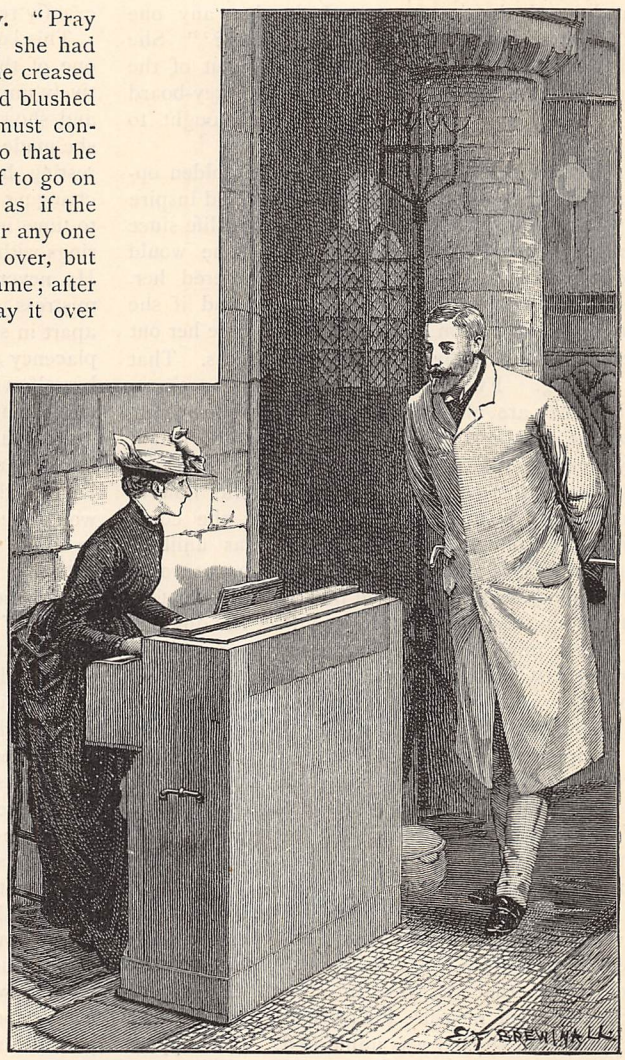
his hat and his hands behind him. She knew who it was at once; he was just as she had pictured him in her imagination; he was too good-looking to be anybody else.

It took her breath away with surprise to see him there, and she ceased to hum the hymn; at the same time, her fingers, paralysed for the moment, rested on a horrid squeaky note that whistled out shrilly as if purposely to attract the visitor's attention—the very last thing in the world she could have wished just then, for she was conscious that her nose was red, and that she must look a terrible little guy. Indeed, it required all Redlands' self-command to repress a smile as, assailed by that sustained flute note, he turned and saw a long, thin, little face, with wide-opened eyes, looking in astonishment at him over the harmonium from under the brim of that old Yokohama hat, that seemed to bury her little head, and looked like nothing but an enormous extinguisher.

"If I disturb you——" Redlands began, with a slight bow.

"Oh, not in the least," she hurried to say. "Pray take no notice of me." Discovering that she had still her finger on that abominable note, she creased her brows in anger at her own stupidity, and blushed to think what an awkward little fool he must consider her. Then bending over her music, so that he could see nothing but her hat, she set herself to go on with her work like a rational being, and as if the visitor were no more than the pew-opener or any one else. It was a simple air she was trying over, but she had to screw her attention to it, all the same; after going through it twice, she felt she could play it over and over again mechanically without looking at her notes; then she permitted her eyes to stray down the chancel. The young man was looking at the beautifully-carved stalls; he passed on, looked up, and then paused. A tablet on the wall recorded how his great-grandfather fell at the siege of Badajoz in 1812, mourned by his family, regretted by his King, and honoured by his country. A little further on he paused again, to read the glowing eulogy in redundant Latin upon a still earlier Redlands—figured above with a high front and a flowing wig—who, respected alike for his public services as a just and learned judge, and his domestic virtues as a benevolent friend to the poor and a most loving parent, died in 1760. Another step brought him to the memorial of another Redlands, who, admired in the field of literature as an elegant writer and astute historian, and beloved by all who "enjoyed his patronage" and shared his affection, died in 1704. Then he came to the monument where his Elizabethan ancestor is represented in life-size effigy, his four sons kneeling behind him, facing his wife and her three daughters, to read how Sir Geoffrey Talbot, Knight of Redlands, after sailing with Drake in his memorable voyage about the world, and furnishing two ships to meet the Spanish enemy (himself fighting them, to his own honour and the glory of his mistress the Queen), died full of years peacefully at Redlands Court in 1599.

A ray of light from the window beyond fell on the young man's face, seeming to reflect upon him some of the glory of that ancestor. He could not look upon that monument without exultant pride to think he came of such a stock; it must have made the blood tingle in his veins and his heart beat faster to see how, generation after generation, the Talbots of Redlands had lived and died bravely and well. So thought Marian, and she thought she saw in his sunlit face that joy and pride with which her own heart leapt in generous sympathy.



"'IF I DISTURB YOU——' REDLANDS BEGAN."

"Oh! if I were only a man," thought this enthusiastic little lady, "now, I would go up to him and shake hands with him." But she was only a young woman, and so, as he turned about, she had to drop her eyes.

Still playing the same air over and over again, she kept her eyes down until she felt he was near her; then she looked up—not thinking of herself now and what a queer little fright she looked in that old hat, but anxious to exchange one look with the young man in whom she had taken such deep interest. He was quite close; but he passed by, taking no notice of her whatever. The sunlight was no longer on his face, and all its happiness and exulting pride was gone. He looked straight before him, seeing nothing, probably, hearing nothing. Marian was quite out of the range of his thoughts, or he would certainly not have neglected to bow in passing.

"Poor fellow!" thought she; "he is perhaps thinking, 'If I fell, who would know what had become of the last of the Redlands? And who would care? What have I done—what can I do that any one should think kindly of me, living or dead?'" She watched him go up the nave and pass out of the church; then her hands slipped from the key-board into her lap, and she gave her whole thought to him.

If she could persuade him to seize the golden opportunity he was throwing away—if she could inspire him with that hope which had given her new life since last night, willingly—with all her heart—she would relinquish the advantages that chance offered her. Oh, she had enough to do without that; and if she had not, she could soon find something to take her out of herself, and make her forget her loneliness. That was nothing. Every one is low-spirited at times, whether they are alone or have friends about them. When the weather changed—when the first bright frosty morning came—she would be cheerful enough! That was not the question: the difficulty was how to approach this poor Lord Redlands. If she could obtain an introduction to him—which was unlikely enough, in face of his avowed disinclination—it would still be impossible for her to tell him what she thought and felt upon this subject. He would set her down at once for an impertinent, self-sufficient, presumptuous, conceited busy-body. That would not matter to her a bit, but she saw clearly enough that he would never act upon advice offered by a person of whom he held such an opinion. Yet, who else could approach him? There was only Mr. Keene, and he had already failed, after doing his best—"And a terrible mess he made of it," I fancy she must have said to herself, though she never included this when afterwards confessing her feelings and thoughts to me.

How she regretted that she had not her wits about her when he spoke! She might so easily have offered to show him what was worth seeing in the church, and in that way have introduced herself, and overcome in some measure his prejudice against her: a prejudice that she felt was unmerited. That opportunity was gone, and would not come again. To-morrow the telegram would come from her grandfather, and the young man, sick of Loecliff, would only be too glad to go away at once. Then, his estate being all gone, to the last acre, he would never come again. In all probability she should nevermore see that face; for it was scarcely likely that he would attend service.

Contrary to her expectation, Redlands did attend service in the evening, coming in just as she had finished the voluntary, and dropping quietly into the first vacant seat he came to. When the congregation rose she could see his head above the rest; she could not help looking that way now and then, but she never found him looking towards her.

Nevertheless, he had cast one glance at her, saying to himself, "Ah, that must be the queer little thing I found here this morning." But he had no notion that it might be Miss Sylvester, she was so completely unlike the conception he had formed of her. Moreover, on first entering, he had caught sight of a lady on whom he settled at once as Miss Sylvester; she exactly realised his preconceived idea.

This lady sat quite alone in the chancel, occupying one of the stalls near the pulpit. She was an assertively imperious young woman of about thirty, bold and showy, with particularly white hands, of which she made considerable show, for they were ungloved, resting her elbows on the desk before her, and changing the position of her clasped palms from time to time, in order to display the sparkling stones in the rings with which her fingers were plentifully adorned. He never for a moment doubted that this was the mistress of Loecliff. The very fact of her sitting apart in solitary state proclaimed it, and her self-complacency and ostentation supported the claim that she herself evidently entertained to a position of complete and exclusive superiority.

He could not get his eyes away from her. At first he was amused by the fatuous vanity of the woman; he thought it not unlikely that she had expected he would be there, and had specially prepared herself to dazzle him; but after awhile, disgusted with her obtrusive vulgarity, he became exasperated to think that henceforth she was to be the sole representative of those who had succeeded the fine old family that founded Redlands.

So while Miss Sylvester was glancing at him with growing interest and compassionate tenderness, he was scowling at some one else, with a growing hatred for the very name of Sylvester.

He was so annoyed that he could hardly sit out the service, and was the first to leave the church, which he did vowing to himself that he would never willingly see Miss Sylvester again, or exchange two words with her, no matter how many negotiations might call for them.

As a matter of fact, the woman for whom he entertained such a decidedly lively abhorrence was, as I have shown, not Miss Sylvester at all, but the masterful wife of the meek vicar, who writes, I am told, the best part of his sermons for him, and spends three-fourths of his income.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

MISS SYLVESTER IN A NEW CHARACTER.

MISS SYLVESTER waited within-doors until ten o'clock the next morning; and then, as no telegram had come, she thought she ought to send me a message, that I might not come over to Loecliff unnecessarily. She determined to go down to the post herself, though there was a drifting fall of thin rain that made going out of doors untempting. Perhaps she thought she might possibly meet Lord Redlands: who knows?

She put on her thick boots, a waterproof, and a bonnet that couldn't be spoilt, and trudged off. There was not a soul to be seen in the one street of Loecliff, nor even a face at the window of the Old Inn.

"Has any telegram come for me?" she asked at the post-office.

"No, miss; nothing has come for anybody," was the reply.

She wrote a message to me, and sent it off. Then she entered into conversation with the young woman who managed the postal affairs, and kept the fancy shop to which the post-office was attached.

"Mother's awful bad, miss," said the young woman, "and I'm terrible anxious about her. Doctor says she oughtn't to be left; but, you see, George has gone with the mail to Barington, and won't be back this two hours, and though mother only lives three doors off, I can't be there and here too at the same time. I could leave the shop, for there's not likely to be any customers such a day as this, but there's the post——"

"Go to your mother," said Marian on the instant. "I can sit here as well as anywhere else. I am expecting a telegram; if the bell rings I will fetch you."

After protesting that "she really couldn't," "she didn't like to," "it was really too good," and so on, the young woman ran off to attend to her mother, while Miss Sylvester, laying aside her waterproof and bonnet, seated herself behind the counter, took up the stocking and needles laid down by the postmistress, and was presently knitting away as if she had no other occupation in the world.

This was no unusual proceeding on her part; she did not know what pride of the false and contemptible kind was. It would have been more in keeping with conventional notions of propriety, perhaps, if she had gone to nurse the woman's mother instead of minding her shop, but that would have been less kind to the woman, and maybe less agreeable to herself, despite the poetry that surrounds a sick-bed

There was not much light in the shop, for all the windows in Loecliff are more or less overgrown with Virginia creepers and fuchsias, therefore she had to bend low over her work, so that it took her altogether by surprise when some one stalked up to the counter, and asked in a clear, full voice—

"Have you anything for George Talbot?"

She looked up and saw Lord Redlands before her. It took away her breath.

"I have been expecting a telegram," he explained, seeing that she looked amazed: "a telegram from Coneyford."

"Yes—that is, no," she said, in confusion.

He smiled. "Are you sure that no is not yes?" he asked.

"When I said yes, I meant that I understood you expected a telegram; when I said no, I meant that none had come in to-day."

"You have made it clear now. Thank you," said he, still smiling pleasantly, for he liked the look of this simple little body, blushing and confused with her blunder. It was an intelligent face, if not pretty, and, above all things, sweet in its possibilities—the sort of face a man would like to see in his home, if he had one. Nice to have a little sister with a face like that.

"If anything comes, will you send it up to the inn, sharp?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," said she, rising from her chair, and letting her work and a clattering pair of scissors fall, "directly."

He nodded and smiled, and said, "Good morning," then marched to the door.

"What a little idiot I am!" thought Miss Sylvester, seeing this, her second golden opportunity, slip away more shamefully than the first.

"Well, this is too much of a good thing," exclaimed Redlands, stopping short on the threshold and looking out at the rain, which had suddenly changed from a fluctuating drizzle to a determined downpour. "I will stand up here awhile," he said, turning about, "unless I block out all the daylight."

"Oh, I can see very well to do such work as this," replied Marian, getting her needles into order, and trying to look as if she were not pleased, or unsettled, or anything else which she ought not to be under such conditions.

As most of the light came through the doorway, Redlands came further in, which had the further advantage of bringing him closer to the pleasant little body. He had scarcely spoken a word since I left him on Saturday; it was quite refreshing to think of talking to some one who seemed simple and human.

When she had got her needles well in hand, she glanced up at him before setting to work. He seemed to know the look of those large dark eyes.

"Surely," said he, with sudden recollection, "you are the lady I saw yesterday morning in the church—you play the organ there?"

"I play the harmonium."

"And you keep the post, mind shop, and knit stockings?"

"Why," said she, at last grasping the chance, "how dull our life would be if we had no occupation!"

"Yes," said he, with a dismal drop in his voice, "it is dull."

"Whereas," she went on, determined to follow up her advantage, "if we only knit stockings it is something done."

"What a cheerful, sunny disposition the girl has!" thought he, looking down at the bent head and nimble, slender fingers; but as he said nothing, she feared she was going too fast, and so added quietly, "I don't know what we should do without knitting in the winter. In the summer we are occupied with the

visitors who take the rooms—they want so much attention ; but when the season is over, this keeps us employed. It is just the thing we wanted. Two years ago only one or two women knew how to knit, but now we are all busy—as much as we can do. Gentlemen give plenty of orders, for these stockings wear a long while, and we sell them as cheap as we can."

"I think you are the busiest little lady in Loecliff," he said, following his own train of thought rather than hers.

"Oh, if you went into the cottages you would find there women just as busy as I."

"But the men—they seem to be the laziest set I ever met with. I came here on Saturday, and I have not seen a single boat put out."

"There is no market for fish on Sunday, and to-day is so wet."

He laughed. "That seems an odd excuse for fishermen."

"They are old men and boys who stay here ; and I don't see why they should not take care of themselves as well as other people—when it rains."

She looked up into his face as she spoke, so that he could not doubt the thrust was meant for him. He liked the fearless look with a flash of mischief in her eyes.

"True," said he ; "I suppose they have as much right to be idle as any one else."

"If any one *has* a right to be idle," she added, going on busily with her needles.

"Some assuredly have. There are cases in which it is our duty to do nothing," said he.

She laid her work in her lap, and looked up in wonder.

"What wonderfully changeful pretty eyes they are," he thought.

"I cannot understand that," she said—"cannot imagine any such case."

"Supposing I took up your work and attempted to finish it," said he, smiling ; "in all probability I should make such a tangle of it that you would have to undo all and begin again—proving that I had done better to leave it alone."

She laughed. "That only proves," said she, "that you cannot knit stockings." Then, with sudden pathos, she added, "Oh, I am sure you could do something infinitely better than that."

That look thrilled him with a feeling to which he was a stranger. There was a deep, tender eagerness in it that told him she knew what the burden was that made him weary of life, and would, if she could, take it on her own slight shoulders.

"I wish," said he, with an earnestness that was also new to him, "I wish you would tell me what I can do. I believe you know me, and have not been speaking on this subject without a purpose."

"Yes," she said quietly, "I know who you are. I knew you when I saw you in the chancel ; I imagined what was in your mind that made you forget me as you passed up the nave to go away. I have thought of it since ; and I have been speaking with a purpose. You ask what you can do ? Go to Black Rock Gap, and you will find the answer there."

He shook his head. "It is a parallel case to the knitting," he said. "I should find work there that will be far better done by somebody else."

"There is work there that none can do so well as you."

"That is your opinion ; but do you think any one less generously disposed—Miss Sylvester, for example—would think as you do ?"

"Yes."

"I don't," said he emphatically.

"Do you think you ought to say that of one you do not know ?"

"I *do* know her—as much as I wish to," he answered sharply, thinking of the woman sitting alone and making a show of her finery. "I saw her last night in the chancel, and unless she is a consummate actress, I am not wrong in believing her to be a vulgar, affected——" He checked himself suddenly, and added, "But I am certainly wrong in saying this behind her back."

Miss Sylvester was amused, as well she might be, by this mistake ; in addition, she was not displeased with Lord Redlands' opinion of the vicar's wife, for she had her womanly failings, this little Miss Sylvester, and was as pleased as you or I might be to find the object of her own dislike hated by somebody else.

"Would you say this to Miss Sylvester's face ?" she asked.

"I should find it difficult to conceal my opinion if I had the misfortune to be brought in contact with her," he replied.

As she did not reply, he said presently—

"I should like to know what is passing in your mind."

"I was thinking," said she, "that here is the case of knitting stockings reversed. You have expressed contempt for Miss Sylvester, which proves that you have qualities higher than hers—for we can despise only those whom we recognise as being lower in thought and feeling than ourselves. Then why should you permit her to do that which you are better able to perform ?"

"In a practical sense she is undoubtedly better than I am."

"Our practice is governed by our principle, it seems to me," she said, still working steadily on ; for that occupation enabled her to concentrate her thoughts on the subject, and gave her more scope for reflection than if she had been looking in his face to divine what was in his thoughts. "And if our principle is wrong our practice cannot be right—morally."

Her reasoning astonished him, as well it might, considering, as he did, that she was only, at best, a fairly instructed intelligent villager. "Where on earth did she get all her ideas ?" he wondered. After a pause, he said—

"I should not know how to begin. Certainly you must have thought more about this subject than I have. You have settled in your own mind what you would do in my place, haven't you ?"

"Yes," said she quietly, "I have. But my notions are only a woman's, and may be no better than Miss Sylvester's. Still, I could tell you how to begin."

"Tell me."

"Do as I suggested just now: go over there and see what is to be done."

He hesitated.

"It is less than an hour's walk," said she, looking up, "and the rain has ceased." Then fixing her eyes on him earnestly, "If you asked me to do this for you, I would do it; or if I thought I could do you a service, I would go there without being asked."

"Will it please you if I go?" he asked.

"Yes. You cannot tell how greatly it will please me," she answered.

"Then I will go."

She dropped her work, and, rising, offered him her hand. He took it in silence, an unpleasant suspicion crossing his mind that this young person, under her simplicity, was a crafty little coquette. Was her temerity the result of *naïve* simplicity, or was it the result of receiving a good deal of attention from gentlemen visitors to Loecliff? The latter was not unlikely, for she had an intelligence very much beyond the range of even well-educated girls; and now he came to look at her, he was surprised to find how pretty she was. And her ways were winning—fascinating beyond those of any woman he remembered to have met.

He did not like the notion that she was a flirt—a symptom of jealousy that showed the dawn of strong liking for her; it was unpleasant to think that idle fellows had come there before him, and spent hours in chatting with the little postmistress. Of course, as postmistress she would be always there for any one to drop in and amuse himself with.

"'IS THERE ANY WAY BACK TO LOECLIFF?'" (*p.* 107).

"If I don't see my way to doing good work after my visit, what then?" he asked.

"Then," said she, "I can but let you know what I thought of doing."

"Good," said he, but not over-cheerfully; for that same unpleasant suspicion led him to think she was but contriving the means for further interviews, with a possible flirtation to follow. "Of course, I shall find you here?"

"No," said she; "I am only staying here while the postmistress is away with her mother. She will be back soon, and possibly you will never find me here again."

He brightened up at this. "Then where may I find you?" he said.

She reflected a minute. "Do you know the schoolrooms?" she asked.

"The new building beyond the church? yes."

"Well, my class is over at half-past four, and then I leave."

"Oh," thought he, more cheerfully than ever, "she is the schoolmistress: that accounts for her playing the organ in the church, and her intelligence, and all that!"

"I shall be at the school-room door at half-past four," said he; then he offered his hand, and they said good-bye—with bright happiness shining in their eyes; and he hurried off, with the strangest feeling in the world giving elasticity to his steps and animation to his mind. It never struck him that what he was doing now he would have regarded as absurdly impossible an hour before.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

WHAT CAME OF REDLANDS' VISIT TO THE GAP.

WHAT Marian's feelings were she never confessed to me—indeed, I own to having supplied more than one hiatus in the narratives of these two young people—she only tells me that "just then" the bell began to tingle in the little room adjoining, and she had to go and fetch the postmistress to take the telegram from the wire.

It was from old Sylvester, addressed to Marian Sylvester, Dalegrove Court, dated November 20th, Amalfi, and ran thus:—

"I will come and decide the point in question. Shall probably arrive at Loecliff about the 28th. Will telegraph when I reach England."

Miss Sylvester was at first simply astonished. This was, of all things, the most unlooked-for. To think that this old man—over eighty—after fifty years' absence from England, should undertake a fatiguing journey from the south of Italy—an invalid going north when all others were going south—was, indeed, surprising, and hardly to be explained by the fact that he was undoubtedly eccentric. It could not be merely to settle the financial question that he came; again and again he had made it clear that he took no interest in the estate whatever, and washed his hands of it entirely. What, then, could be his motive? There was but one conclusion: that just as the flame of a candle flickers up before dying out, some flash of human sentiment had animated the old man's heart, and warmed it with a desire to look once more upon his native country, and to see his son's child before he died.

With this hope Marian's responsive heart glowed with pleasure, and she at once began to revolve in her mind what rooms she should prepare for her grandfather, what means she should take to insure his comfort and satisfaction. First of all, she must let me know; so she wrote out the text of her grandfather's telegram, in doing which she was reminded that now it would be impossible to conclude the purchase of Redlands before old Sylvester's arrival; and I dare say this reflection gave her quite as much delight as the prospect of meeting her grandfather.

Meanwhile, Lord Redlands was making his way to Black Rock Gap—and a very bad way he found it when he got off the high road and well on to his own estate—the ragged road no better than a watercourse, and the land on either side covered with a tangled growth of briar and brake, that only a poacher could make his way through. Down he went into the Gap, stepping as neatly as he could from stone to stone in avoiding the pools of stagnant slush and the stream of muddy water, until he came to a turn whence one gets a fairly comprehensive bird's-eye view of the village. There lay the thatched cottages huddled together in the hollow between two bold rugged hills, the beach below with the two boats stranded; a crumbling mass of stone-work stood out of the sea, showing where once the pier had formed a harbour for the craft; beyond, the grey sea spread out into the grey mist. An artist would have gone into raptures over the scene: it took every bit of courage and hope out of poor Redlands' heart. Was there any need to go further, to examine the thing closer? He knew that every one of those cottages was a foul den of misery; he knew that the one thin streak of blue smoke rose from the chimney of his beer-house; at the very thought of it he seemed to smell the reek of stale beer and filthy tobacco. Was there any necessity to look at the people who dwelt there, to know that they were squalid and brutal?—at those boats, to know that they were rotten and unseaworthy?—at that butt-end of a breakwater, to know that it no longer afforded protection from the sweeping waves? No; he realised fully all the misery and wretchedness and desolation of those unhappy creatures, who had lost the last spark of hope that animates mankind to forsake the bad and seek better. But for shame in the consciousness that he was responsible for this state of things, he could have laughed at the idea of his coming hither at the bidding of a pretty little schoolmistress to reform it. What could he do?

However, he had promised to go into the village, and he was not a man to break his word, even when no good was to be done by keeping it, and the work it involved was to the last degree unpleasant. Down he went into the thick of it, and found the condition of the people rather worse than he expected. Dirt, decay, and evil odours all around; not a soul usefully employed anywhere to be seen. The dull, heavy men seated of a row on a spar outside the beer-house scarcely troubled themselves to look at him; three women disputing at a cottage door stopped their discussion to gape and then laugh at him; a boy from the safe side of a hedge threw a cabbage-stump at him. He got down to the beach as quickly as possible. There, leaning against one of the boats, stood a fellow with an empty pipe in his mouth, and an empty look in his face. "He must be a little better than the rest, to prefer his own company to theirs," thought Redlands, and ventured to speak, without expecting much civility in return.

"Is there any way back to Loecliff without—ah—going up that watercourse?" he asked.

The man looked at the sea, which was as calm as the conventional mill-pond.

"I don't like vent'ring out with this here old boat, master; but I *will* ventur it for eighteenpence."

Thinking the man's life at least might be worth more than eighteenpence to his family, Redlands replied that he would prefer going on foot if it were practicable.

"Oh, there's a way up Redrift and the Combe if you only knows which road to go," said the man.

"I'll give you half-a-crown to show me the road."

"Half-a-crown! Come on, sir; it's a precious long time since I've seen half-a-crown," and with that the man struck out along the shingly beach, Redlands following with a feeling of relief in turning his back on the Gap, albeit the loose pebbles were painful to the pedestrian in fashionable boots.

"What shall I say to that poor little girl?" he wondered as he plodded on. "She will never understand how utterly helpless I am. If she were in my place, now, how much she might do! What a pity she isn't!"

For a good half-mile he ploughed along that wretched shore; now and then stretches of slaty shale made walking a little easier. Presently he observed that the sea was no longer grey, but tinged with dull red as far as the eye could reach. He asked his guide the meaning of this.

"It's the stream as comes down Redrift as does it, master. It's as red as blood. I guess that's why the rift is called red," the man explained.

Then they came to the rift—a narrow chasm in the red rock, down which poured a stream of water, thick, and of a deep red. He looked about him with a searching eye.

"We've got to go up here, master," said the guide.

"All right," replied Redlands, still with his eyes on the rocks about him.

"It's a bit rough, and it's a bit dirty," said the man; "shall I turn up the legs of your trousers?"

"No, never mind; go ahead!"

Redlands was getting excited about these rocks. Up they went, such a path as very few Pall Mall gentlemen have ever experienced, I reckon; the guide looking at the ground in front for safe foothold, Redlands following in his steps instinctively, his eyes continually exploring the rocks on either side. Presently he stopped where the red rock rose sheer up a hundred and fifty feet.

"Whose estate are we on?" he asked. "Does this belong to Miss Sylvester?"

"Law, no, master! There'd be a nice clean path up here if it did. This is Redlands', and wus luck for us as has to live on it."

"Do you think you can knock a bit off that piece of rock sticking out there?"

The man thought he could; and finding a loose stone, chipped off a fragment and brought it to Redlands. The young man took it eagerly, weighed it in his hand, and looked at it closely; then he sat down on a rock as if he were bewildered.

"Will you have my jacket to sit on, master? You're a-spiling your clothes," said the fellow.

Redlands shook his head, and sat musing, with the piece of red rock in his hand. After awhile he started to his feet, and followed his guide till they came to the top of the rift, where the scrubby Combe began. Then he paused to look down the rift, then he started off to climb the hill to the right, despite the guide's assurance that he was going away from Loecliff. From this hill he went to the next, following a course that must have seemed erratic enough to the man at his heels, and only stopping from time to time to examine the outcropping rock.

Suddenly he remembered his appointment to meet the girl at the school-house, and looking at his watch, found it was half-past three.

"Show me the main road to Loecliff as quickly as possible," said he.

When they were in the road, Redlands, after looking about to mark the place, gave the man a half-sovereign, and said, "Meet me here to-morrow morning—early—eight o'clock. Don't forget."

"Right, master; no fear! I'll bring you the change of this here."

"I don't want any change; bring a pick and a spade, that's all;" and off he started at a brisk pace towards Loecliff.

Just then I caught sight of him, for I had driven over to the Court to see Miss Sylvester about the strange telegram from her grandfather, and was then going back to Coneyford. I pulled up as we met, but for a moment could say nothing for sheer amazement, to see this young swell spattered and daubed from head to foot with the blood-red mud.

"Would it be inconvenient to turn round, Keene, and drive me to Loecliff?" he asked. "I have an appointment, and I fear I may be late."

Your true gentleman has the same nice regard for punctuality, whether his appointment be with a dairy-maid or a duchess.

"Not a bit, my lord," I replied—"especially as my visit to Loecliff was partly to see you."

"All right," he cried, setting his foot on the step and springing up to my side with an alacrity that surprised me not less than his bespattered condition.

"I had to tell you," said I, "that we cannot let you have a definite answer about the purchase of your estate for at least a week."

"It's all the same if you can't let me know for a year. The estate's not for sale. Miss Sylvester shall never set her foot on it if I know anything."

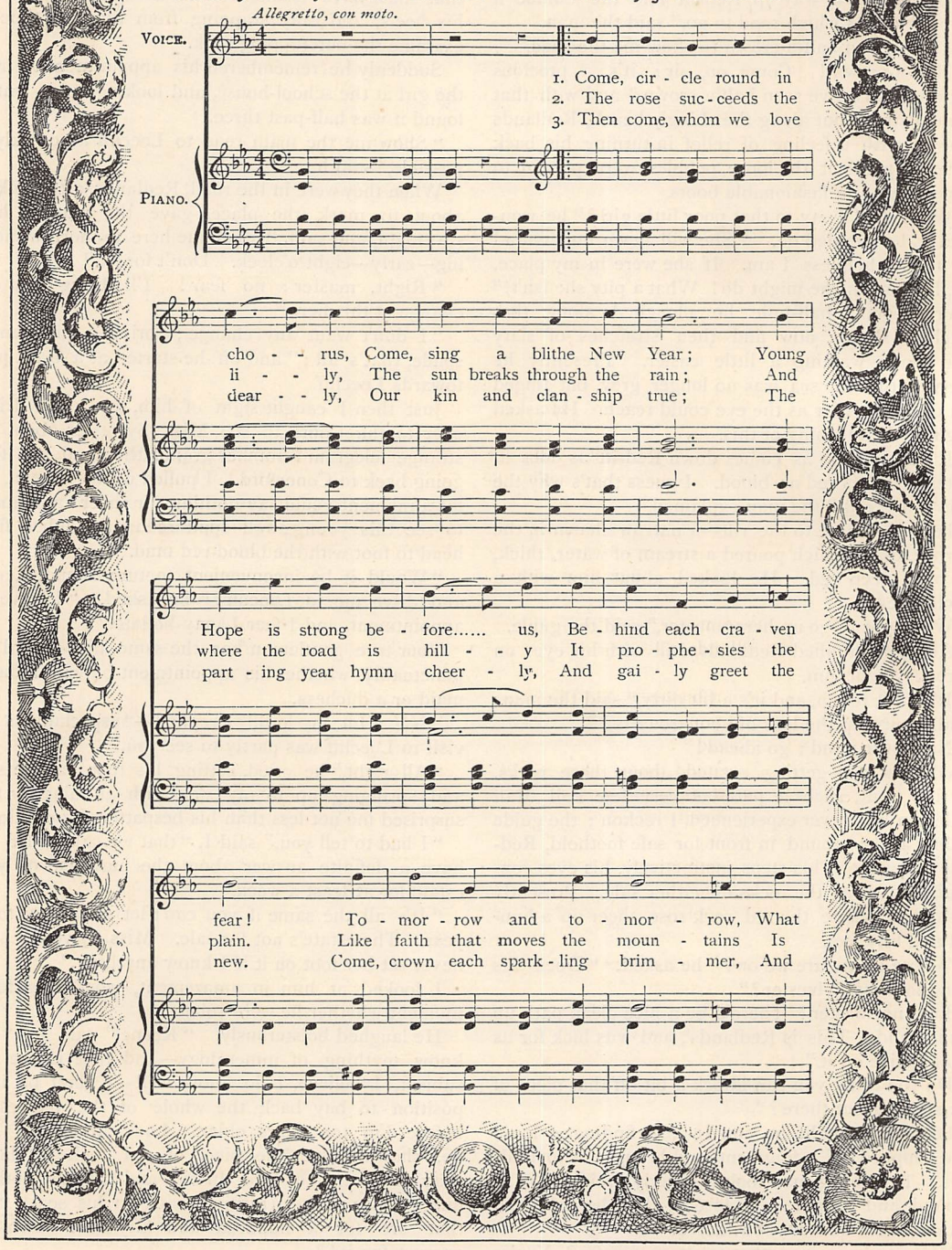
I looked at him in amazement, wondering for a moment whether he were sober.

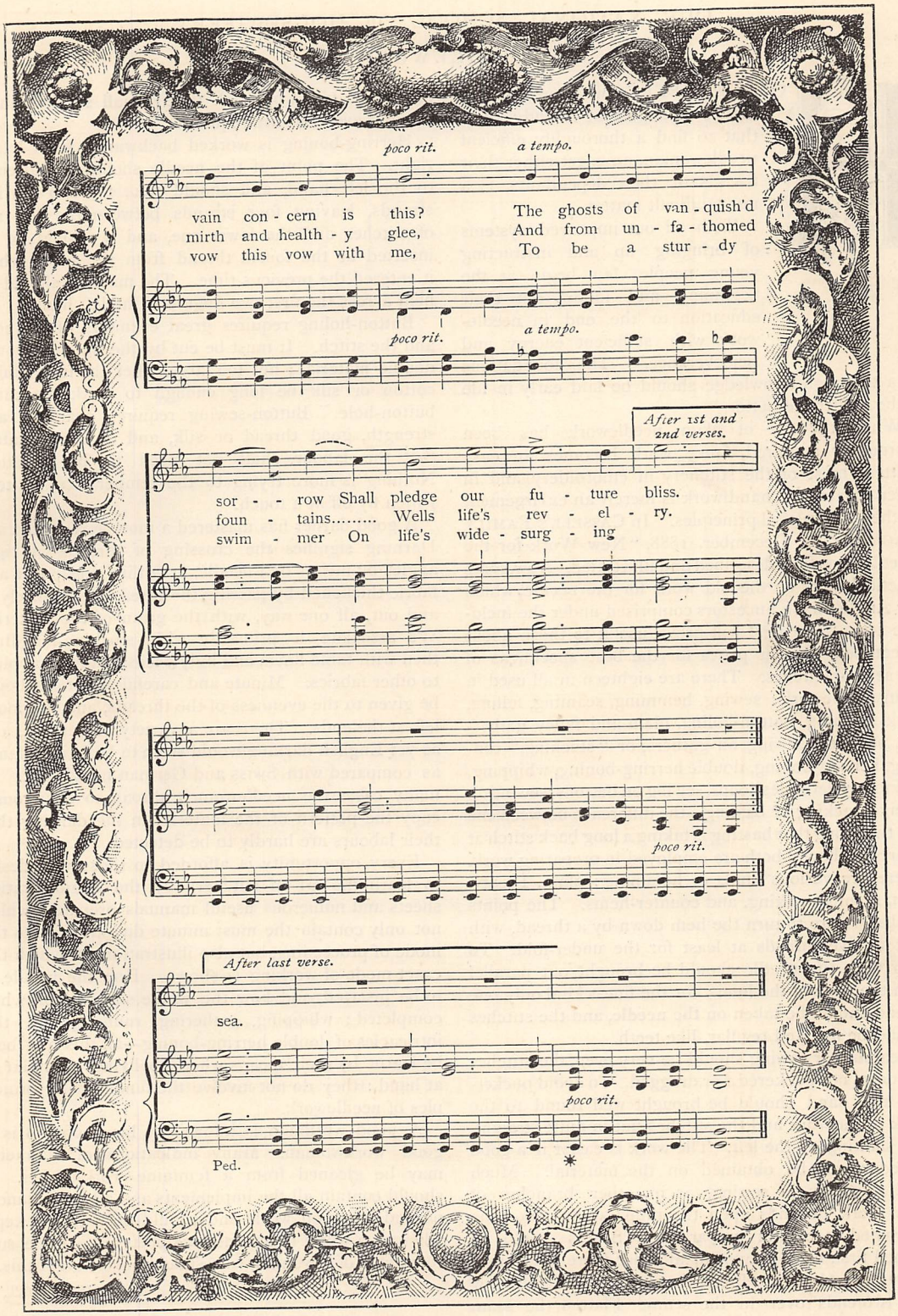
He laughed boisterously. "Keene," said he, "if I know anything of mineralogy—and that is the one subject, I believe, I do know well—I shall be in a position to buy back the whole of the old estate before I'm ten years older. Look at that!" said he, showing me the piece of red rock; "there's sixty per cent. of iron in it; and there's nothing under those hills" (turning back in his seat) "but that ore for a hundred and fifty feet down, I'll answer for it!"

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH

A Song for the New Year.

Words by PROF. J. STUART BLACKIE. *Music by* J. W. ELLIOTT.




poco rit.
a tempo.
vain con - cern is this?
mirth and health - y glee,
vow this vow with me,
The ghosts of van - quish'd
And from un - fa - thomed
To be a stur - dy
poco rit.
a tempo.
After 1st and 2nd verses.
sor - - row Shall pledge our fu - ture bliss.
foun - tains..... Wells life's rev - el - ry.
swim - mer On life's wide - surg - ing
poco rit.
After last verse.
sea.
poco rit.
Ped.

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

NEEDLEWORK.

HOUSEKEEPERS who make domestic management a study know that to find a thoroughly efficient needlewoman, amongst either their friends or their dependants, is a most difficult matter.

With all our improved systems of bringing up and instructing young people, few begin at the beginning and follow out their education to the end in needlework with sufficient energy and perseverance. The foundations of a thorough knowledge should be laid early in life—the earlier the better.

When the art of plain needlework has been thoroughly acquired, fancy work becomes an easy matter; most of the stitchery in embroidery and in other ornamental handiwork is merely an enlargement on the fundamental principles. In CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE for December, 1888, "New Work for the Needle" was fully described and illustrated. Now, some practical hints on the old work for the needle, which our Anglo-Saxon ancestors comprised under the inclusive term "Sewing," will prove useful to those about to compete for our prizes for the best specimens of the several stitches. There are eighteen in all used in plain needlework: sewing, hemming, seaming, felling, back-stitching, button-holing, plain and fancy gathering, stroking, sewing on gathers, or "stocking," running, herring-boning, double herring-boning, whipping, making eyelet-holes, loops, sewing on buttons, sewing on strings, tacking or basting—the difference between the last two being that basting is taking a long back stitch at intervals, though both are employed in preparing work. There are various kinds of hemming: plain, French hem, mantua-making, and counter-hems. The points to observe are to turn the hem down by a thread, with four or five threads at least for the under-fold. To hem well, the needle should be brought out parallel with the edge of the hem; for the finest kind only one thread should be taken on the needle, and the stitches should be fine and regular, like teeth.

Seaming or sewing should be very even, the stitches not deep, nor puckered nor dragged. To avoid puckering, the hand should be brought well round to the back of the work and the stitches put in quite straight, not slanting to the left. The work is easier if a good selvedge can be obtained on the material. Much of the success in sewing, as in other branches of plain work, depends upon the preparation. No time is wasted in careful preparation. Seams should be pinned first, each pin put in and out more than once. Never use a knot nor break the thread; cut it, and sew the two ends over in the seam. Flatten the seam well with the nail when completed. Stitching should be learnt on a drawn thread, and only two threads should be taken up each time; small stitches and a straight even line are required.

Herring-boning is worked backwards, from left to right. The point of the needle should be directed to the left hand, and should take up two vertical strands, leaving four strands between the top row of stitches and the lower one, and it should be reinserted at the fourth thread from the point where it entered the previous time. The material should be held across the first two fingers of the left hand.

Button-holing requires great evenness of the edge and the stitch. It must be cut by the thread through double material; not too large. Let the needleful of cotton or silk be long enough to work the entire button-hole. Button-sewing requires neatness and strength, good thread or silk, and a determination that the labour shall not need to be repeated. Nothing is more trying to the temper than buttons which fly off at a touch.

A good darner has mastered a most serviceable art. Darning signifies the crossing of threads at right angles by means of a needle, or a thin portion of any fabric thickened by passing the thread very closely in and out, all one way, with the grain of the material. We associate it primarily with stocking-mending, then with table-linen, and only occasionally as applied to other fabrics. Minute and careful attention should be given to the evenness of the threads, and the loops left at the ends. There are a variety of stitches, and as yet English darning would seem to be in its infancy as compared with Swiss and German handiwork. In many cases the needlewomen abroad so dexterously copy the pattern of the material in the darning that their labours are hardly to be detected.

Every opportunity is afforded to those who desire to learn the art of stitchery by the demonstration sheets and numerous useful manuals prepared, which not only contain the most minute directions as to the mode of proceeding, but also illustrations in which the exact mode of working is shown. How the needle is to be inserted, and how the whole should look when completed; whipping, gathering, running, and the intricacies of double herring-boning—all this had best be learnt by their means when no living exemplar is at hand: they do not involve the fundamental principles of needlework.

A good workman is known by his tools, so is a good workwoman. Many indications of character may be gleaned from a feminine work-basket. It should contain all the implements and all the adjuncts needed for good work, and should be carefully kept. There is a world of unconscious poetry about the surroundings of a woman, who should never forget this.

ARDERN HOLT.

*** Our readers are reminded that, according to the curriculum published last month, January 10 is the latest day for receiving work in this class.

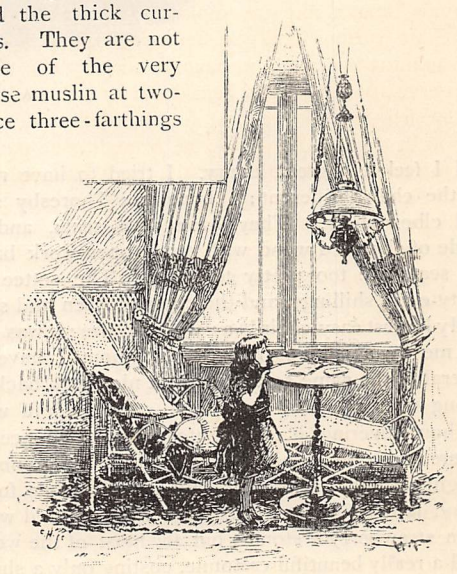
OUR NEW HOUSE AND ITS PLENISHINGS.

RATTAN CHAIR, WORK-BAG, POUFFÉ.

AMONG all the rooms in this house,* the drawing-room is my favourite. It suits me; I generally feel happy in it. It is furnished in no particular style, and there is nothing very valuable in it, but I cannot help knowing that it is a very pretty room. I can afford to praise it, because in so doing I am not commending my own taste. Two years ago I happened to visit the Welcome Club at the American Exhibition. All the rooms pleased me, but the smoking-room particularly took my fancy. It was a long, light room, beautifully furnished in walnut-wood, with cushions and covers of dark leather, and hangings of Oriental muslin. As soon as I saw the paper on the walls, I felt I must have it. I should never have chosen one like it. I should not have dared to, for I do not understand enough about wall-papers to know how very well it would look when hung; but seeing it hung, I felt I could not live without it! And if only the "Ruling Powers" would tell me where they ordered it, I would have it forthwith. All the countless strangers who asked favours of the "Ruling Powers" at the American Exhibition know something of the courtesy and kindness with which they were granted.

It was not long before I had my coveted paper, and, like a child, was "made happy for ever after." It is a magic paper indeed for me: gifted with the power of conjuring up delightful reminiscences. But as no stranger can enter into those pleasures, I will try to describe it in prosaic terms. Its colour is what is called cinnamon-brown, and it is easier to say what cinnamon-brown is not than what it is. For one thing, it is not a brown at all. The ground is a pale buff, and the pattern running over it is made with red and yellow mixed together, more of the yellow than the red being used in the mixture. At the top of the paper runs a narrow border of the same colours, with an outer line of brown, and above this the high cornice is divided into panels, just as it was at the club, and is surmounted with more narrow brown lines. I had to think very seriously about what colours would do to go with this paper. I covered the floor with plain China matting, very finely woven and of a lovely buff shade, and in the centre had a soft Axminster carpet in tints of yellow and dull red; it is very lovely, and cost five and elevenpence a yard, so it ought to last for a long time; the border with which it was made up cost a shilling less than the carpet.

There are two windows in this room, and their curtains were a present to me, as was also that dear little spherical pouffé, which looks like a big round ball on castors. It is covered with the same material that the curtains are made of, Capucine satin. Its appearance is that of very thick Roman satin, quite different from the ordinary satin, the "sheen" of which I very much dislike in upholstery. The design is called Honduras, and very beautiful it is. On a background of a deep strawberry shade is a straw-colour line about an inch and a half wide, on which are woven strawberry blossoms in colours of crushed strawberry, yellow, and brown; a narrower stripe is in a darker shade of strawberry than the background, with blue flowers sprinkled on it. It is a material which I think will last for ever. I could not have afforded to buy it, but it is quite within the means of wealthy people. I tied the curtains with bands composed of four lengths of ribbon plaited. The shades were strawberry, pale brown, pale blue, and straw-colour. Close to the window, fastened upon the woodwork above the highest pane, was a piece of copper wire, which corresponded with another piece at the bottom. From these were fastened, by means of tiny rings, pretty curtain-blinds of pale blue Indian muslin, made with tiny frills at the side where they meet. They are generally pulled back so as to allow about an inch to protrude beyond the thick curtains. They are not made of the very coarse muslin at twopence three-farthings



AN IDEAL CORNER.

* See CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, April, 1888, p. 276.

the yard, with which the shops are now overrun, but of a much finer substance, which is sold by the piece of twelve yards for six and ninepence. Of course I used nothing like a piece for these little curtains, but the remainder came in very useful for other things. Draped over silk it is very soft for dresses. As for the furniture, it is nearly all new, as most of that used in the old drawing-room has gone to the school-room and nursery. Our greatest expense was the couch. We gave seven guineas for it, or, to speak more correctly, not quite so much, for we bought it only in its lining, wishing to cover it ourselves. It is very comfortable, and I feel it a great luxury. I tried to have nearly all the chairs different; I bought a Thoresby settee and elbow-chair. They have rush seats, and are made of ebonised wood with pretty open-work backs: the seats are too pretty to cover. The settee cost thirty-eight shillings, and the chair thirteen and six.

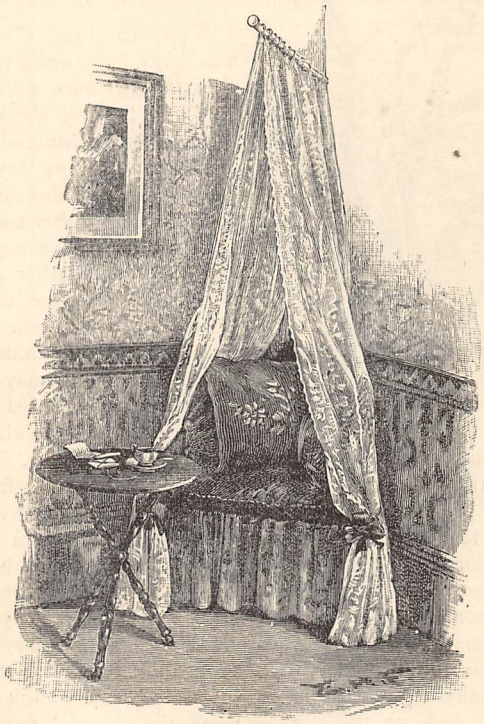
My largest easy-chair is a very good size; it was made for me by a cabinet-maker from whom I have had several of the same sort. It has a nice high back and strong arms made of plain deal, enamelled in white. Without covering, it cost eighteen and ninepence, and covered with my own material it came to a guinea. I bought a smaller arm-chair, called the Eugénie, for one pound four. Some of the chairs were covered with a plain strawberry cretonne, but for most of the work I used a really beautiful cretonne, costing only a shilling a yard. Its design was perfect: a pattern of large conventional lilies upon a black ground, in colours of blue, crushed strawberry, olive-green, and pale brown. The couch and chair coverings were all made with "petticoats," deep flounces not quite touching the floor, but hiding the legs. Most of them were covered at home; they are not difficult to do if the pattern is first cut in paper, and tried on before being cut in the material. It is a great saving of money to do them in this way. For other chairs, I bought a plain wood rocking-chair with a rush seat for half-a-crown. Also for the same price two cane bed-room chairs, taking care to get them unpolished, and two church chairs at two shillings each. These all retired to the painting-room for a time, and emerged looking rather different. The rocking-chair had been enamelled pale blue, and had a pretty cushion of crushed strawberry velveteen, while a little cushion of about eight inches in depth was fastened with ribbon bows across the back. The two cane chairs were stained with a good black staining; they required three coats to make them a really good colour. Their cushions were made of the cretonne. We cut the shape first in strong calico, which we stuffed with mill-puff and then covered with cretonne, making the covers to unbutton for washing. There are many ways of treating the little church chairs. This time we enamelled them in pale blue, but instead of making cushions, enamelled the rush seats a bright straw-colour. They looked very uncommon. Of course we had the little shelf for books

A CORNER BOOK-CASE.

taken off the chairs before painting them. We had also a rattan cane chair with a high back, at eight and sixpence; and two low wicker chairs in white straw, at six shillings each. I had once painted a straw chair, and so I left these as they were! It is next to impossible to paint or stain wicker-work properly; it takes such a time to get the brush between all the straws. At the manufacturer's they are dipped into a great well of staining, and are completely covered; it is not possible to do this at a private house, it is therefore better to keep them in their original state, or to pay a little extra and have them done at the shop. We have a novel seat in one corner of the room: it is simply a corner seat made by a cabinet-maker of deal, but furnished with cushions and "petticoat" of light brown cretonne. Over it, driven exactly into the corner, is a brass pole, such as is sold for French beds, costing about ten and sixpence. From this fall pretty muslin curtains in blue and brown stripes; these are fastened by ribbon bows, which are passed through a small ring that is screwed into each end of the seat. The ribbon is tied very loosely, as an appearance of tight straining would spoil the whole effect. So much for our seats.

As for the tables, with the addition of an ebonised writing-table, we used the same that we had before, the description of which I gave then and copy now. In reference to a tea-table and corner cupboard, I said: "I traced upon the deal a conventional pattern of plums and blossom, then I stained all the background with oak staining, and painted the outline and shaded the pattern with sepia. When this was French polished the effect was of inlaid wood." The legs of the table ought to be stained with the dark staining, and all the outside of the corner cupboard should be dark. Another table was made of deal; the top and under shelf were covered with dark blue serge, while the legs were painted a lighter shade; pretty little tables for tea-cups are painted black, with the letter T scrawled over the top in white paint to represent the writing on a slate. We bought two common foot-stools made of carpet: these were covered in serge, upon which an outline pattern was worked with tapestry wool. There are two fire-places in the room; both mantel-pieces being of walnut-wood. Over one we fixed the dining-room over-mantel, for the other we made a suitable decoration: a piece of wood was cut just the length of the mantel, and about two yards wide, rings for hanging were fastened into the back, and it was covered with brown velvet just the shade of the mantel-piece; the velvet cover ought to be sewn on by means of strong thread at the back. I drove a nail into the centre upon which to hang a pretty old looking-glass with a cut-glass frame, below which was arranged a row of miniatures in ivory.

I also fastened on some very pretty silver sconces, which looked well with two old silver plaques. On the mantel-shelf was laid a piece of the same velvet, on which some cut-glass bottles and Venetian vases stood. These over-mantel-boards are soon made, and are very effective. Velvet or velveteen is better for this kind of use than plush, as it keeps more free from dust. We have a book-case of our own invention for our treasured volumes, without which no room is complete. We exactly copied the outside of a small



OUR NOVEL CORNER SEAT.

bed-room chest of drawers, which is almost a deep square; only instead of having the usual two corner drawers and three large ones, it was fitted with shelves two deep, three-quarters of the way down, the bottom part being left for big books to lie flat in. The shelves were about an inch back from the front, so that the books were kept free from dust. The top of the case made a nice place for a heavy lamp to stand. The wood was stained black. For three pounds fifteen we bought a pretty cabinet in ebonised wood, with four bevelled glasses, a little cupboard, and four shelves for china: it was exactly four feet wide, and quite large enough. The piano stood against the wall, and at one side of the fire-place stands my work-bag on its own four legs. It is very convenient, being just the height of a chair, and so much more tidy than a hanging bag. I made it out of one of the shilling camp-stools, the legs of which I first painted white; I then lined a piece of strawberry-colour plush with blue sateen, and made it into a bag without a bottom, and fastened it on to the seat of the camp-stool. I then turned it inside out and sewed a piece of the sateen over the ends to quite cover the seat; this formed the bag. Below the camp-stool seat I sewed a deep frill of white Valenciennes lace to hang down; the bag was tied with ribbon to match the velvet. These bags look pretty made of many other stuffs. Chintz pattern cretonne is a favourite and cheap material.

CHRISTMAS ALONE: A PHANTASY.

"T'S a pity to spend Christmas away from one's relations," a girl once said to me; and I think she was right. On Christmas Day more than on any day in the year, the members of a family like to gather round one hearth and be happy together. The father and mother wish to see their children before them on this day, and the children, whatever age they may be, and whether married or single, like to have about them their near relations when Christmas comes.

If we think of it, this feeling arises not only from the greatness of the festival, but also from the fact that we regard our Christmas Days as landmarks in the history of our lives. They are like birthdays without those melancholy reflections which will obtrude themselves on us when we suddenly find ourselves a year older. Christmas is essentially an anniversary of pleasure; the good and the healthy are more than usually happy on this day; it is indeed a dull heart that feels no thrill of joy when the cheerful festival approaches.

There is a saying, "Christmas alone is no Christmas at all," and in this sense one 25th of December was no Christmas for me. I had been for a walking tour alone, in the East of England, in that dull time of the year when all the beauty of autumn has passed away, and winter is just commencing, and showing its worst side: that season when the warm days are not sunny, and the cold days not bracing, a withering season which destroys and gives no return. Having spent my nights at old village inns, and the greater part of my time on country roads, I had lost count of the days of the week and month, and was surprised on arriving at Lynn, in Norfolk, to find that the day after the morrow would be Christmas Day. This tempted me to return, but the weather, which so far had spoilt my tour, now showed signs of improvement; winter was putting on a brighter garb, and a clear and frosty Christmas might be expected.

For the first time in my life I determined to spend Christmas alone, and in an old-world town. Was that Lynn? No, it was not; for though Lynn *is* an old-world town, it was not old-world enough for me. As I was not to spend Christmas with my people, I would have as lonely a one as possible; so I left Lynn, "put on spurt" as athletes say, and passed many an old church of great archæological interest situated in beautiful scenery, which, however, ceases to be beautiful when the villages are left, a characteristic of this part of the world being that all the beauty surrounds the villages.

The weather was cold. It snowed now and again, and there was a cutting wind, made more biting by the proximity to the sea; but I stepped out manfully, regardless alike of wind and snow. Even in this lonely part of the country evidences of the joyful festival were not wanting. Numerous traps and dog-carts passed me, freighted with holly and Christmas cheer, the little village cottages were lit up and decorated, and the old farm-labourers trudged home with happy faces, evidently thinking of the good dinner and happy day which awaited them on the morrow.

At about half-past three o'clock, I arrived, foot-sore and tired, at the place where my Christmas was to be spent. It was already getting dark, few people were about, and the scene was a very dreary one. A prosperous seaport had this village, or rather town, once been; evidences of past wealth were to be seen in the large houses and wide streets, and a grand old second-pointed church, venerable and ivy-grown, reared its stately tower high above all. What changes had this old church seen in the decayed town; for local brains, local hands and money, had shaped its splendid traceried windows, its stately arches and embattled tower. Unlike the houses, however, the church, though little if at all restored, is magnificent to-day, venerable but not decayed, firm as a rock, though five centuries old, a symbol of the eternity of religion, and its handmaid art.

The grandeur of the church, however it might feed the mind, does not feed the body, and a craving for the creature comforts of food, warmth, and rest, soon led me to inquire for the inn, if inn there was in so woebegone a place.

"There be'es no inn 'ere," said a man; "but at the 'Black Horse' they've got a bed or two."

So to the "Black Horse" I directed my steps.

It was not easy to find one's way; the gloomy streets were deserted, save for one small group of rowdy boys, who seemed most out of place in the decayed town. Surely, one would have thought, the silent streets, the great deserted mansions, would restrain their boisterous laughter; surely some thought of the great bygone would temper their rowdy gaiety. But after all, why should they? Why should youth and vigour be depressed by thoughts of a past, however much its greatness may have contrasted with present gloom?

The "Black Horse" was a poor house when approached from one side, but on the other it looked on to a spacious square, a huge dreary piazza built in by large houses, the majority deserted, the others tenanted by the more prosperous people of the town.

"Can you give me a dinner?" I asked the landlord.

"And what may you be pleased to call a dinner? There's cold pork and cheese; you're lucky to get that to-day," was the ungracious reply.

So off cold pork and cheese I made my dinner, the

humble repast being shared with another, a commercial man, who was, however, poor company. He commenced by asking me a few questions about farming and "prices," and discovering from the answers my utter ignorance of these matters, he evidently put me down as a fool with whom it was waste of time to converse, and was silent for the rest of the meal.

After dinner I strolled out into the old square, which looked more dreary now that it was lit up by the moon. Scarcely any of the houses showed signs of habitation; there was not a soul about, the larrikins had gone, and I was alone in the dying town. I wandered out of the square into one or two narrow dark streets, and by-and-by found myself at the harbour, from which there stretches a dam to prevent encroachments of the sea. The dam was of considerable length; indeed it seemed endless to me, and from it a good view of the harbour is obtained. I walked for about ten minutes over the dam, and then turned round and looked at the town.

The night was perfectly clear; the pale light of the moon was reflected in the still harbour, and the long coast-line of deserted mansions and old custom-houses was cast into shadow. One ship with its lofty mast was in the harbour, the solitary representative of a dying trade. A huge hulk had this ship, and the rigging, so black against the starlit sky, gave to it a ghost-like appearance. Grand in its solitude, it looked an ill-omened vessel, and, like the *Flying Dutchman*, its presence seemed to bode no good. Was it a ghost of former days come to remind the old seaport that its days were numbered, and its trade for ever gone?

There was not a light on the whole coast-line. Ah! yes, presently the tiny glimmer of a little rushlight was just visible in one of the smallest houses, and accentuated the gloom.

And this was in England, the greatest maritime country the world has ever seen. We talk of the dead cities of the Zuyder Zee and of a bygone Venice. I have stayed in the queenly city of the doges, but not half so gloomy, not a quarter so dead is it as this remnant of a bygone England. There are dying ports in this great commercial country. The maritime wealth of this centre of the world's trade gets more and more concentrated—a few colossal ports, not content with their bloated wealth, are swallowing up that little which staved off ruin from the time-honoured representatives of a bygone England's maritime greatness. But you old ports, you will have your revenge—your rivals also will decline in wealth, man himself and man's work follow an inexorable law—growth, maturity, decay—your rivals have seemingly approached their second stage, and long may they remain there, but they cannot always do so, and what then? Unlike yours, their old age will not be venerable and picturesque; unlike you, they will leave to a future generation a terrible legacy, a nightmare of greedy centralisation; if still thickly populated, the filth, squalor, and vice which now disgrace their humbler streets, will reign supreme; if deserted, which is more probable, they will be eyesores, hideous ruins, relics of a wealth that divorced itself from art and beauty, built in meanness—on the one side a stuccoed palace, on the other a row of hovels—gorged itself in luxury in its heyday, and left only its antitheses poverty and ruin.

Such thoughts came over me when looking at the old seaport, dismal thoughts—un-Christmas-like thoughts you call them, reader, and so they were, for Christmas is a festival of birth, not of death.

I turned back and again approached the harbour, and so greatly had the gloomy scene depressed me, that I felt quite nervous; the narrow streets seemed about to close in, the long shadows seemed to pursue me; I commenced to run; and longed to see a human being. Again the great square, but more than ever dreary now; a thin layer of snow covered the rank ill-kept grass, the moon had retired behind the lofty mansions, long black shadows threw themselves in fantastic forms across the square—it looked uncanny and unreal. I must have caught a chill. I was terribly nervous; the uneven layer of snow in the curious light looked like little heaps of bones; to my excited imagination the square seemed converted into a colossal charnel. I laughed at the folly, but could not shake off the fear.

A man approached from the other side of the square. Never was I so pleased to see a fellow-creature! I rushed up to him, and asked the way to the inn; there it was, opposite me. I knew it when I asked the question, but something had to be said, and I longed to hear a human voice. The thought of the night now made me tremble; I remembered the bed-room, a great old-fashioned room approached from a corridor, just such a place as ghosts frequent. Oh, no! not ghosts, I could not be afraid of them, don't believe in them in fact; it's only nervousness, stupidity, the effects of a chill—useless philosophy, ever at hand when you are not wanted, never convincing when nerves are unstrung.

The inn was shut up for the night. I knocked, rang, shouted, and at last the landlord, surly and bad-tempered, let me in. "We're quiet folk 'ere and don't stay up o' nights," and handing me a dirty candlestick containing the flickering end of a rushlight, he shouted after me, "When gents stay at a hotel they ought to get their drinks there." Uncivil speeches, but they somewhat restored me: the landlord at all events was no ghost. I groped my way up the stairs and reached the corridor, long and uneven, and so draughty that at every step I thought the candle would go out. I shaded it with my hand, and made a search for my room. How foolish of me! Of course it was on the higher landing, so, turning back again, and carefully protecting the wretched light, I mounted the second flight of stairs, and arrived at the other corridor. A sudden gust of wind here extinguished the candle, the silvery light of the moon streamed into the passage, a mysterious and vivid ray was thrown straight into my face from the window at the head of the stairs. I rubbed my eyes and peered into the darkness, but could for the moment see nothing. How was I to find my room? Let me think. Ah! it was at the further end of the corridor, at right angles with

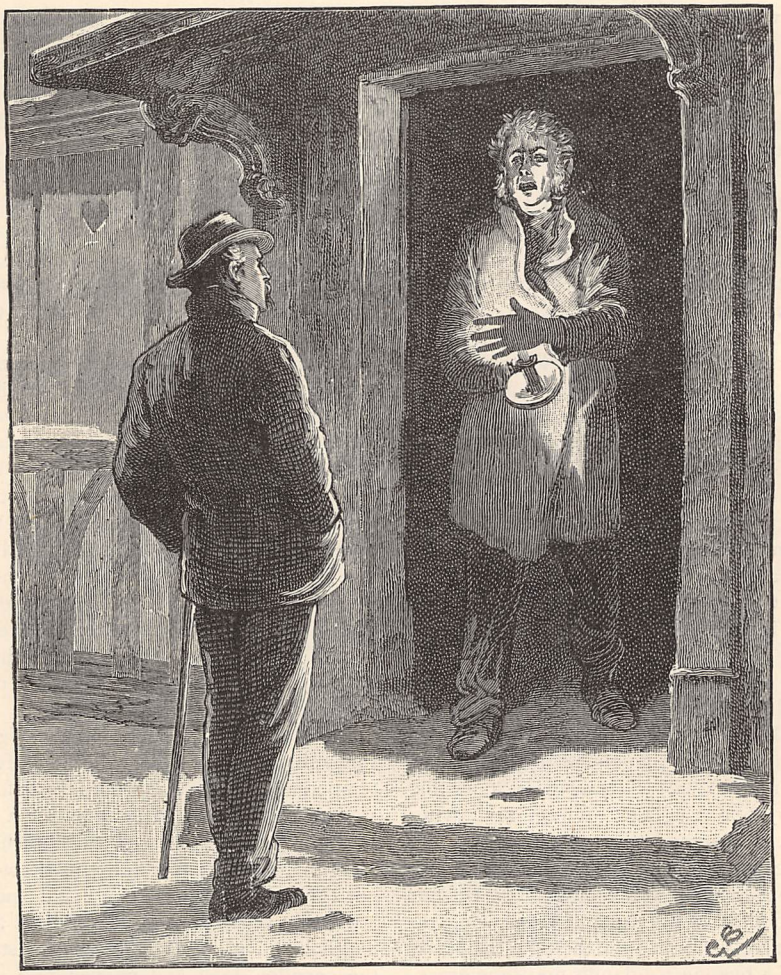
a great whitewashed wall. I rubbed my eyes again, turned my head and looked straight down the long passage. I stood for a moment paralysed with fear. There on that whitewashed wall, some twenty yards distant, was a huge shadow, the right hand extended in the act of warning, and pointing to a room—my room!

I almost fainted with fear, and let the candlestick drop, when the spell was instantly broken and the shadow explained. It was, of course, myself. I had held the candlestick out at arm's length to protect my face in the dark, which gave to the shadow the position of the arm.

I lit the candle again, and went into my room more than ever nervous now. No use trying to deceive myself, it was ghosts I feared. That solitary ship in the harbour, of a form so out of date, so unlike our modern builds, *was* a phantom; the old port had received its warning on this very night; the ancient mariners had come to reclaim what an ungrateful posterity had rejected. I locked the door, undressed quickly, and got into bed, but did not extinguish the light, for the fear which I had vainly tried to stifle now fairly mastered me.

Contrary to the ordinary opinion, we reason in our fear, and the fear—which in my case was of a distorted and fantastic origin—led to my reasoning in a fantastic, not to say ridiculous manner. Those ghostly mariners would surely come to the inn, and must approach my room, I being the only occupant of the place except the landlord and his family. If they did come, shadows of a past, occupants of a region probably possessing faculties far exceeding our own, they would be able to read my thoughts. I determined to pacify them—think well of the old town and a bygone England, wish evil to those monster ports that had ruined this once prosperous place.

Having arrived at this singular determination, and



"AT LAST THE LANDLORD, SURLY AND BAD-TEMPERED, LET ME IN" (*p.* 115).

received some comfort from it, my attention was directed to the candle, which was making furious attempts to prolong its miserable existence. It flickered, died down, then flared up to a brilliancy it had never formerly known, and finally expired, like all worthless objects, tenacious of its worthless life.

I slept soundly, how long it is of course impossible to say ; but I awoke suddenly and sat up in bed, surprised to find how light it was. The blind was drawn up, I had forgotten over-night to pull it down, and the moonlight streamed through the window, calm and beautiful. It was Christmas night, the most comforting and the greatest of all festivals had come round again. Revived with the thought, I got out of bed and looked through the window. It must have snowed heavily ; the square was now quite white, the old mansions were completely covered with a spotless mantle, all traces of decay, all unkind markings of the hand of Time were obliterated, stately proportions only were visible—a day's rejuvenescence in honour of the one birth that escaped the penalty of death.

How still and hushed all nature seemed ! I would open the window and look out. I was about to do so, when a curious sensation came over me, as if I had been touched. I was conscious of having felt or heard something. I looked behind me, there was nothing ; then the impression defined itself into sound, ever so faint—a surging sound—a living thing was disturbing the death-like stillness of the night. It was outside, a sound of movement, then a clicking noise, louder and louder, followed by the dropping of a chain !

I stood perfectly still for a moment, and all my fears returned in tenfold force ; then I swiftly and silently rushed to the bed, threw the clothes over my head, and stopped up my ears. I sat up in bed again, tried to buoy myself up, when a sinister thought whispered to me, "You are no good ; you are too frightened ; leave others to deal with the danger, whatever it is." The temptation mastered me, and I was sinking into bed again, when the heavy, gruff voice of the landlord was heard shouting to his son ; I thought he grasped a weapon ; then the response of the other man, and finally an opening and shutting of doors.

I dressed quickly, and now felt ready for anything ; and can assure you, my reader, that though you may have curled your lips in scorn at my cowardice, now all vestige of fear had left me. A violent situation had dispelled all ghostly superstitious fears ; I was completely roused from my lethargy.

Seizing my stick, I rushed out of the room and downstairs, but taking the wrong direction, arrived in the coffee-room ; meanwhile a scuffle was going on outside, a sound of blows and angry voices. I was impatient, and in my excitement could not open the door of the room, which had slammed behind me. I could hear the gruff voice of the landlord, and then an agonising cry. I tugged at the door, it would not unfasten ; my excitement grew intense. Unable longer to restrain myself, I rushed to the window and struck at it with all my might, shivered it to atoms, jumped through the aperture, and ran into the square, in the middle of which were two dark forms bending over another.

All was over, that was evident. The landlord was leaning on a long, heavy stick, evidently the weapon which had settled the encounter ; he was flushed, and for a moment speechless from excitement, and was looking down upon his late antagonist.

I approached the group, and saw the prostrate man. It must have been a desperate fight. A huge figure was stretched at full length in the snow—a sailor with a long white beard and brawny arms, like an elderly Hercules, his hand grasping a short thick stick, his big frame still quivering from the blow he had received. I looked down on the man, and kneeling in the snow, saw that he had fainted. I lifted him up slightly, and the moon, which had been obscured by a passing cloud, suddenly threw its light straight upon his face. I started at the face, so unlike what I had expected to see ; exposure and want were stamped with terrible emphasis on the manly features. Here was no dastardly ruffian, no housebreaking rascal, but a starving man, led by absolute necessity to a desperate deed. The head was noble, like the pictures of St. Peter, and the long grey unkempt hair, the begrimed face and arms, the tattered clothes and shoeless feet, told their tale of privation and misery. The strong frame was reduced to a skeleton, but those brown sinewy hands, so honest-looking, they would have worked, and with good effect, had they been given the chance. Even the landlord was touched.

"No wonder he chucked up so quickly. I thought I had a tough 'un to deal with, such a big-carcased chap."

A few people, disturbed by the noise, approached the square, and I sent one of them for the chemist, while the landlord, his son, and I lifted up the old sailor and took him to the inn. Just a little life still left in the old place ; some twenty or thirty people crowded round the inn, anxious to hear the cause of the disturbance. We shut the door and bade the people go away, they would hear all in the morning. This was foolish, and the crowd at once increased, and literally besieged the place, while the chemist arriving at this juncture, there was a rush to the bed-room where we had conveyed the poor burglar. The chemist was a kindly fellow, not much use it is true, but luckily for him his patient returned to consciousness on his arrival, a fact which, for some inscrutable reason, greatly redounded to his credit with the townsfolk.

The old man soon told his miserable tale ; how he had tried hard to get work, had tramped for miles, and at last arrived at this port, dead beat, and feeling that he could not live another hour without food. How he had then tried to force his way into the inn, which he discovered to be only fastened by a rusty chain.

We felt compassion for the poor fellow, and the landlord gave up his idea of "getting the law out o' him," a wise resolve, there being nothing left for the law to take. I saw that the once powerful frame was about to succumb, not to the landlord's blow ;

no, there had been a longer fight, but starvation and exposure had at last conquered, and were about to complete their gnome-like work.

The people looked kindly on the dying man; perhaps they felt a sympathy, a fellow-feeling with him. Was he not a sailor, a waif from some far-off port probably like their own? But how much more miserable, how hopelessly ruined, must be that port which sends a man to rob from *them!* They asked him where he hailed from, and I could see with what interest they awaited the answer. It was slow in coming; the sailor was almost past speech; but, rousing himself for the last time, he blurted out with an execration the hated name . . . No, surely not!—*that* storehouse of gold, *that* mighty city, that all-devouring port which had stretched forth its greedy hand to clutch the wealth of a whole coast: ruiner of this place and many such another! It could not be!

You people of an old-world town, your ideas are narrow, and your ways are out of date: you may yet have to seek a new and prosperous city. What was wealth to you and your ancestors, is to us a widow's mite; *now* gold is ladled out to some, but others are allowed to starve.

You remnant of a dying England, your working life is over, and your trade for ever gone. You are shrunken and decayed, and must allow others to do that which you once so well performed. You leave a legacy in your beautiful church, which outlives you because it symbolises an undying life; your spacious streets are grass-grown, and your mansions crumbling, but while they last they witness to your well-spent wealth, the honest keeping of your trust.

J. F. BREWER.

A GIRL'S FACE.

A GIRL'S face, where the budding rose
Of youthful beauty blooms and grows
By nature's influence, sweet and good,
To fuller grace of womanhood;
Is there a sight on earth so fair?
Consider well the raven hair
That clouds the forehead pure and white;
The lovely eyes, like stars of light,
In whose clear, hazel glance is seen
The soul untroubled and serene;
The ripe, bewitching lips, that part
With smiles like sunshine of the heart;
And all the charms, unnoted here,
That blossom sweet from year to year.

Time changes all. The fairest day
Of short-lived summer fades away,
And on the wintry garden-bed
The petals of the rose are shed;
Time steals the splendour from the hair,
And marks the brow with lines of care;
But there are beauties of the soul
That time and change may not control;
The faith and love, that still are blind
To others' faults, and good and kind,
And swift to help with blessed deeds
A sister's or a brother's needs,
These grow with years in brighter grace,
And add new beauty to the face.

J. R. EASTWOOD.

WHAT TO WEAR IN THE NEW YEAR.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

"HOPE tells a flattering tale," but we must be sanguine indeed if, with our knowledge of climate deduced from experience, we expect anything but cold dark weather during the first month of the year, with, maybe, a clear sunny day occasionally in the country, and a very few such enjoyable innovations in London.

It is a most important point that outdoors, as well as indoors, children should be kept warm. The little cloak in our initial illustration fulfils this requirement admirably, for just upon the chest, where most warmth is needed, the material is arranged in kilt-pleats, so that it is in fact of a triple thickness mostly. It can be made in any soft thick cloth; beaver is the best, because it has a fleecy interwoven lining, but some of the new brocaded cloths are suitable. The garment is not, as would appear at first sight, a kilted front, with a curiously-cut cape over; but a pelisse with cape in one. At the back the pleats are broader, and a band of the same brocaded galon which borders the cape, and the light band that encircles the neck, are carried down the left side of the skirt. The pelisse has close-fitting under-sleeves to match, and it fastens at the side, and with it is worn a belt with metal clasps at the waist. Many children wear double-breasted coats of the Ulster form, with wide Incroyable revers at the side, made in plain or check cloths. The newest of these materials are woven with a fleecy frieze-like outside of uniform colour, and a checked lining of a

A GIRL'S FACE
after Greuze

(See p. 113.)

lighter tone, so that the revers may be simply the lining allowed to show. The hat in the illustration is an unbound felt with a large bow of watered ribbon at the side.

The two friends who have just met at one of our now numerous winter exhibitions are evidently discussing the first exhibited work of a mutual friend. Both have invested in new Parisian mantles, and of totally different classes. The coat of the first is cut on a new principle. The bodice is double-breasted, but comes only to the waist; and the skirt, which is far fuller than it generally is, is gathered round and sewn to the bodice, with the fulness equally divided all round. The revers to the bodice take the form of a fur cape, matching the cuffs, and the bordering of fur is carried all round the skirt and up the fronts; it may be opossum, lynx, squirrel, bear, sable, or any of the fashionable white-tipped skins—an effect which can be artificially produced by greasing the hairs before dyeing, which prevents the colour adhering and leaves them white on the dark ground. The bonnet, made of velvet, has a high flaring brim lined with velvet, a bow of ribbon on one side; the strings fasten beneath the chin on the left, and have no ends, being made of piece-velvet; a bunch of ostrich-plumes finishes the outside of the bonnet. Far more elaborate is her friend's cloak, made in striped plush of two tones of brown, or in the brocaded woollens which are so universally worn in Paris, the patterns inspired by the designs which hail from Cashmere. It entirely covers the dress, and fits the figure at the back, and very nearly, though not quite so closely, in front. It is elaborately trimmed. The sides are cut up to the depth of half a yard, while round the cloak and these openings is a handsome floral trimming of crocheted silk, which also borders the long pointed hanging sleeves, ending in a tassel. The most original part of the trimming is, however, the band of gimp galon which surrounds the throat, and is laid on two narrow bands of the lighter tone in silk, and falls in a point to the waist. From beneath these bands, again, come long ends of the material, lined with silk, which fall down the back and meet the side seam of the skirt, being edged with handsome ornaments. This would be a good design for an evening as well as a day cloak.

The bonnet, which is velvet, has a pointed brim over the face, and a turned-up point at the back, and is literally covered with outstretched wings. The most curious part about it is, that coming from the outside of the bonnet, thrust through this pointed brim, are two birds' heads; the effect would be comical if it were not suggestive of an unwarrantable sacrifice of pretty little songsters.

The Parisians would seem to find it difficult to make gowns sufficiently elaborate, and frequently three or four materials of different colours are to be found in one dress. Red velvet, green satin, and black brocade, for example; the back of the bodice and skirt made of black brocade, the front of green satin, the sides of red velvet with black passementerie. This is one of the most recent creations. The rounded belts, forming a distinct point in the centre of the front, and starting only from the side seams, are introduced on many gowns, and are made of velvet; but it would be almost as difficult to lay down rules for the general make of dress in the French capital now, as to describe the difference in the physiognomy of the wearers, for no two would seem to be alike.

Accordion pleats, which had such a marked success some years back, and for producing which several machines were invented, are a feature at this moment, both in cloaks and dresses. They do not form the entire skirt, but only the front of cloaks, filling up the vacuum in the centre of the back, which is frequently slashed up. The skirts in which these accordion pleats appear are always cut up some half-yard at the back, and a quarter of a yard at the side, to allow for the kilting to appear in a contrasting shade or material.

Parisians have never been so faithful to any passing mode as to the wearing of green. Watercress and the deep full Empire tones are in the ascendant, very often combined with lighter tints between Nil and lettuce-stalk.

There are many eccentricities in the making of sleeves. A pretty one is cut at the top of an extra length, so that when sewn in it can be gathered into a double festoon, giving height to the shoulder. This is infinitely preferable to the mode some dressmakers follow of gathering the sleeve with a wide heading, and thus sewing it outside the armhole; it has the most "bunchy" appearance.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

"You see, I have a half-handkerchief of soft embroidered silk of a brown tone, matching the sash introduced so curiously on the bodice of my dress. How can I use it for a bonnet? The dressmaker sent it home for the purpose?" This is the inquiry which is being eagerly answered by the friend who, in our illustration, has just been thus appealed to.

"Nothing easier. Buy one of the small flat shapes with a gable-brim above the face; then take the centre point, where there is most of the embroidery, and lay that on the point of the brim, which must have been previously bound with velvet. Arrange the embroidery down the side of the bonnet, pinning it close, and lay the material in a cross-fold upon it, leaving the point as it naturally falls. The centre of the half-handkerchief can then be formed into a Quaker-like crown of soft folds, the edges turning under at the back, and requiring no other trimming. Beneath this brim place a torsade of the light blue-grey velvet, of the same tone as the dress, and introduce an eagle's quill outside. Have short piece-velvet strings, tied with a bow beneath the chin, rather to the left, and you will possess a fashionable bonnet."

The dress with which this headgear is to be worn is most elaborately braided on the band which encircles the throat, on the outside of the arm, and not only on a side panel of the skirt, but on the fold which borders it, a scroll-work design being carried round the front drapery, describing an acute angle. But

"HAVE YOU SEEN HER PICTURE?" (*see p.* 119).

there is something new in this front; a portion of it has been detached and caught together as an end and tassel. The bodice is made full, and the front of the skirt so arranged that it appears to be cut in one with it; but this is not the case. The Empire style is shown by a sash of soft brown silk brought from immediately beneath the arms across the front to the waist, and the only other touch of brown is a loose cross-cut band which forms the cuffs.

All the present modes would seem to be for the benefit of slender figures; no one with any tendency to *embonpoint* could venture to wear a bodice of this description, or this new and stylish scarf. But it displays the lines of the waist to the very best advantage on a thin figure.

As soon as we have got over the turn of the winter, long cloaks are apt to become heavy and cumbersome. We have illustrated a new shape made in soft Vicuna of a grey and cream combination—the ground cream, the pattern on it grey, printed in stripes. It is trimmed with grebe. It is quite short at the back, and not inordinately long in front, the sleeves pointed, with wide hanging sleeves beneath, bordered with passementerie of steel beads and tinsel cord mixed with plain grey cord. The bonnet is made of a piece of the same stuff, with just a cluster of little birds over the face, their plumage various tones of grey. (We really must renew our protest against this cruel fashion.) The dress worn with it has a grey velvet petticoat arranged in broad pleats, and over it is draped a full skirt of striped grey velvet and moire.

An old lady's bonnet is one of the articles of dress which it is difficult to make look really pretty and comfortable; but some great improvements have been wrought in many of the new models, which are notable for their lightness. The shapes are large, stand up well over the face, having some soft cream pleating of lace or tulle beneath the brim. The fronts are drawn, so are the curtains, which come down well on the neck, leaving but little of the grey hair to be seen. The bonnet is relieved from dowdiness by ostrich-feathers and some lace placed above the face; the crown is pleated Quaker fashion. The fashionable tone of grey is peculiarly well suited to old ladies, and velvet is the material which is best adapted to winter, to be replaced by satin as the season advances.

There are many festivities going on at this time of year, and fans are required. The newest are made in very fine gauze painted with flowers large in size, and placed at the edge in such a way that, the outline being cut out, they form the border. Some are scattered all over with tiny butterflies, which have upstanding wings. Blonde lace, which means really silk lace, is coming in again, and is used considerably for fans, some being made entirely of coloured silk lace to match the dress; and there is a new shape for these—the top almost oval, as though scarcely open. The sticks are now often scented, and the lace, when cream or white, is painted over in floral designs of natural colouring.

Flannel is considered to be the most healthy wear for under-clothing, though some skins cannot bear the contact, and do better with the woven under-wear, which develops many improvements.

A petticoat-bodice and stays combined is made of the undyed natural wool almost to the throat, with bones inserted at the waist in such a fashion that they can be slipped in and out for washing. They afford a certain support to the figure, and are very warm; so are the over-bodices made to cling closely to the bust and waist, and convenient for wearing with low combination garments.

Silk is certainly the pleasantest wear for all such clothing, but everybody has not money to spend upon this. Fortunately a new fabric has been brought out between the two—merino mingled in the weaving with silk, and possessing much of its soft suppleness. This has been adapted to all kinds of under-garments.

Those who ride will be glad to hear of a new and most inexpensive glove—white, with six buttons—in doeskin, which can be pipe-clayed, and will retain its

freshness for a long time, and will scarcely wear out with a year's hard wear.

Dressing-gowns are now made much after the order of Empire coats, fitting at the back, having large flap-pockets, big revers, and full fronts of distinct colour and material, coming from the throat to the hem. Laces by the piece, beadings, crêpe de Chine, and other stuffs, are all now made sufficiently wide to carry out this idea.

fashionable people; in a few months they will be general.

Boas are nearly all made flat and shaped to the neck. Skunk is worn more in France than here, for the reason that there they dress it so that there is no smell whatever. Fur trimmings are well worn on winter dresses, especially in black, which, notwithstanding the many beautiful colours brought out, is being worn very generally, especially with touches

A CONSULTATION (*see p.* 119).

The Empire veil is one of the few fashions of that period that we have not accepted with alacrity. It is too large and full, and far better suited for hats than for bonnets, but the drawing-string under the chin is not very pretty to look at, and is too much like a nosebag to be acceptable to the majority. The new veiling comes between the old narrow strip of spotted net and this new idea. It is a yard long and rather wider than of old; it is spotted, and has a real lace border of somewhat important dimensions. At present these have only been worn by the most

of light Chartreuse green, and lemon-colour, lining sashes and draperies. Tea-gowns made in soft silk of bright colours find formidable rivals in the good serviceable black with coloured fronts, and some really handsome dinner and evening gowns in black are heavily trimmed with gold galon, which is used as waistcoats and as borderings to side draperies. Such trimmings are so well made that there is no fear that they will tarnish, and the designs are excellent—large and important-looking, finely worked braid and cord of two thicknesses blended together.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

A Crockery Drying Rack.

A rack for drying crockery has been introduced. No wiping is required with the device, which is illustrated herewith. Hitherto, as a rule, only plates have been dried by merely draining them; but the rack in question allows a complete tea or dinner set to be treated in this manner. It is stated that over a hundred pieces or more can be dried on a rack standing upon a floor-space of one square foot. One piece cannot drip into another. The drainage is caught and carried to a receiver. Of course different sizes are made to suit different requirements.

The Welfare of London.

Some time ago we mentioned a new step in the treatment of social statistics, which had been taken by Mr. Alexander B. MacDowall, M.A., who had given, in a series of curves, a history of recent progress in Ireland. The same author has now applied his method to London, and in "Curve-pictures of London," recently published by Messrs. Sampson Low & Co., Limited, has provided the social reformer with an easy means of arriving at definite information on the increase of population, its density, the birth, death, and marriage rates, the fluctuations of crime, drunkenness, pauperism, prices, and so forth in the metropolis. Such a book is worth whole reams of hasty and superficial articles in the press, and volumes of social speculation, simply because it shows us the actual facts of the case beyond any cavil. With regard to population, Mr. MacDowall's curves and remarks indicate that it increased from 0·9 of a million in 1800, to 3·8 millions in 1881. These figures refer to the London of the Registrar-General. The Metropolitan Police District, reaching, in some parts, fifteen miles from Charing Cross, had 4·7 millions in 1881. Females preponderated over males in the proportion of 2 to 1·79 in 1881. London has now a larger population than Scotland, which in 1881 was 3·7 millions, while Paris had 2·2 millions in 1881, and New York 1·2 millions in 1880. There has been a decline in the birth, death, and marriage rate in London since 1865. Unfortunately, however, the evil of boy and girl marriages appears to be growing in London. Thus, while in 1860 3·4 per cent. of men and 13·6 per cent. of women married under twenty-one, in 1886 these proportions were 5·8 for men, and 19·3 for women. There seems to be no very decided decrease of drunkenness during recent years. Social order, however, seems to have somewhat advanced. Since 1870 there has been a fall in pauperism, owing in part to the reduction of the number of outdoor paupers by a change of system. Illiteracy is, happily, declining both in London and the provinces.

A Singular Mirage.

A curious instance of mirage is reported from Hudiksvall on the Baltic. On July 15th, 1888, at 11 p.m. at that place a mirage was seen representing an airy picture of a vessel sinking in a boisterous sea, and a boat putting off from it. The display lasted five minutes.

Compressed Fuel.

Small briquets of compressed fuel are now being made by machinery, from coal-dust and pitch, with the help of steam, which makes the mass plastic for the mould. They are 4½ inches long by 2½ inches thick, and weigh twenty ounces. The machine turns out fourteen a minute, or at the rate of five tons per day of twelve hours. It requires two horse-power to work it, and a man and two boys to attend to it, mixing the ingredients and stacking the briquets. The latter make an excellent fire, and burn with very little ash.

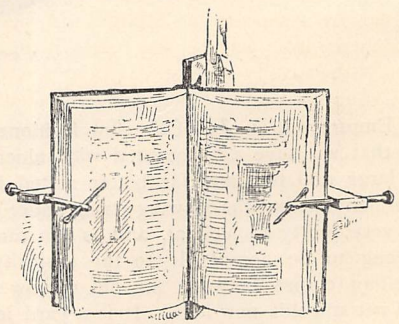


FIG. 1.—HOW THE BOOK IS HELD OPEN.

Book-Holder for Invalids.

A new device to enable invalids to read in bed, without putting them to the fatigue of holding the

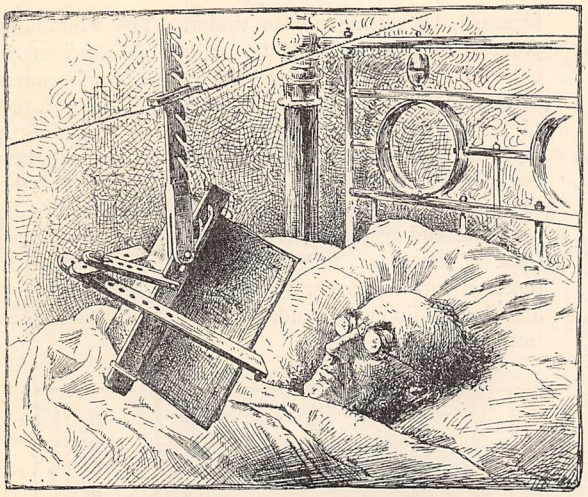


FIG. 2.—HOW THE BOOK-HOLDER ACTS.

book, has recently been brought out. Its construction may best be seen from the accompanying illustrations, which show the book-holder in use. The arms that hold the book open are provided with a number of holes, so that by moving the position of the peg the grip may be increased or diminished. By a very simple device the apparatus may be inclined to the one side or the other to catch the light, while the toothed rack immediately behind the book makes it possible to incline the work at any angle towards the reader. The pages may very easily be turned with one finger, if the volume has been properly adjusted in the holder. In cases of accident, where the patient is obliged to lie in a recumbent position, this device should be extremely useful.

A Forked Palm.

There is a bifurcated palm-tree at Cayenne, French Guiana, and several at Rio Janeiro. These belong to the genus *Areca*, and are known colloquially as *palmeira bambu*. Professor Haeckel, of Jena, was also shown a forked cocoa-nut palm in Ceylon, so that, it would appear, bifurcated palm-trees are not so rare as most people imagine.

Curious Lightning-Strokes.

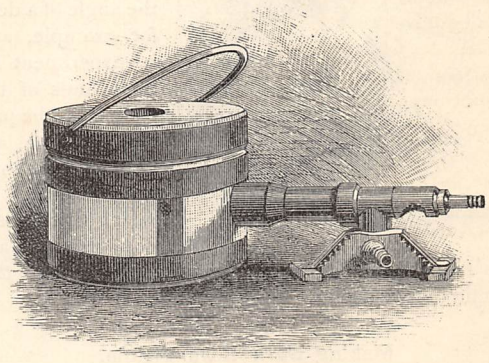
A narrow escape from lightning is reported from De Funiak, in Florida. Mr. John Chisholm, a merchant of the town, took shelter in the porch of a drug store, used as a post office, and "protected" by a lightning-rod fastened to the house by glass insulators in the old-fashioned way. The lightning struck two tall pines about 100 feet back from the house, and leaped to the rod, then ran along the comb of the roof and down the gable by a corner. Mr. Chisholm only remembers a sensation like a "heavy blast of hot air" striking him between the shoulders. He was thrown on his face and picked up for dead. His person was "blistered," especially from the knees down, and on regaining consciousness, he complained of a feeling of suffocation and "heartache." For four months he was helpless, suffering from aching bones and stinging sensations, as though a "thousand" needles were being stuck into him. A more singular case was also recently reported by a Wolverhampton newspaper, and has not, we believe, been contradicted. During a thunderstorm occurring in July last, a coal-miner named Bates, who had lost his eyesight by an accident, and wore spectacles to conceal the disfigurement, was being led to his home, when a flash of lightning was "reflected" on the spectacles. After the thunder Bates complained of a severe pain in the head, and to his surprise found that he had regained his eyesight. Obviously, however, this may have been a coincidence, and not a consequence of the flash. During one of the July thunderstorms, too, a fire-brigade station in the Old Kent Road, London, was roused by the electric alarm ringing, and a fire-engine started with an escape to the supposed scene of the fire, only to find that the alarm had been sounded by the electricity of the atmosphere. Two telegraphists also suffered severe shocks — one while working his apparatus, the other while standing close to it; but neither was killed.

A Railway to Bokhara.

The railway built by the Russians in their Central Asian possessions is now open as far as Bokhara, so that it is possible for an Englishman to travel by rail from Charing Cross to Bokhara, with the exception of the Channel and two other short sea-passages—namely, Odessa to Batoum, and Baku to Michaelovsk. In less than a year it is expected that the line will be in close contact with the Indian railway system, so that the "overland route" is likely soon to be revived in another sense.

An Oxygen Furnace.

Our figure shows a new oxygen furnace brought out by Mr. Fletcher, the well-known inventor of laboratory appliances. In the furnace compressed oxygen is used along with coal-gas. A jet of the oxygen, mixed



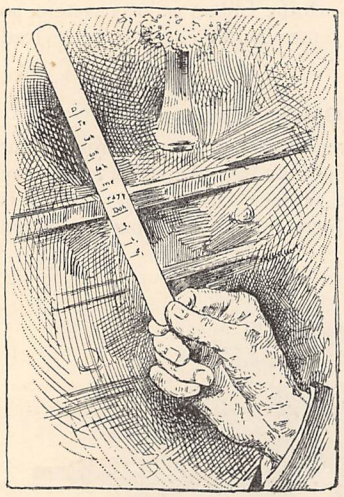
with air as it goes, is burnt with the gas, producing an intense heat. The power of the furnace is regulated by the gas supplies, and can be adjusted from a dull red light to a fervour capable of melting refractory

substances. Brin's compressed oxygen is employed along with the coal-gas ; the pipes in the figure show how the gases are supplied.

Some Household Novelties.

Towels and dusters that are hung upon nails are very apt, as all housewives know, to be spoiled by rust, or to be torn through being carelessly put in their places. A new invention has lately been patented, which provides a ready means of tidily disposing of such things without going to the trouble of putting up rollers. It consists of a loop of strong plated wire hung on a little screw, which can be let in anywhere. The bottom of the loop is carried to a point, so that the duster or towel is held firmly if it is once pulled into its place towards the bottom of the loop.—A new spanner and pipe-wrench has lately been patented, which seems to us to supply a want. Instead of the screw-sliding loose arm of the more expensive forms, this spanner is made in two parts, which are secured by a stud fixed in one arm, and fitting into any one of four holes in the other arm, thus securing the tool from any danger of slipping, while providing a ready means of adjustment.—A granulated form of black-lead has lately been introduced, which is said to give very good results indeed when properly used. Some persons objected to the trouble of reducing the nickel-silver black-lead in ordinary use to powder, as was necessary, but in this new form they will be able to reap the advantages of its use without this labour.

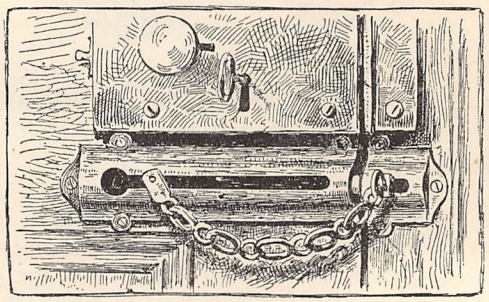
A Musical Paper-Knife.



An ingenious Frenchman writes to a French contemporary pointing out that a paper-knife can be used to play tunes. The knife is struck against a hollow piece of furniture, the angle of a desk for example, and by experiment all the sounds of the gamut can be produced. The annexed figure shows the manner in which this is accomplished. Various airs can be played after some practice with this primitive instrument.

Making Dark Rays Visible.

Dr. Lommel, the well-known authority on optics, has demonstrated that a focus of the dark or ultra-red rays of the spectrum can be rendered visible by means of a phosphorescent substance. Dr. Tyndall has, on the other hand, shown their heating power when focussed, by setting fire to tinder. The "luminous paint" of Balmain, or better still, a phosphorescent calcium sulphide, prepared by Dr. Lommel, becomes brightly phosphorescent in the focus of these ultra-red rays. If a transparent screen is made by spreading a layer of this substance between two plates of glass cemented at the edges, the ultra-red region of the spectrum is shown as greenish-blue phosphorescence near the end of the spectrum both on the front and back of the glass. When the dark focus alone is received on this screen, it appears as a bright spot on a feebly luminous ground, which by-and-by changes into a black spot.

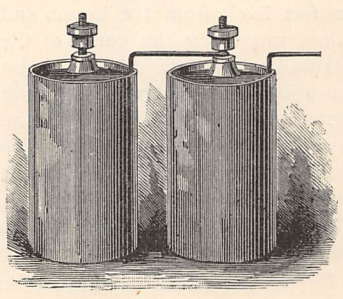


A Safe Door-Chain.

The ordinary door-chain is not altogether free from the drawback of being opened from outside ; and the new chain we illustrate is designed to prevent such an occurrence. It consists of a bolt with its case screwed to the jamb of the door ; and the ordinary chain-case fixed on the back of the door. One end of the chain is fixed to the bolt in such a manner that the bolt must be pushed home into its socket in the door-case before the other end of the chain can be released and dropped. It follows that securing a door by this chain also bolts it ; and that the chain can only be taken off when the door is bolted. At the same time, once the chain is on, the bolt can be withdrawn, and the door partly opened for ventilation if desired.

A Dry Battery.

The Gasner "dry" battery, which comes to us from America, is a novelty in its way, and may be useful for domestic electric bells. It is illustrated in the figure, and has this practical advantage over the ordinary cells, that the outer case, or containing jar, is made of zinc, and is therefore less liable to break than the ordinary jars. There is, moreover, no solution inside, the necessary moisture being in a state of chemical combination. According to the statement



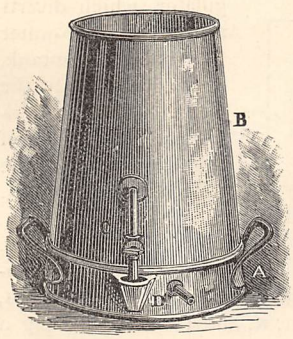
of the English agent, the cell consists of a carbon cylinder packed round with a solid and porous mass of oxide of zinc and gypsum, the whole being contained in the zinc jar, which forms the zinc pole of the combination. The charging mixture is not liable to spill or freeze, and the battery may be placed in any position. The electromotive force is about the same as that of the Leclanché (1·48 volt), and the internal resistance of a cell 7 inches high and 3 inches in diameter is about 0·6 ohm. When exhausted the cell recovers itself greatly on resting, and it can be regenerated by having the current from a dynamo passed through it.

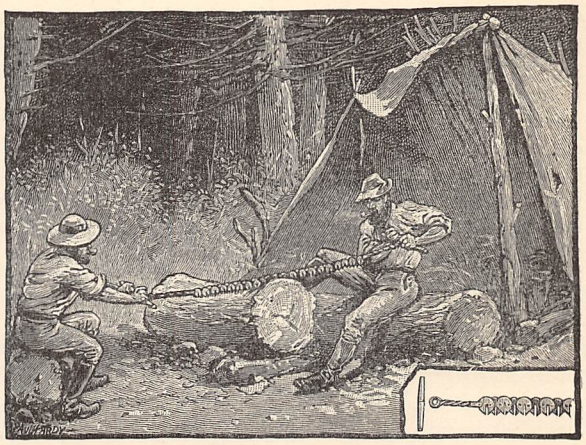
The Eye as a Source of Light.

At the recent meeting of the British Association, Mr. Friese Greene, the well-known photographer, read a paper on an experiment he had made which appears to show that the eye is, to a certain extent, capable of storing light, in the manner of luminous paint. He had stared at a 3,000 candle-power electric arc lamp in Piccadilly, at a distance of 3 feet, for 15 seconds, then closed his eye and brought it very quickly over a sensitive photographic plate, 1 inch from the film. In this way he had obtained a faint yet distinct image of the electric arc with the carbons. The arc would seem to produce a bright spot on the retina, which remains luminous for a short time. A weaker source of light, such as a gas-lamp, failed to produce the effect.

An Automatic Water-Still.

The accompanying figure illustrates a still for distilling water which will be useful in the household, or to druggists and photographers. The lower part, A, of the apparatus is the boiler, which has an annular trough inside. Into this fits the upper part or reservoir, B. The tap, C, from the upper reservoir, dips into a lip communicating with the boiler. A projecting tube, D, from the inner trough, forms the delivery jet. Cold water is placed in the upper reservoir to serve as a condenser. The steam from the water in the boiler below rises into a hollow cone in the heart of the condenser above, and is there chilled into water, which trickles down the cone and into the trough, escaping by the pipe C. In order to keep up the supply of water automatically the tap, D, is turned on, thereby allowing the water from the condensing reservoir to feed the boiler. The apparatus will work when placed over a fire or stove, a petroleum burner, or a gas-jet.





A Portable Saw.

The woodcut shows a new saw for cutting down trees or other purposes, which can be packed in a leather case, and slung over the shoulder or attached to a belt round the waist. It only weighs 1⅝ lbs., and makes a case 8 inches by 3½ inches by 1¾ inches in size. Nevertheless, it is said to be equivalent to a 6-foot cross-cut saw, and to be capable of cutting down a live tree 12 inches in diameter in five minutes. The figure illustrates the nature of the saw with its handles. It is formed of hardened steel plates, riveted together in a double series, in such a manner that the rivets are sufficiently loose to form joints. Each plate or link in the chain, so to speak, is so shaped on one side as to form a pair of saw-teeth, one tooth cutting in an opposite direction to the other. The cross-handles are withdrawn when the saw is packed up. Inaccessible trees can be cut by it, if ropes are attached to the ends in place of the handles. The saw promises to be useful. Sappers or emigrants may find it handier than the ordinary kinds.

Purifying Zinc.

Mr. Alexander Watt has brought out a serviceable process for purifying crude zinc, or extracting the metal from its ores, by means of the electric current. This is done by using a solution of commercial acetic acid in an electrolytic bath. The crude zinc forms the anode to the current, and a sheet of good zinc forms the cathode. When the current is passed from the anode to the cathode through the solution, the crude zinc is dissolved, and the pure metal deposited on the sheet-zinc. The impurities fall to the bottom of the bath as mud, which is cleared away. When ore is reduced, it is first ground and sifted, and mixed with the acetic solution. The current is then passed through it from a carbon or platinum anode, and the metallic zinc is deposited as before on a sheet-zinc cathode.

A Buried Amphitheatre.

A curious archæological discovery has been made at Altenburg, a town between Vienna and Presburg,

on the Danube. Professor Hauser, observing the colour of a corn-field, which varied in every part, expressed the opinion that it covered a buried amphitheatre. A drawing he made showed that the corn was richest over the orchestra, where the soil was deeper, while elliptical lines of greener corn indicated the rows of seats in the auditorium. As soon as the corn was cut the excavations began, and sure enough an amphitheatre was laid bare. The pavement is said to be in good condition, and a road leads from the theatre to the camp of Carnutum, at some distance.

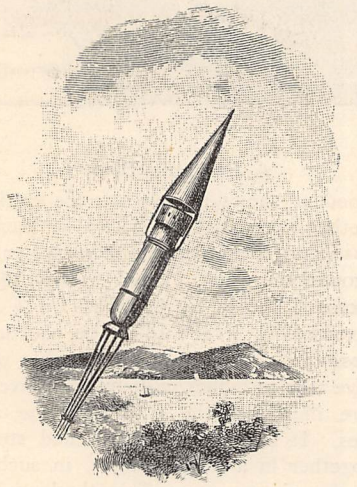


FIG. 1.

A Rocket Camera.

A mode of taking photographs in the air by means of a rocket is reported from France. The camera is cylindrical, having twelve lenses at regular intervals round the circumference; the rays in each being screened from others by partitions as shown at A, in the annexed figure (2). A sensitised plate, C, is placed in the centre of the camera; and a circular shutter, B, provided with windows, for the lenses are so arranged that when the camera, after being shot aloft by the rocket, commences to fall, the shutters open and close, allowing the photographs to be taken. The complete apparatus is shown in Fig. 1, a parachute being attached to open out and support the camera, which is hauled back to earth by a cord.

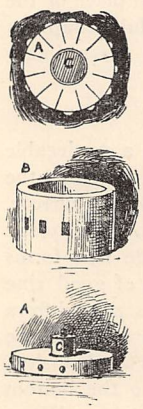


FIG. 2.

Storing the Nile.

A series of surveys has shown that there is a great depression seventy-five miles south-south-west of Cairo, which communicates with the Nile when the river is a little below high water. This tract of country is the Wadi Raiyan, and is bounded by high and precipitous limestone hills. It is therefore proposed to turn it into a great reservoir for storing the flood-water of the Nile, thus enabling irrigation to be carried on during low Nile. Its capacity is such as to practically double the summer irrigation of Egypt. The works necessary to convert the basin into a reservoir could be completed in a year; but three seasons would be required to fill it. It is confidently expected that these works will ere long be carried out, and a large extension of the cultivated soil of Egypt thus effected.

Discovering Leaks in Ships.

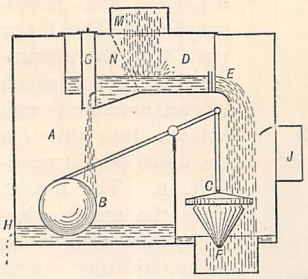
Herr Th. Thorbjörnsen, of Kragerö, has devised a simple apparatus for discovering leaks in ships while lying in the dry dock. The apparatus consists of a closed furnace placed on deck, and burning straw or bramble. The hatches of the vessel being closed, the smoke of the furnace is pumped into the hold, and any leak in the hull is then discovered by the smoke escaping from it.

Fire-Drawings.

If a saturated solution of saltpetre be used with a quill or fine brush to make a drawing or writing on white absorbent paper, keeping the lines well clear of each other, and the whole in outline, a glowing match will set fire to the lines, and a spark will run along the design, cutting it out as with a knife. The saltpetre yields oxygen to combine with the carbon of the paper, when heated to the point of ignition by the glowing charcoal of a match ignited and blown out.

Storing Clean Rain-Water.

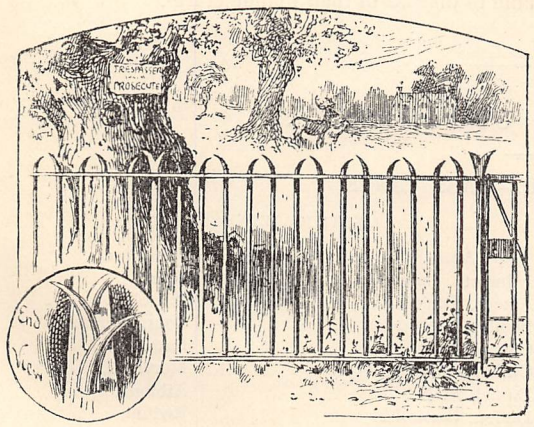
A special form of gutter, designed to prevent accumulation of dirt, has been introduced in conjunction with an automatic regulator, which diverts all the dirty rain-water from the storage-tank, and collects only the clean. The figure illustrates the interior of this regulator. The cistern, A, being empty, the weight of the float, B, keeps the valve, C, open. The dirty rain-water entering the apparatus through the pipe, M, passes through a strainer, N, and then flows along a passage, D, over a weir, E, to the foul-water pipe, F. At the same time a portion of the water enters the cistern, A, through a small tube, G, and discharges at a lower rate through the tube, H. The ball, B, rises with the water in the cistern, and closes the valve, C, thus diverting the flow of clean rain-water, after the foul has been run off, into the pipe, J, connected with the storage-tank.



Making Light.

Light is understood by some electricians to be an electrical vibration of the ether; and hence Dr. O. J.

Lodge, a holder of this theory, has been endeavouring to produce these waves by direct electric action without the intervention of heat. The means adopted was the oscillating discharge of a Leyden jar with a rate of vibration as high as one million per second. The waves thus obtained were about three yards long; but, according to Dr. Lodge, were light in every particular except wave-length. To reach the wave-length of light, however, they would require to be shortened from three yards to the hundred-thousandth of an inch. The electrical waves of Dr. Lodge travel through space at the same speed as light, and are refracted and absorbed by material substances according to the same laws. Hence Dr. Lodge concludes that if we can only generate electric waves sufficiently small, we may entirely revolutionise our present modes of obtaining artificial light. In connection with this subject we may refer to the important discovery which has been made by Dr. Hertz, of Vienna, to the effect that blue light is capable of starting the electric spark when it otherwise would not pass between the sparking points. That is to say, for example, that if the sparking points of an induction coil be drawn just too far apart for the spark to leap across the intervening air, a ray of violet light falling on the gap will start the spark. Dr. Oliver Lodge infers from this discovery that the mere blaze of one lightning-flash may precipitate other flashes.



A New Hurdle.

A new hurdle, or iron fence, designed to prevent climbing over, is illustrated herewith. The top spikes are curved in opposite ways so as to form hooks which catch on the dress of any would-be trespasser. The fence is made of square or rounded bars, and sometimes the hooks are formed by dividing a bar at the top and turning the points to both sides. Ordinary iron fencing with spiked tops is by no means a sure preventative of climbing, and the new hurdle appears to be a decided yet simple improvement in this respect.

Two Noble Lives.

The life-story of Robert Moffat, the veteran African missionary, and his wife, is full of interest and incident. It has been told by their son under the title "The Lives of Robert and Mary Moffat," and we are glad to see that Mr. Fisher Unwin has brought out a new edition of this work at a price which brings it within the reach of all readers. Just now, when African affairs are so much under public notice, this book cannot fail to be both interesting and useful to English readers.

"Commodore Junk"

Is the title which Mr. G. Manville Fenn gives to his latest story published by Messrs. Cassell. The story tells how Abel Dell and his friend Bart Wrigley were transported for taking the law into their own hands on a false lover of Abel's sister, Mary, and how Mary follows them to the West Indies in disguise, and ultimately succeeds in helping them to escape from the prison. Then follow numberless adventures and hairbreadth escapes, and a life of unqualified piracy for the three friends. "Commodore Junk" is the title assumed by Abel, and after his death is held by his supposed brother "Jack," who is really Mary in disguise. The story is full of life, brightly pictured and vivid in keenness, though we must confess some of the incidents and shifts are not at all to our taste. But "Dinny" is a very amusing character, and "Bart" a singularly strong one.

First Lessons in Anatomy.

For those in search of an easy introduction to the study of the human frame, Mr. William Furneaux, special teacher of Science to the London School Board, has prepared a work entitled "Animal Physiology," published by Messrs. Longmans & Co. The book, which is one of a series of elementary science manuals, is fully and very carefully illustrated, and seems to us admirably adapted to meet the wants of those for whom its author intended it.

Two Books for Women.

The author of "How to be Happy though Married," whose name is familiar to our readers, aptly calls his latest volume—"The Five Talents of Woman"—"a book for girls and women." Mr. Hardy's witty preface tells us that his pages "do not contain anything unsaid before, for woman, being one of our oldest institutions, has benefited or suffered in all ages from description and definition." The five talents, according to our author, are (1) To please people; (2) To feed them in dainty ways; (3) To clothe them; (4) To keep them orderly; (5) To teach them; and in the course of the work he explains, with a boundless wealth of anecdote, how these talents may best be acquired and developed. Mr. Fisher Unwin is the publisher of this book, which should certainly be read by all about to marry. But all women cannot marry, and many must fight the battle of life for themselves, so we are glad to welcome another and revised edition—this time at sixpence—which has just been issued by Messrs. Cassell, of Mercy Grogan's "How Women may Earn a Living."

For the Very Little Ones.

Messrs. Cassell & Co. have issued a series of brightly-covered and fully-illustrated little works for little people, under the title of "The Swallow Series." There is not one of the fifteen volumes that would not in itself be popular in any nursery in the kingdom for its pictures alone, and the letterpress which accompanies them is of the simplest description possible. —"Nurse's Memories" (Eyre & Spottiswoode) is a charmingly-written little story by Charlotte M. Yonge, illustrated in colours by Fred. Marriott and Florence Maplestone. The simply-told chapters are sure to please the little ones, and the coloured plates with tasteful floral borders are marvels of artistic reproduction. A less elaborate work in the same excellent style is a collection of hymns for children by Sarah Wilson, accompanied by Sir Arthur Sullivan's tunes and by tasteful monochrome illustrations.—Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode also issue four little booklets attractively illustrated in colours, and admirably adapted for gift-books at this season. One is called "The Royal Homes of England," and contains illustrations of the royal palaces, a portrait of Her Majesty, and a picture of the Albert Memorial; the other three are books of rhymes by our contributor Mr. Frederick Langbridge, of which the "River of Years" is, perhaps, likely to be the most popular, though "Come Ye to the Waters," and "The Talking Clock" —the latter addressed to children, and the former dealing with sacred subjects—are sure to please.

Two Volumes of Verse.

Everybody remembers Mr. Walter Crane's charming sketches in "Legends for Lionel," so we may be sure they will be glad to welcome another similar volume from him, entitled "Flora's Feast: a Masque of Flowers" (Cassell), which is, as he himself puts it, "penned and pictured" by the artist. It is impossible, in a brief paragraph like this, to give anything more than a shadowy idea of this attractive work, in which all the flowers of the garden are cleverly personified to illustrate running verse that links them together.—"A Publisher's Playground" (Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.) is, as its title implies, the outcome of a publisher's leisure-hours. Some of the verses are pretty, especially those written to accompany music; but the work as a whole is not, to our mind, sufficiently serious.

Profitable Needlework.

Those whose aim in taking up needlework is merely to pass away time, will find in a little manual entitled "Needlework for Ladies, for Pleasure and Profit" (Swan, Sonnenschein, Lowrey, & Co.) many hints as to the making of useful and pretty articles with every variety of stitch and needle; whilst those who are obliged to turn their needlework to account, will not only find the useful directions they want as to the making of various articles, but a list of work societies through which there is any likelihood of their being able to dispose of their manufactures.

AMATEUR FREE UNIVERSITY.

OCTOBER COURSE.—PASS LISTS.

DOMESTIC FACULTY.

(ORIGINAL RECIPE COMPETITION.)

The Prize of One Guinea is awarded to

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH WHITEHEAD, Somerville Aston, near Broadway, Worcestershire;

and a Certificate of Honour to

Elizabeth A. Sterling, Cardiff.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Dymond, Helen	Bath.
Evett, Hettie	Kingsbridge.
Gregson, Sarah E.	Ulverston.
Moore, Amelia	Great Yarmouth.
Smith, Rosa I.	Brockley.

LITERARY FACULTY.

(ORIGINAL STORY COMPETITION.)

The Prize of Three Guineas is awarded to

MINNIE MOORSOM, 8, Onslow Crescent, London, S.W.;

and a Certificate of Honour to

Eleanor Holmes, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Ashworth, James G.	Truro.
Axtens, Frances E.	Bristol.
Boodle, Adelaide A.	Bournemouth.
Curry, May B.	Bath.
Cutler, Frank	Norwood, S.E.
Daniel, N. N.	Athlone.
Duffett, Bessie E.	Redhill.
Cresswell, B. F.	Teignmouth.
Eldridge, Annie	Newport.
Fearn, J. Eaton	Uttoxeter.
Fox, Mary	Halifax.
Gibbons, Alice	Brierley Hill.
Hall, Annabelle	Stoke Newington, N.
Holdsworth, Florence C.	Hull.
Holmes, Florence	Birmingham.
Ketchley, Harriet E.	Kirby Moorside.
Longmore, M. E.	Brentwood.
Pendlebury, M.	Grange-over-Sands.
Porter, Charlotte A.	Bridlington Quay.
Raper, S. J.	Bridlington Quay.
Ruffy, E. L.	Kettering.
Smith, Frank	Weymouth.
Tait, Ellen C.	Salisbury.
Van Baerle, M.	Utrecht, Holland.
Walker, Ethel M. S.	Rugby.
Wickham, Annie	Bideford.

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

THE SIBYL.

MISS JIGGER.

REDLANDS' excitement was accounted for. To find, on the eve of selling the last acres of his estate to cover his debts, that the land contained treasure to restore all that had been lost in the past, and insure ample competence, and more, for the future, was surely enough to turn his head. It turned mine for the moment, so that I could only look at him in incredulous astonishment.

"I must have money to work it, Keene," he pursued. "You can raise it on a mortgage, or something of that kind."

"Yes; there will be no difficulty in raising six or eight thousand on the estate as it is. Of course, when it is proved that there is a vast source of wealth in it, it will be easy to raise ever so much more. On that point you will take a surveyor's opinion at once, I suppose?"

"No," said he; "I shall trust to my own guidance in that. I want to feel that I am good for something."

"H'm—yes," said I dubiously; "still"—I was about to add that two heads are better than one, that though doubtless his theoretical judgment was sound, yet a man of practical experience might prevent him falling into a costly mistake, with other observations of a prudential kind, but he interrupted me.

"I know what you would say: that of two fools, he who keeps his money is the least foolish: that it is better to know my idea is worthless before spending anything upon it than after. I don't contest that. But if all the surveyors in the world were against me, I would not abandon this enterprise whilst I had the means to pursue it."

"I'm glad to hear you so confident about it," said I. After all, I thought, he will cool down in a week, and be more likely to listen to reason.

"Besides," he continued, "there's no time to wait for surveyors' reports: I must begin at once. You must let me have a few hundreds to-morrow, if possible."

It was no worse to throw away a few hundreds over this folly than over any other, I said to myself; he had not asked my advice, and it was not in my province to direct him; my business was to serve my client, and so I promised to let him have some money the next day.

"Thanks!" said he; then, after a moment's pause, he added earnestly: "You don't know how I feel about this; it's like waking from a dream of death to find oneself full of life and vigour!"

I was heartily glad to hear him speak in this way, and I said so. Then, my nag falling into a walk, for we were at the foot of the hill leading to the church, he said—"I won't trouble you to take me any further, Mr. Keene. I'll get down here." And with that he shook hands, leapt down, and walked off up the hill faster than my pony would have gone—which was perhaps why he proposed walking, being in this impetuous, eager mood.

And now, to continue my story and keep the threads of it well in hand, I must again go greatly upon hearsay and my own conclusions, setting down what has been told me by a certain party intimately acquainted with the facts, and making such additions as the circumstances of the case seem to me to warrant.

Miss Sylvester had left the schoolroom a little before the time—an unusual occurrence with her—and was some little distance down the hill when she met Redlands. There was something hopeful in the quick elasticity of his step as he approached, but when he was near enough for her to see the expression of his face, in which the apathy and dejection of the morning had given place to strenuous interest and eager exultation, she knew that the wish of her heart was achieved.

"Eureka!" he cried, holding out his hand, for his excitement had not been abated by the long pull up hill.

"Eureka," said she, giving her hand; "that means: I have found it—does it not?"

"Yes, I have found it, thanks to you, you little Sibyl. Oh, I don't forget," he added, turning quickly from gay to grave—"I never shall—that I owe everything to you."

"I should like to think I have been of some use to you; but I would rather believe that you owe most to the prompting of your own heart."

"My heart!" he replied in a tone of perplexity; then suddenly bursting into a laugh, he added—

"Oh, I see what you mean. You think I was touched with remorse by the deplorable condition of the people on my estate, and came to the virtuous resolution to build them a pier, furnish them with fishing boats, make the approaches decent, and, in short, do for Black Gap what Miss Sylvester has done for Loecliff: that's what you would have done, or would have had me do."

"Yes," said she, "that is what I should have tried to do."

"And what you might have succeeded in, having the patience and sweetness of an angel—for I know you have, Sibyl though you are. I have no qualities of that kind. I must do nothing, or take everything at the charge. I couldn't lay siege to Fortune: I must carry it by impetuous assault."

They were now walking side by side. Marian glanced uneasily at her companion, and he, catching that glance, again laughed, thinking perhaps what a long little face it was.

"My heart counts for nothing in the matter," said he; "I'm afraid if you had known how material and worldly I am, you would never have sent me to Black Rock Gap."

Then he confessed how he had quitted the village in disgust, resolved never to go there again, and to get rid of it with the least possible delay; and only changed his intention when he discovered the wealth of iron ore that lay in his estate. Marian was a little downcast to hear this, knowing so little of mankind, and having but girlish ideals. But she was ready enough to make excuses for his shortcomings, because he was a man, and could not be supposed to have the same feelings and views as a woman. To be sure, her father was a brave soldier, manly in all things, and yet patient and tender withal; but then he was so much older.

So with this under-current of thought she followed the course of her companion's conversation, gradually warming with his glowing description of the great find, and coming to share something of his enthusiasm.

"To be sure," said she, "this will give employment to all those poor things at the Gap."

"Assuredly, and to as many more as I can get together. And look, my dear little friend, instead of waiting till a pier's built and boats are furnished for a change in their condition, the whole lot can be got to work at once."

"Oh, that is good!" she cried. "But do you think they are capable of miner's work?"

"The first thing is to make an approachable road to the place; and any one can work at that who has a pair of hands. There's work enough: my only fear is that I shall not be able to get as many workmen as I need. I should like you to see what there is to do."

"There's nothing I should like better," said she simply, taking him literally at his word. "I may yet be of service to you."

"I owe you too much already to neglect such a chance. I wish you would come."

"I will," said she, and readily agreed to meet him, where they were then stopping to separate, at eight o'clock the next morning, without the slightest suspicion that she was disregarding the conventional rules of society as perhaps no other little lady in England would have done in her place.

As for Redlands, this sudden change in his fortunes had completely upset all his established rules of action; and it was not a bit more absurd, in reviewing the strange events of the day, to find that he had closely allied himself with a pretty little school teacher than in regarding his legs and feet to remark that he had a cake of red mud on each knee, and that the lustre of his boots was apparently gone for ever.

It was only when he awoke the next morning from a long night's sleep that he asked himself what on earth he could have been thinking about to make an appointment to meet "that little thing" this morning. He felt ashamed of himself—as one does the next morning when there has been indiscretion overnight—and looked forward to still more unpleasant consequences.

"I shall have to drag her about all the live-long day," thought he; "there'll be no getting rid of her: a pretty beginning to serious business, upon my honour!"

Marian, who was not conscious of any past indiscretion, had no such unpleasant reflections or anticipations. To her great delight, the weather had changed—a smart frost hardened the ground, and the sun, rising beyond the great fir-woods, cast here and there patches of glittering light upon the rimy banks. She was just as calm and self-possessed as ever when Redlands met her, only her face and eyes seemed to reflect the sparkling radiance and freshness of the morning.

"She *is* pretty, and that's the fact," thought Redlands, wondering how it was that in her absence he always figured her as an odd little person.

There was nothing odd about her. He noticed that her gloves fitted to a nicety, that her hat was very becoming, her dress altogether in good taste—indeed, it seemed to him that, for a country schoolmistress, she was decidedly fashionable. Nor was there anything unusual in her manner beyond its simplicity and a perfect absence of constraint; and, as he had remarked before, a more graceful, delicate bearing and a sweeter voice he had never known.

Under the influence of that sweet little smile of hers all his compunctious forebodings vanished, like the frost from the boughs in the glow of the sun. The prospect of having her on his hands for some time was anything but disagreeable—especially as she had not the dawdling gait of some young women, but stepped out as briskly as he chose to walk.

To be sure, her conversation was so different from most girls'—there was none of that vapid small talk which degenerates into fatiguing banter. Her bright, intelligent eyes were everywhere, noting every aspect of the country about her with the keen perception of one who has taken the pains to learn and love nature. Every observation was a stimulant to fresh ideas. Redlands thought he had never found talking with a woman so easy and interesting; he felt that he must try and remember one or two phrases of hers—they were so pithy, and yet so pretty. When had that happened to him before? Never.

"Our nearest way to the rift is to strike across the common from this point," said she, when they came to a bend of the road.

"Then this way we will go," said he, wondering how she had come by her knowledge.

Presently they came to the edge of the Combe, whence you can look down the rift and see dark purple patches of the ore cropping out amidst the tangled growth of ivy and bramble and fern. He seated himself on a rock, forgetting her for the time, to gloat over this sight; and she, seeing him so absorbed, sat quietly down hard by, thinking what a good thing this was for everybody.

"I suppose," said she, looking about her, "you will raise the ore to a stage hereabouts, and then cart it by a road up the Combe."

"That would be easier, certainly, than laying a road along the beach and up that awful Gap."

"And a much shorter way, too." She took from her satchel a folded paper, opened it out and said, "See—here is the rift, and here the Coneyford road; it is much more direct to cut through the Combe than to go round by the steep Gap."

"Why, where on earth did you get this from?" he asked in astonishment, taking the paper.

"I traced it from the Ordnance map. There's nothing surprising in that, is there?" said she, laughing at his bewildered look. "I thought you might want it."

"You certainly are a witch—it's the very thing I needed. With this I can begin at once. Oh! I can't tell you——"

"And I thought this might be useful to you," she hurried on, to check his thanks, as she produced another paper; "it is the prospectus of a company that supplies a narrow-gauge railway, that is easily laid, and seems very useful where roads are to be made. There's an agent at Coneyford, you will see."

He took this in mute wonder. Was there ever a girl so pretty, and yet so practical and thoughtful?

"It's a long, roundabout way by Coneyford; but I suppose in time, when you get the pier rebuilt, you will be able to ship the ore straight from here to Wales to be smelted."

He looked up from the prospectus to her without speaking—"for still the wonder grew, that one small head could carry all *she* knew."

"You know all about iron, too!" he gasped.

"Not much more than I read last night," said she.

"She must have sat up half the night," thought he—"thinking about my interests while I was sound asleep." Then he said—

"Have you got anything more in that wonderful bag of yours?"

"Only this," replied she, giving him a paper; "it's a list of men, and where they are to be found, who really know something about road-making; for, you see, though any one will be glad to use pick and spade, only a few know how to trace and level. Those I have marked with a dash. Those with the star are farmers who could lend you horses and carts. This one underlined has a saddle-horse he would lend you, and his son is a sharp little lad, who knows all the men I have written down, and would fetch them, or could take you to them, as you desired."

"Why, you have saved me a week's work," said he.

"I thought I might save you some trouble. That is why I ventured to do what I have, believing that you would not misunderstand me."

"Misunderstand you!" he cried; "what an ungrateful idiot I should be if I failed to understand that you are the most delicate and generous little lady in the world!"

He looked so happy and eagerly grateful that she could not but feel happy. She rose with a warm flush in her cheek, and held out her hand.

"Oh, you are not going?" he said; "what can I do without you?"

"Work," she replied, smiling. "I have my own business to attend to, and it is getting late."

He insisted on walking back with her, but she would suffer him to go no farther than the road, and there they shook hands again and parted.

He stood where she left him, watching her quickly retreating figure, and he was glad that she never turned round to look back at him, for he wished to think of her as a lady equal to any of his own class in refinement. Yet he was sorry not to have got another momentary glimpse of that fascinating little face.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

REDLANDS GOES TOO FAR.

THE work began in real earnest at once, but deeply interested as he was in its progress, Redlands left the men and got up to the schoolroom as Marian was coming out. He had two or three questions to ask on technical matters, which she answered as if they had all been considered beforehand. There was nothing very astonishing in this, except to him, for all this business of road-making and the like she had gone through only the previous year, when she made the drive down the Great Park on the east of Loecliff. She stopped when they came to where the roads diverged, and he was too well-bred to suggest going farther with her; only when she was gone it seemed to him they had been together no time at all; and the evening before him looked blank in the extreme.

The next morning he went out of his way to pass the point where they had met yesterday, and timed himself to be there at the same moment; she was not there. He lingered five minutes, hoping she would come, and when he saw no sign of her, he went his way disappointed. More or less she was in his thoughts all day. The road was empty when he got to the school-house in the evening. Had she purposely avoided meeting him? he asked. Then looking at his watch, he found, to his astonishment, that he was a quarter of an hour before the time for her leaving her class. He was delighted at this, and walking up and down, tried to classify all the things he had thought of during the day to say to her. But he was too impatient for that. Something—he knew not what—possessed him, and in that quarter of an hour he looked at his watch half a dozen times. At length she came out, the graceful little lady, and hurrying to meet her, he grasped her hand as though she were an

old, old friend. Then left to himself, he felt that he could have said nothing; but she had so many questions about the work, that this odd confused feeling wore off at once, and he scarcely left her a chance to say a word for the rest of that too brief space that was allowed them. After that the evening seemed blanker than ever. After about two hours of solitude he went out, hoping to meet her. He passed every house in the village, glancing into those rooms where he thought it most likely she might live. Some of the houses were decent enough, yet he was not surprised, and in one way not disappointed, not to see her in any of them; she seemed so much better than the kind of people he saw there. Where could she live? That he could not discover, even if he had been minded to make inquiries, for he absolutely did not know her name. That was as odd as anything. Then he went back to the dismal inn to write letters, and draw plans, and think about his work, and stuck at this business till he got sick of it, and throwing his note-book down, felt that he would give anything for a little conversation with some intelligent friend.

One evening some days later when they came to the parting spot, he said—

"I don't know how I'm to say 'Good night.' You can't tell how I look forward to meeting you, and we seem scarcely to have said 'How do you do?' when it's time to say 'Good-bye.'"

Marian made no reply; these meetings and partings had taken effect upon her, possibly.

"It is such a relief to get away from thoughts of levels and gradients, and cartage and money, and all that sort of thing."

"Oh, yes, you must be glad to set all that aside, and have a good long evening."

He was about to undeceive her on this point when, with a gesture, she silenced him to listen to a robin that had begun to whistle from a bush quite close at hand. He knew nothing about birds, having lived all his life in cities; but he listened as if a new sense had been given him, with a delight he had not known before: perhaps because at the same time he was watching a face that looked so sweet and pale in the half-light. What picture could equal it? He could think of none. Only it recalled to his mind the description of Il Penseroso with her rapt soul sitting in her eyes. The robin went through his little evensong, pausing now and then, as if to recall another verse, then stopped, and presently a "chink, chink" from the distance told that he was gone.

"That is his 'Good night' to us," said Marian.

"What a beautiful songster!"

"Oh, he is the best of all; better than the thrushes, for he sings when they are silent—better than the nightingales, for he stops when they go."

"Is it a blackbird?" asked Redlands.

Marian clapped her hands and laughed.

"Why, no," said she; "it is a robin; didn't you know that?"

"Upon my honour, I didn't. I wish you would walk up to the top of the hill, and tell me about robins and things of that kind. You don't know what a delight to me it is to detach my thoughts from my work, and I can't do that alone. That's why the evenings are not so pleasant as you suggested."

"Can't you fix your mind on other things, if you try?" she asked.

"No; unless I go over what you have said to me in our brief interviews; and then I miss the voice that lends your words a charm."

Marian was unused to compliments and flattery, and she could make no reply for the pleasure it gave her to hear this. So they got almost to the top of the hill without speaking. Then she caught sight of the moon rising like a great brass shield beyond the birches, amidst a delicate lacework of slender boughs and sprays.

The still calm beauty of it, the happiness in his heart, was unspeakable to him; he wanted to touch her hand, and that way convey to her simply all he felt and thought, and the desire was the greater because it could not be gratified.

"It is lovely!" he said in a low voice. And then, as they went onward, "I had no idea the country was so beautiful. Even my own barren land with its ragged scrub delights me now; the wind that blows across it seems to bring me vigour and healthier life, and at first I thought I could not endure it for twenty-four hours."

"I suppose places are like people; we must know them fully to like them."

"Yes. That reminds me that I did not think very much of you at first, and now"—he paused, for it was on his tongue to say—"You are never out of my thoughts," and seeing the danger of that, he said instead, "Now, I don't know what I should do without you"—which to be sure was scarcely less dangerous than the phrase he suppressed.

Poor Marian felt something in her throat that prevented her speaking in reply, even if she could have found anything suitable to reply in the confusion of ideas and thoughts created by his avowal. For it must be remembered that she was totally ignorant of the ordinary ways of society; she had never had a single flirtation, never received any of those attentions that prepare a girl for attacks of this kind, and teach her to take pretty speeches for a mere fashion of speaking. She herself, by her exceptional seclusion, was particularly matter-of-fact, and literal in all things, and looked upon words simply as a vehicle for expressing truthfully actual feelings and ideas.

"I dare say you are right," he continued, seeing that he had gone too far. "One must know a place, and all its nooks and corners, to like it as it deserves; still one owes most to human association; there would be more charm in the four walls of a garret with a sympathetic friend than in a boundless paradise alone. This is a steep bit; will my arm help you?"

She laid her little hand, that trembled somewhat, on his arm, and collected her thoughts by an effort.

"Yes; I suppose that is because our happiness lies in making others happy," said she.

When they got back to the point they had started

from, Redlands, to protract the parting for another minute, said—

"I wish that robin would begin again."

"We shall hear him no more to-night; it is late for him — and me." Then, with a laugh: "How odd that you should not know the note of a robin!"

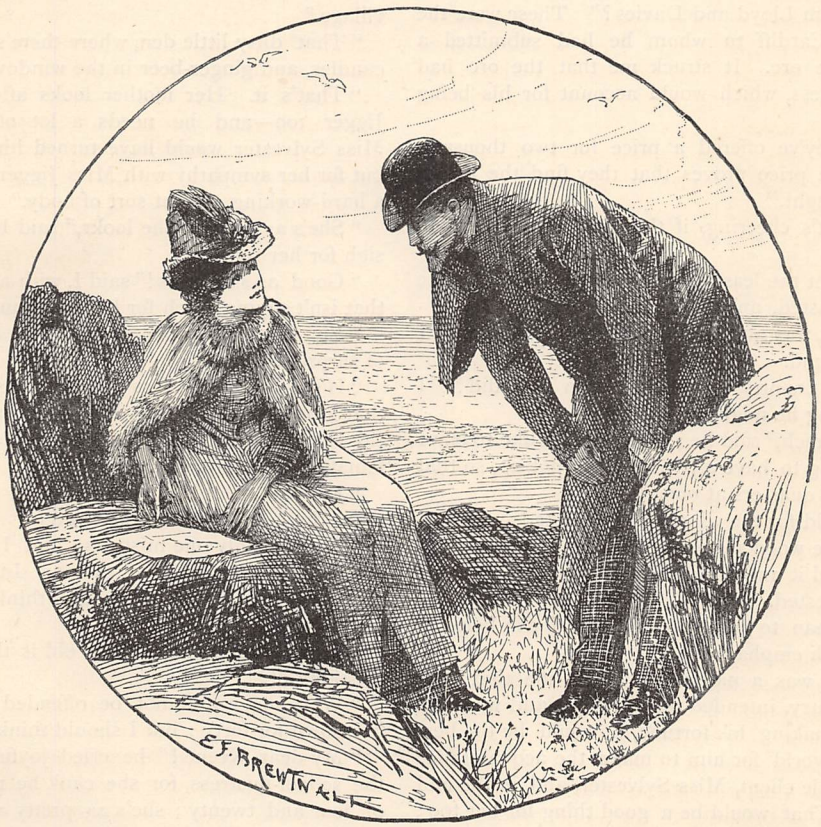
"I might have known the song without knowing the songster's name," he answered. "I don't think my bump of inquisitiveness is greatly developed. Some people, when they hear a piece of music that pleases them, immediately ask who composed it. It's a matter of indifference to me. It's sufficient that the music pleases me; what does it matter what the composer's name is, or where he comes from? It's a sort of impertinence to inquire."

Marian did not quite agree with this; if she liked a book, she learnt the author's name, that she might get more of his works. However, she was beginning to like Redlands too well to think he could be in error, and was ready enough to believe that in some respects curiosity was impertinent.

"After all, it's not so surprising that I did not know the name of that bird, when you think that I have not yet inquired your name, or anything about you. All I know is that you are a school-teacher, and that you make my very existence delightful to me; and that's enough for me."

This hurt Marian; taking the literal view of things —it was enough for him that her company relieved the monotony of a day's work. It was enough for him that she amused him in his idle hours. He wanted no more than that. Such was the conclusion she drew from his careless speech.

Redlands, concluding by her silence and gravity that he had "gone too far," said, to mend matters as he thought, in a lighter tone—



"'WHY, WHERE ON EARTH DID YOU GET THIS FROM?'" (*p.* 131).

"I don't think I have ever seen a robin in a cage."

"No," she replied, with a voice that had a pathetic vibration. "No. Why should we keep them? We throw out a few crumbs to attract them, and one comes and sings to us; and if that one comes no more it doesn't matter; another will come and sing in its place. Good night."

"Good night," he answered; but with an accent of inquiry, as if he wished to know what was the meaning of the sadness in her voice, and the quivering "Good night."

But she left him hastily without another word or look, and only stopped on her way to the Court to have her little cry out, and dry her eyes, that the maids might not notice what had happened.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

ADVENTURES ARE FOR THE ADVENTUROUS.

ABOUT three or four days after this, according to my calculation, Lord Redlands called in upon me. He came frequently into Coneyford—nearly every day—on matters of business, and I had seen him several times, but never, since the day of his arrival, with such a lugubrious countenance as he presented now. He said "Good morning," and seated himself in silence. I could see that something had gone wrong.

"Getting on with your road satisfactorily?" said I.

"Oh, yes," he replied; "the weather is in our favour—that's all right."

"Heard from Lloyd and Davies?" These were the founders at Cardiff to whom he had submitted a sample of the ore. It struck me that the ore had proved worthless, which would account for his being out of spirits.

"Yes. They've offered a price for two thousand tons; and the price proves that they find the ore is rich, as I thought."

"Well, that's cheering, if the block is only up to sample."

"There's not the least doubt of that. I've had the great head blasted, and it's all through alike."

Evidently it was not that which had upset him. I tried new ground.

"Like the country any better than you did?" I asked, thinking he might be sick of it.

"Ever so much," said he; "I shouldn't like to leave it now. Going to have a Swiss châlet put up, so that I may go into quarters at once."

"Rather cold for the winter," I suggested.

"No; those wooden houses are very warm."

"You'll find it rather dull, living there alone, won't you?" I suggested.

"I don't mean to live there alone, if I can help it," he replied with emphasis.

Then there was a pause. It struck me that if he liked the country, intended to live there, and was in a fair way of making his fortune, it would be the best thing in the world for him to make the acquaintance of my nice little client, Miss Sylvester, and in the end marry her. That would be a good thing for her too; so breaking the silence, I said—

"Have you called at Dalegrove Court yet?"

"No; and I don't wish to," said he curtly.

"Do not think me impertinent if I say that I think you ought to do so, as a matter of politeness; not from a social point of view—you know more about that than I do—but as a point of common business etiquette."

"What do you mean, Keene?" he asked, somewhat sternly, as if resenting the imputation of want of civility of any kind.

"Why, sir," said I, "you offered to sell your estate to Miss Sylvester. On that offer we wired to the actual proprietor, old Sylvester, who has come all the way from the south of Italy to give you an answer."

"I did not think of that," said he. "Has he arrived?"

"He arrived the day before yesterday."

"In that case I will certainly call and explain matters as soon as possible."

Saying this, he took out his note-book, and made a memorandum; as he slowly closed the note-book, he said, without raising his eyes—

"Can you tell me the name of the lady who teaches at the Loecliff school?"

"Oh, yes," said I; "I know her well. Miss Jigger is her name."

"Jigger," he repeated, in a tone of disappointment. "Can you tell me where she lives?"

"At the little chandler's shop at the bottom of the village."

"That dirty little den, where there's sweetstuff, and candles, and ginger-beer in the window?"

"That's it. Her mother looks after that and old Jigger too—and he needs a lot of looking after. Miss Sylvester would have turned him out long ago but for her sympathy with Miss Jigger—who really is a hard-working, decent sort of body."

"She's as good as she looks," said Redlands, with a sigh for her relations.

"Good as she looks!" said I, with a smile. "Well, that isn't saying much for her good qualities."

"You don't think her pretty?" he asked, in a tone of surprise.

"H'm! I don't profess to be a judge on matters of that kind; but if I might hazard an opinion, I should say she was the most ordinary—not to say frightful—female I ever clapped eyes on."

"Perhaps there are two teachers; the one I mean plays the harmonium in the church."

"There's only one mistress; and I never heard of her having any musical talent. Indeed, from the sound of her voice, I should think the poor old soul——"

He interrupted me. "How old is the lady you are speaking of?"

"Well, she would not be offended if any one set her down for forty; but I should think——"

"My dear Keene!" he cried joyfully, "*that's* not the school-mistress, for she can't be more than three or four and twenty; she's as pretty as the morning, and her voice is as sweet as—as a robin's."

"Then it's not poor old Jigger. I know she talked of giving up, because the children made fun of her, but——"

Again he cut me short. "Can you find out this new teacher's name and her address?" he asked.

"Certainly; I shall be going over to Loecliff in two or three days' time."

"No, go to-morrow, and let me know at once." And then he added, seeing my look of astonishment, "I mean to make that little lady my wife."

I was thunderstruck, and followed him to the door in silence. As he threw his leg over the horse, I reminded him of his promise to call at Dalegrove Court on old Sylvester, as I scarcely cared to present myself there before something had been done about the breach of purchase. He promised to go there immediately, and started off at a gallop.

"Half-past three," said he to himself, looking at his watch as the keeper opened the gates of Dalegrove Court to let him through. "I shall just have time to knock off this precious interview, and get back to the school by her usual time."

He passed the gate, and quitting the drive, cantered over the turf in the direction of the Court. Following the sweep of the drive, as he rounded a bank of rhododendrons, he caught sight of a figure before him that set his heart bounding. It was she—the girl he had been thinking of night and day for a fortnight and more, whom he had been seeking in vain the last three mornings and evenings. She did not hear him coming over the grass until he was close behind her, and then, as she looked up quickly, he was struck with the pallor of her cheek, the care in her face and deep eyes. He sprang from his horse and turned to her with outstretched hand; in that moment the colour had come back to her face, and all the pain gone from her eyes.

"Oh, I am so glad to have found you again!" he cried. "I have been wandering about like a miser looking for lost treasure since we last parted."

"I have not been able to do my ordinary work in the school. There have been other things to occupy me"—she paused. He had been waiting for that pause.

"You are *not* Miss Jigger, are you?" he asked.

That made her laugh; and shaking her head, she inquired—

"Why should you think so?"

"Because old Keene would have it there was no teacher at the school but Miss Jigger."

"When did he tell you that?" she said.

"This afternoon. I went over there to ask him."

"That wasn't impertinent curiosity, was it?" she asked archly; for her spirits had risen like the silver in a thermometer under the glow of a summer sun since he had been beside her.

"Spare me," he said, and added earnestly, "It was want of thought, not want of heart, that led me into that blunder. I knew, when it was too late to overtake you, why you left me so—why there was that accent of disappointment in your voice. It was that luckless simile that set me wrong. I know the construction you put on what I said. I—I want to tell you all, and undeceive you in the matter."

He looked round. They were close to the Court, and some one was looking from a window. It was not the place to make an offer of marriage, quite.

"I want to say a great deal to you; where are you going?"

"I am going to the house."

"So am I. I've got to see old Sylvester, and tell him I can't sell my land—thanks to you. I'll knock that off in a couple of minutes. Will you meet me when you have settled your affairs there?" ("I suppose," he thought, "she has to render up an account to that precious Miss Sylvester. That's why she has put on a bonnet instead of her little hat; but it suits her dear little face just as well.") "Will you meet me at the school, unless I overtake you on your way?"

"Yes," she answered; "I will go up to the school, unless we meet before."

"How kind you are!" he said, looking fondly into her face as they took hands.

"Kind!" she murmured.

"Yes, kind," he replied, pressing her hand. "That's the word; and if you could only see your face in the glass just now, you'd own it was the right one."

Then he flung the reins over his horse's neck, and ran up the steps of the Court, while she passed out of sight by the side walk.

"Hateful!" he growled, as he knocked viciously at the door. "To think she should have to go round to the servants' door simply because she's a teacher! Never mind, you dear little soul. One of these days, you shall march into the house by this door, and show all the world that you are the equal of Miss Sylvester, or any one else. By-the-by, I don't know her name yet!" Then he asked for Mr. Sylvester.

"Mr. Sylvester won't see any one in the afternoon sir, gen'ly; but if I send up your card p'raps he'll come down."

Redlands reflected. The old man evidently went to sleep in the afternoon. He might think it worth while to get up. That would take time, and all the while *she* would be waiting at the school. An idea struck him.

"Can I see Miss Sylvester?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sir; Miss Sylvester sees any one who calls. If you'll step this way, I'll take your card."

Redlands followed the servant, and was left in the great reception-room.

"Just the kind of room I should expect to meet that lady in," thought he: "pretentious, dull, and abominable. Couldn't be more appropriate. Dare say she won't be pleased to lose the chance of getting my estate; may cut up rough. Don't mind if she does."

With these reflections he looked out of window, rather enjoying the prospect of having a spar with Miss Sylvester, till he heard a door open and close; then he turned about. Looking into the obscurity, after gazing into the light, he could only at first discern a slight figure at the other end of the room, but it struck him at once that if this was Miss Sylvester she was not such an imposing figure in a room as in the chancel stall. He advanced, but the next moment he stopped in astonishment; the lady before him was the one he had quitted outside a minute or two ago.

"Can it be you?" he exclaimed.

"Certainly it is," she answered. "You asked to see Miss Sylvester."

"You—you Miss Sylvester!" was all he could gasp—yet with an accent of keen hope.

"Why should I not be Miss Sylvester?" she asked quietly, smiling at his surprise.

"I thought that showy woman in the chancel was Miss Sylvester; I had no idea you, who took such a humble place——"

"That shows that it is sometimes worth while to inquire the name of one who sings. Had you asked me at any time, I should have told you that my name was Marian Sylvester"

"Marian!" he repeated softly, thinking it the sweetest name he had ever uttered—"Marian!"

"Sylvester," she added.

"Oh!" he cried, taking her hand, "let me tell you now what I intended to tell you when we met again. I meant to ask you to change that name for mine—even though it was Jigger, and all was as Keene said about that dirty sweetstuff shop and old Jigger. Oh, Marian!" he pursued, his voice trembling with deeper feeling, "I can't live without you. You have lifted me out of despair, and given me life and hope. But you must not stop there, for without hope my life is worth nothing. You have made me what I am, you may make me a yet better man; but you must not let me go back to what I was, Marian dear," drawing her to him. "You have shown me the road to happiness; will you be my fellow-traveller to the end?"

"'I SHALL JUST HAVE TIME TO KNOCK OFF THIS PRECIOUS INTERVIEW'" (*p.* 135).

She had bent her head, and shut her eyes that her ears might drink in all these sweet words the better; as he gently raised her face she opened her dark eyes, and looking up into his through the dew of love that had fallen upon them, she murmured—

"Yes, dear, to the end."

END OF CHAPTER THE NINTH.

"MY POOR CHEST AGAIN!"

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

ONCE upon a time—I could not say how many hundreds of years ago—there lived in Thessaly a great king, whose name was Peleus. By some means or other, the story does not tell us how, he got introduced to Nereus. I cannot give the history of Nereus himself, my memory is not good enough, but he was the son of an ancient sea-god, called Oceanus, and had no less than fifty daughters, called the Nereides. Nereus was to be pitied, but that is neither here nor there. Peleus got married to one of them, and there were thus only forty-nine left. But mighty monarch though Peleus was, he had a son who gained greater honour and glory than he. This boy, whose name was Achilles, joined the army and distinguished himself very much in the Trojan war. Although ever foremost in the fight, he never received so much as a scratch, at which everybody wondered, until told that the captain was invulnerable; that the sea-nymph his mother had dipped him when a child in some mystical river, and every portion of his body which the water touched became proof against dart or spear. But—there always *is* a but—the right heel, by which he had been suspended, had not come in contact with the water at all, and Paris, son of Priam, took advantage of this: he fired an arrow at the captain's heel, and then—there was no more Achilles. Very likely his mother had wished to render her boy immortal, but did not quite succeed.

Well, just like Achilles, we each and all of us have our weak and vulnerable point, however sturdy and strong we may be in other respects.

This is usually some internal organ which, when we happen to get exposed to cold or wet while in a state of temporary debility, from fasting, for instance, is singled out and "determined to."

By this latter phrase, I mean that the chill sends the blood more particularly to this weak organ. Congestion is the consequence, and, if this be not relieved, inflammation may follow. A mere momentary shock of cold will send the blood from without inwards, as in the case of a cold plunge or shower bath. But in people who have plenty of *vis naturæ* this is really beneficial, for the nerves set to work at once, and with the resiliency of the tiny blood-vessels speedily restore matters to the *status quo*. After this we feel the outer surface, if not actually glowing, at least more comfortable than before, while at the same time the mind and whole body feel lighter, for that temporary congestion has stimulated the excretion of every internal organ. Hence the healthfulness of this cold bath to those who are strong enough to take it.

A long-continued chill is quite a different affair, and a dangerous affair as well.

I have not got my physiological gown on to-day. It is a toga that I do not often array myself in, while writing these Family Doctor Papers, for I well know that to most of my readers physiology is a dry-as-dust science; but there is a question which it needs but little very deep reasoning to explain, although it is a most important one to everybody living in this uncertain climate of ours: "How do we catch cold?"

If we only knew what to do to avoid such a mischance, would it not be a blessing? Unfortunately some of the causes of "common colds" are beyond our power of resistance. Certain states or conditions of atmosphere, for example, sudden changes from dry cold perhaps, to moderate warmth with moisture; a moisture in all probability laden with mephitic vapour or unwholesome inhalations from the ground, the grass, or even the trees. These act for evil in at least two ways, for while the malaria poisons or inflames the mucous membrane that lines the nose, eyes, and air passages throughout, the moist warmth debilitates the body, and renders resistance to the evil influences less energetic and effectual, and, according to the amount of malaria, if I may so call the bacteria-charged air, and the degree of change of temperature will be the virulency of the cold one catches. This will also depend upon many other causes. Mr. A—— may escape entirely, Mr. B—— have but a slight attack, while Mr. C—— suffers severely, and Mr. D——'s trouble goes on to actual inflammation of perhaps a dangerous nature.

But the most common cause of cold is a chill. I do not like the word "chill," and only use it in lieu of a better, and because it is understood or supposed to be understood by all. Now, exposure of the whole body to cold would produce universal depression of vitality. Such exposure seldom occurs, but an example of it might be cited in the case of a person who had fallen into the water, and after getting out had remained inactive for some length of time. If one keeps energetically moving, even though wet to the skin, there is an active resistance to stagnation of the blood and congestion anywhere. This should be remembered.

A partial chill on the other hand will, in most constitutions, result in a cold; that is, if it be kept up too long. Now, I have not, strange to say, to go very far for an example, and I always think that one should make use of the simplest illustrations he can find, if they are capable of making clear the meaning he wishes to convey. I am writing these lines, then, in a small ornamental house in the middle of my grounds, and which I call my garden study. It is situated on the top of a high green mound or terrace, and certainly is exposed to plenty of fresh air. Well, it is seldom, even in winter, that I have a fire; but to-day, and for

some days—the month is November—a high east wind has been blowing, and the stove has been lit. Nevertheless, my love for the purest of air has caused me to sit for the last hour close by the open window, and bare-headed. The result is a warning sneeze or two, a little heat of the eyes, and stuffiness of nostrils. These are certainly the first signs of a cold, but I wisely and in time shut this casement and open another, trusting to the vigour of my constitution to ward off evil effects. This is an example of slight chill. Had I sat longer head-on to that east wind draught, a cold could not have been prevented.

But here another question obtrudes itself: Why, in a case like the present, should it be the lining membrane of the nostrils and eyes that is affected? Or why is there no bad effect perceptible on the structures that lie between this membrane and the skin, upon which fell the direct impact of the cold current? It will not do to answer that the irritation of the mucous surface was occasioned by actually snuffing in a cold current; it was not wholly so due, perhaps not even in the most trifling degree. And had my chest been my weak point, that would have been affected, although the air before it reached it would be warmer by passing through the nostrils—I never breathe through the mouth. I should in that case be now coughing instead of sneezing. No; the answer, in best accord with the reasonings of physiology, is found in the fact that the skin which covers the outside of the body, and the mucous membrane which lines every portion and organ of the interior, are one and the same thing, and united in a continuous network of blood-vessels as well as nerves, so that chill, or the deprivation of blood on the skin, results in temporary congestion or over-fulness of blood in the mucous membrane. Now, note that blood is composed of two parts, a watery, clear fluid, and the red corpuscles which form the clot in drawn blood, and if turgidity of the vessels of the lining membrane of the nasal passages or lungs takes place, the watery portion will to some extent exude, while all the million minute glands in the neighbourhood pour out their secretions; hence we have running of the nose in colds in the head, and exudation causing cough in those situated in the lungs.

We usually give the name of bronchitis to lung colds, and it is needless to say they are dangerous owing to the delicacy of structure of these organs, and the likelihood of the inflammation affecting the deeper structures of the lung itself.

Unhappily, the chest is to thousands, nay, but millions of us, what the heel was to Achilles—the one vulnerable spot.

I am not going to suggest means for curing colds in this paper; I do enough, I think, for one day, if I indicate plans or methods of prevention. And I cannot surely better effect my object than by trying to explain when applied cold is dangerous, and when it is merely a bugbear. I have given one example in my own person; the corollary is—beware of draughts. There is danger, I mean, in having one portion of the body exposed to chill, the other portions being warm. Example:—I do maintain and defy contradiction in saying that many thousands of people owe their fatal illnesses to colds caught in bed. For here the front of the chest is kept warm, so are the arms and whole body—the face and head excepted, but they are inured—while the one wee morsel left exposed to chill, especially in those who sleep on the side, is not much bigger, perhaps, than the heel of Achilles, and lies beneath the nape of the neck and between the shoulder blades. Have you never felt cold just there, reader, towards morning of a winter night? Protect that spot. If delicate, there is where the chest should be shielded by a chest protector.

People subject to colds in the chest should do all they can—and that is a good deal—to prevent recurrence of their complaints. We hear people say sometimes, "Yes, I am rather subject to colds, but they don't last long." The warning answer to this is, They do not last long for two reasons: first, you are young or middle-aged and have strength to throw them off; and secondly, the mucous membrane has not yet become chronically thickened. But advancing years make matters worse, and each winter cough prepares the ground for its successor.

Here is another hint: I have spoken of certain warm mephitic-laden and debilitating states of atmosphere conducing to colds, but even in the healthiest of weather it is possible to engender such an atmosphere indoors; and people who "mug" themselves in badly-ventilated rooms, and are afraid of a breath of fresh air, simply do this. Their mucous membrane, aye, their whole bodies, get enfeebled, and they become no more able to bear a puff of cold, wholesome wind than thistledown can stand a thunder-shower.

A person of this sort wants the purest blood it is possible to manufacture. How to do it? Why, begin with food: let it be moderate, nutritious, tasty, toothsome, and solid; coffee and tea only in moderation; healthful exercise to the verge—no further—of fatigue and perspiration; the purest of air outdoors and in, by day and night. As to the baleful effects of night air, it is best to look upon this as a myth.

Next, as to the morning prophylactic. This is the tub. Soap and lather with hot water the whole body, then have a cold sponge bath. When partly dressed take a ten-minutes' spell of the dumb-bells.

As to clothing, nothing is more important to people with weak chests. Let the under-clothing be all wool, but not thick. It must *not* be too warm. The dress should be nearly all wool, and never heavy. The feet should never be damp.

In all habits of life such persons should be most temperate. Diet should not be stimulating, nor should hot sauces be taken, nor anything to interfere with the due action of the liver.

Cultivate the habit of breathing through the nose; do not sleep under a great weight of bed-clothes, nor in too soft a bed, nor too warm a room. Never breathe a dusty atmosphere, nor walk quickly up hill. Obedience to these simple rules, without the aid of medicine—which nearly always weakens—will stave off many a cold, so that from year's end to year's end you will never have to say, "My poor chest again!"

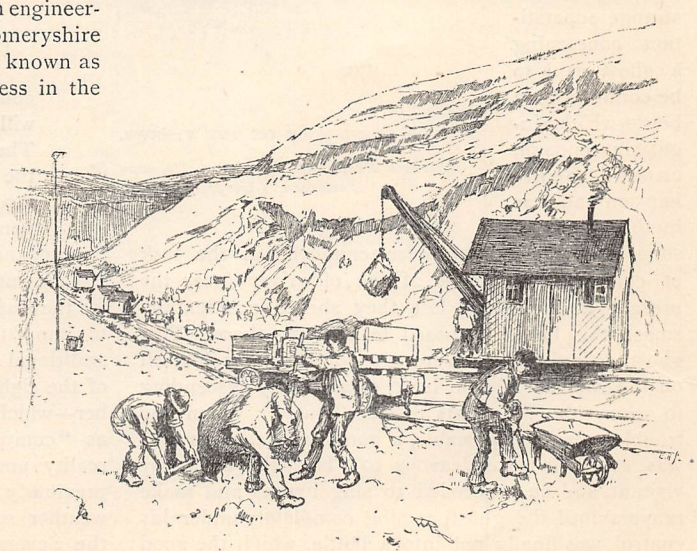
THE DOOMED VALLEY.

POST OFFICE, LLANWDDYN.

(*From a Photograph by Messrs. Robinson & Thompson, Liverpool.*)

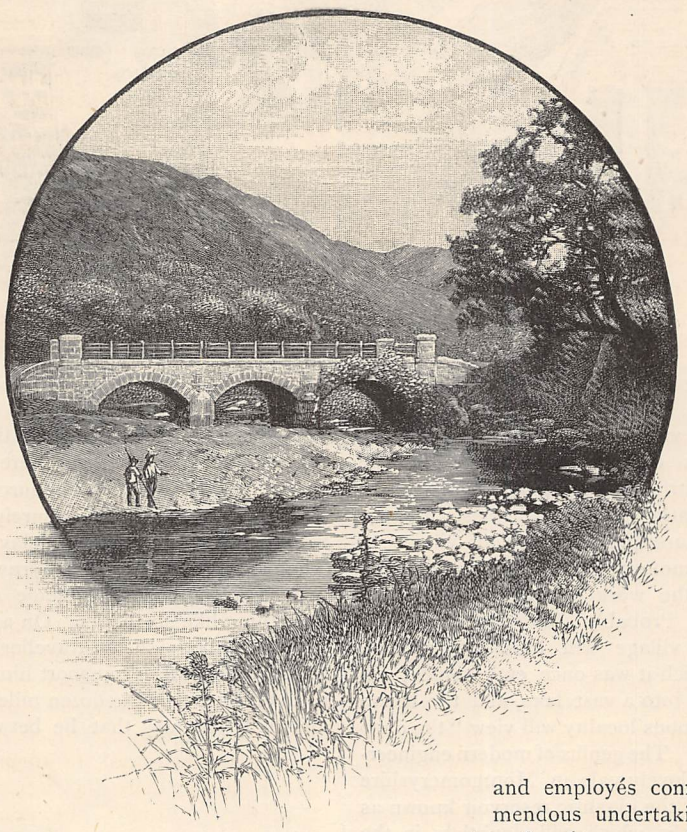
IN a secluded valley, far removed from the beaten track of tourists, situated in the charming district of Montgomeryshire, there exists, or rather there did exist a brief period ago, the picturesque and ancient village of Llanwddyn. At the moment of writing it is doomed to destruction, and the work of demolition has already commenced. Probably before these words appear in type the village will have disappeared, and the valley, in which it was once embosomed, will have been converted into a vast lake, and the future visitor to this now famous locality will view "the deep where grew the tree." The genius of modern engineering has fixed on this lovely vale in Montgomeryshire for the construction of the gigantic reservoir known as the Vyrnwy Waterworks, which will doubtless in the future effectually remove a long-felt and well-nigh intolerable want. For some years past the inhabitants of Liverpool, during the dry summer months, have been troubled with a door-to-door visitation of the emissaries of the powers that be, who have thrust upon them printed notices calling attention to the scarcity of the water supply, and requesting all good citizens, in order to avert the possible catastrophe of a water famine, to exercise the utmost prudence and economy in its use.

Previous, however, to entering on a brief description of the wonderful Vyrnwy water scheme of the Liverpool Corporation, let us—before it for ever passes from our ken—take a last glance at the doomed village of Llanwddyn. It is, in the first place, a matter of no small difficulty to get there, even from Liverpool, travelling *viâ* Crewe, Whitchurch, and Oswestry, one has to put up with the leisurely speed of the Welsh railway, and the vexatious delay of frequent changes. The nearest station to the Vyrnwy works is Llanfyllin, and to accomplish this stage of the journey takes something like six hours. On arrival at the terminal station of Llanfyllin, the traveller must proceed on foot, or charter a trap to transport him, not without caution as to driving, over the dozen miles or so of rough, wild, and hilly country that lie between the station and



QUARRYING FOR STONE.

Llanwddyn. This ancient village, now in process of demolition, comprises a parish church, two chapels, two public-houses, the Powis Hotel, and about forty houses. Through the deep valley, in which the hamlet nestles, runs a road, centuries old, the highway between Llanfyllin and Bala. Like most places in North Wales, this village has been remarkable as the venerable haunt of tradition and romance. There is a legend concerning "Wddyn," or "Owddyn," the patron saint of Llanwddyn, that he was buried in a sequestered spot on the northern side of the valley, together with a vast treasure. The resting-place of this holy man is reverentially designated "Givel Owddyn," or "Wddyn's Bed." Sacrilegious attempts, it is reported, have been made to dig open the "Givel" or "Bed," but so far such efforts have only met with deserved failure, owing to the great thunder and lightning which at once break in on the would-be spoilers, causing them to beat an unceremonious retreat! There is yet another strange superstition concerning a ghost said to be confined in a bottle, which, singularly enough, caused apprehension and fear in the minds of some of the men who were employed in the task of changing the course of the old river (near the present embankment) lest they should accidentally smash this bottle supposed to be lying there. This ghost, according to the story, used to disport himself on the roof of "Cynon Isaf," occasionally descending to worry the occupants of the house. When the trouble grew insupportable, a good and religious man was called in to endeavour to "lay" the unearthly visitant, and he proceeded to sing hymns and make prayers until the ghost, coming completely under his control, was finally put into a bottle, which the good man at once corked and threw into the river.

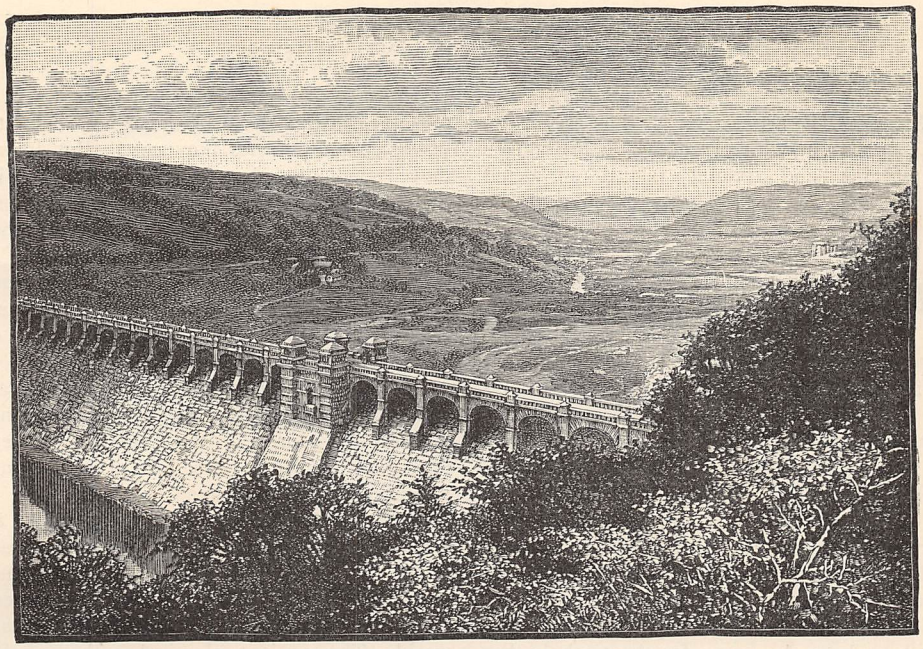


A QUIET NOOK ON THE VYRNWY.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. Robinson & Thompson, Liverpool.)

Leaving, however, such legendary lore to that limbo of oblivion which inevitably awaits it, we notice with interest the new road which the Corporation has constructed around the immense reservoir at an elevation above the high-water level varying from ten to thirty feet, and considerably over eleven miles in length, and which replaces the former highway running through the valley. A new church and vicarage have been built on the mountain-side in close proximity to the doomed village, and the bodies of the dead have been carefully removed to their new resting-place. The hotel is also being erected on a suitable site, and convenient tenements are also being provided for the villagers who have for generations, from father to son, passed their lives in the same dwellings—now, alas! to be for ever blotted out beneath a waste of water.

The Liverpool Corporation owns 13,000 acres of land surrounding the lake, and this area is dotted with the temporary offices and dwellings of the engineering staff and employés connected with the tremendous undertaking. The lake itself consists of 1,165 acres, and the high-water level will be 825 feet above the level of the sea. The river Vyrnwy, which rises to the east of the Berwyn range of mountains, and flows through this valley, in which it is to be impounded, is one of the principal sources of the Severn, and the Corporation are obliged by their Act of Parliament to compensate the Severn Commissioners for the loss of this important stream. It is satisfactory to know that the 10,000,000 gallons daily, with an additional 40,000,000 gallons during four days in each of the eight dry months of the year—March to October—which the Corporation have arranged to supply as "compensation" to the Commissioners, will in reality amount to three or four times the water previously derived from the Vyrnwy during the dry weather season. Even this immense contribution to the Severn Commissioners will not prove of an exhausting nature, as no less than 13,000,000 gallons a



THE VYRNWY EMBANKMENT.
(*From a Photograph by Mr. J. Maclardy, Oswestry.*)

day will, at the initial stage, be diverted for Liverpool, and it is computed that this daily supply, on the completion of the works, will be further augmented to something like 40,000,000 gallons, a quantity far in excess of the requirements even of a most extravagant consumption. Abandoning the customary protection of earthen embankments, and thereby avoiding the remotest possibility of any future catastrophe, the Corporation, regardless of the correspondingly heavy cost, have decided on the substitution of a dam of the most substantial and magnificent masonry. It may be mentioned that certain doubts having at one time been expressed as to the absolute solidity and resisting power of the masonry embankment in course of erection at the Vyrnwy Valley, the Corporation invited Sir Andrew Clarke and Mr. Russel Aitken, M.Inst.C.E., two most eminent experts, to reassure the public mind by making a most minute and searching investigation of the entire work. The superb masonry stood the test, and Sir Andrew remarked in his report that "nothing short of an earthquake could possibly disturb it."

The length of this vast reservoir when full will be something like five miles, and its greatest depth about 84 feet. It will in fact be much deeper and nearly as large as Loch Katrine, from which Glasgow is supplied. The Vyrnwy district, moreover, is famous for its large rainfall, and of the twenty rain gauges in operation on the drainage area for many years past, one to the east has registered 49·73 inches of rain in a year, while another to the west has recorded 118·51 inches in a similar period, or rather more than three and a half times as much as the average rainfall in Liverpool.

What perhaps most impresses the spectator is the massive structure of solid masonry, which, as if "piled by the hands of giants," blocks up the entire end of the valley, and connects the new roadways skirting each side. This embankment is 1,173 feet long, and the stone of which it is built is capable of resisting an average pressure of over 800 tons per square foot, and the mortar stands, after two years, 275 tons per square foot; whilst the concrete will resist, without cracking, something like 300 tons per square foot. The contents of this magnificent wall are about 260,000 cubic yards, and it stands about 144 feet above the lowest rock foundation. Some of the stones at the base weigh ten tons. There is a viaduct, with well-formed arches, constructed at the top, through which the water will escape, in the case of an overflow from the reservoir, to the basin below. Over the arches is the roadway from one side of the valley to the other, 22 feet wide, with footways on each side for pedestrians. There is a marble tablet on the wall which records the fact that the first stone was laid by the Earl of Powis, during the mayoralty of Sir W. B. Forwood, on July 14th, 1881. The names of Messrs. Thomas Hawksley and George Frederick Deacon, bracketed together as engineers, are also inscribed on this stone. We may say, in conclusion, that the water, when the lake is full, will be passed through a "straining tower," erected half-way up the valley, so as to partly cleanse it before being sent on to Liverpool, which is accomplished by means of an aqueduct of over 68 miles in length. Before reaching its final destination the water is further purified at Oswestry by means of filter-beds.

RICHARD HOLLAND.

WRITING, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

THE art of writing has an origin and history of which the nature and antiquity is little suspected by the majority of those whose pens glide so rapidly over their paper. The term "invention," by which we usually describe the introduction of some new discovery, cannot, correctly speaking, be used in this instance, for the art of writing was not, in the ordinary sense of the word, "invented."

It might, perhaps, be thought by those who have not given any special study to the subject, that by some happy flash of genius the idea of writing was first conceived, and that subsequent improvements were rapidly made on the original conception, till the art of writing attained its present state of perfection in a comparatively short period of time. Ample evidence, however, is at hand to prove that this cannot have been the case; for the truth is that those letters which we form so easily, and which are the *media* whereby we conduct our correspondence, commit our thoughts to paper, and transmit to posterity the information we possess, are the result of a very slow and gradual process of evolution which has extended over many thousands of years.

Men have always desired to record events which have come under their observation, and to leave behind them an account of their doings; but a huge period of centuries lies between the first attempts at picture-writing and the fully-developed characters which meet the eye of the reader of this page.

In the present article it is proposed briefly to give some account of the source of our modern letters, and of the methods employed by the first inventors of an alphabetic and syllabic system to depict the characters in use in their day.

For very primitive examples of graphic representation we must go back to times which lie outside the range of exact chronology, to a period of which the learned Dr. Isaac Taylor says that it was "more remote than the invention of pottery or spinning—prior even to the taming of any domestic animal, or the cultivation of cereals: earlier, so far as we know, than the construction of any kind of human habitation." These Cave or Palæolithic men, as they are called, were no mean proficients in the art of pictorial representation. It is true, they knew nothing of pens, for their only graphic instrument was a rude tool of flint; nor of paper, for they scratched their designs either on the surface of some kindly rock, or on the horns and tusks of animals which they hunted for food; nevertheless, their efforts are marked by spirit, and betoken no little artistic skill.

Their designs consisted, as we should naturally expect, of scenes from their daily life—such, for example, as the chase of those now extinct animals whose contemporaries they were. But, interesting as these relics are, they were at the most individual attempts, and led to no further developments; they are, however, noteworthy, as they contain the earliest indications of a system afterwards more fully developed by the civilised nations of antiquity, and which has passed through various changes and stages, till it has finally culminated in the art of writing as we have it in the present day.

To "write" implies the possession of alphabetic characters; we must pause, therefore, a moment to inquire the source of those twenty-six letters, the formation of which with pen or pencil in a given sequence we call "writing."

Now what was the source of our alphabet? On this question much has been said at various times. A Rabbinical tradition states that letters or writing were one of the ten simultaneous creations by Almighty God at the beginning of the world. The ancient classical authors held that a knowledge of letters originated with the Phœnicians, and that by them they were introduced into Greece. This was the opinion for a long time generally accepted; but modern research, based on the testimony of the letters themselves, has conclusively shown that this cannot have been the whole truth, and that the origin of our system of letters, with the consequent introduction of the art of writing, can be traced back to a source infinitely earlier than the days when the Phœnicians were the master-merchants of the world. This source is none other than the ancient hieroglyphic system of Egypt.

This discovery is due to the labours of the celebrated French scholar De Rougé, and though when originally given by him to the world it met with no little opposition, yet is now almost universally accepted by those competent to judge as the only correct solution of a much-debated question.

To trace the various stages of the process whereby the letters which we use so readily have been evolved from the venerable Egyptian hieroglyphics would be a task far beyond our present limits, and having briefly indicated the source of our modern writing we may now proceed to describe the ancient system of picture-writing, which was the precursor of our modern art.

We find, then, four principal systems of picture-writing—viz., the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Chinese, and the Hittite. The space at our disposal will not permit us to speak of the three latter, and we must confine our remarks to that system which, as it is the oldest, so it is the most interesting system—namely, the Egyptian.

The hieroglyphic characters from some of which our modern letters are lineally descended may be described as a series of signs, not joined by any ligatures, but separate and distinct from each other.

They were little pictures of men, animals, and birds in various positions; flowers, regal emblems, reptiles, fishes, insects, vases, tools, and many signs that were wholly conventional. These were arranged in symmetrical order—sometimes in vertical columns, sometimes in horizontal lines—and are always read from the side towards which the characters look. Bearing in mind the facility and speed with which we form our letters, we may smile at the cumbrous system thus represented; but even to-day the system of picture-writing among ourselves has not wholly faded out. To take one example: in the hieroglyphs a constantly-recurring symbol is the "red crown" of Egypt; and the use of the crown of England on legal and other documents is familiar to all of us, and other instances might be quoted.

At what time this system of picture-writing was originally invented it is impossible now to say. But the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford contains a tablet in this script, which was erected by a king *Sent* in remembrance of a priest *Shira*, who was a relative of his. The date of this tablet has been fixed by some Egyptologists as far back as four thousand years before our era, and there is reason to believe that *even then this character was of extreme antiquity*. Before proceeding to describe the materials used by the Egyptian scribe, we may allude to three specimens of this ancient writing. Two of these may be seen at any time by our readers. One, Cleopatra's Needle, now stands on the Thames Embankment; the other, the celebrated Rosetta Stone, discovered in 1799 by M. Boussard, is in the south gallery of the British Museum, to which it was presented by George III. The third specimen is the "Book of the Dead," parts of which are said to be older than the Pentateuch, and of which the most perfect copy is to be seen in the Museum at Turin.

In contrast to modern articles, we now pass on to describe the materials used in the ancient writing of Egypt. The most fastidious taste can to-day find itself suited in the variety of papers—thick or thin, smooth or rough, coloured or plain—that are offered for sale; but the Egyptian scribe was limited in the materials at his disposal. Sometimes he wrote on leather, or on pieces of prepared wood, or on linen on which a layer of plaster had been spread. The usual medium, however, was the pith of a reed, the *papyrus* (from which is derived our modern word "paper"), and which grew in the flat marshy land of the Delta. The process of making this reed-paper is thus described by Sir J. G. Wilkinson: "The mode of making the paper was by cutting the pith into thin slices in the direction of its length, which, having been laid on a large slab or table, received upon them similar layers at right angles, and the two sets having been glued together, and kept under pressure for a proper time, formed a sheet." The sheet thus made was of various lengths; some were over 100 feet, but the width was seldom more than 12 or 15 inches.

With regard to a graphic instrument, the choice was even more limited. We can select, as fancy dictates, either a quill or steel nib, broad or fine, soft or hard; but the Egyptian writer knew nothing of a pen in the proper sense of the word. As a reed supplied him with paper, so a reed supplied him with an instrument with which to draw his picture-writing. But the reed he used was not sharpened or split at the point, like our modern pens, but was frayed out till it more resembled a paint-brush than a pen, and it is nearer the truth to say that he *painted* his characters rather than wrote them.

For an inkstand he used a slab either of wood, ivory, porcelain, or alabaster, in one end of which were two or more wells to contain the writing-fluid, which was usually of two colours, red and black; but other colours were often employed—such as brown, green, and yellow.

We have thus endeavoured to give some account of the source from which our modern writing is derived, and of the *media* employed by the inventors of the earliest graphic system to delineate their symbols. Our object will have been attained if we have succeeded in impressing on the reader—and writer—the fact that the characters which are so familiar to him are the outcome of centuries and centuries of slow development, and that all writing had its origin in *pictures*, by which objects or ideas were represented.

BULBS, AND HOW TO GROW THEM.

THE GARDEN IN FEBRUARY.

WHEN treating generally of the garden in the early spring of the year, our thoughts involuntarily turn at once to those subjects in keeping with the season, and which serve most to make our garden gay and bright. This brings us to speak of our bulbs in general.

February, then, may fairly be called the month of the year in which our bulb-exhibition commences. But to go properly into the matter we must, more particularly in gardening operations, go first of all to the root of it, and this will involve a few moments' return to the autumn of the year. October and November, then, are the months in which we devote ourselves to bulb-planting. And here we will begin with a caution: while October will do admirably for the setting in of many of our bulbs, such as the crocus and hyacinth, yet a month later—say, the earlier part of November—is best adapted for our tulips. And for this reason: if our tulips are put in too soon, and should the winter that ensues be a somewhat mild one, we shall find the green spike of our tulips pushing

remark that as the road is finished off and the various deep shafts that have been sunk are filled in, each of these spots is at first left much above the level of the other parts of the road. But the whole soon subsides and a uniform level is attained.

Next, when the time has come for our bulb-planting, we first take away for awhile any superfluous soil, and so level the bed as to allow of about four inches of soil being afterwards put through probably just at a time of year when some severe weather is setting in.

Now a bed of tulips, when their cultivation is undertaken on a fairly large scale—that is to say, where a whole bed is to be devoted to their exhibition—requires a good deal of special attention. So we must not mind a little trouble in the preparation of our bed; and as we are always anxious to have our soil entirely free from such garden enemies as the grub and the wire-worm, we, some little time before our planting commences, empty our bed of the soil for perhaps two feet deep. All this digging and clearing out will enable us to free the soil entirely from the grub. At the bottom of our bed we next spread some decayed manure for a depth of some two inches, and this done, we carefully crumble in and replace the soil on the top, leaving it somewhat in the shape of a high ridge, and rather above the level of any surrounding soil, as of course, when the whole comes to settle down, it will sink in considerably. This precaution it may be as well to emphasise in passing, for much annoyance and inconvenience would necessarily be occasioned by the subsidence of any flower-bed below its proper level. Any one who has noticed the laying, say, of a deep drain along any of our high-roads, will

wards placed upon our bulbs; and the surface of the soil we now make perfectly smooth and level with our rake. Before, however, proceeding further, it may be as well to hint at the sort of soil most favourable for the growth of tulips. That which a tulip is said to like most is rotted turfs from a loamy meadow. These turfs should be cut some six inches thick, and after lying some time in a heap, transforming themselves into mould, plenty of chopping up and turning over should be given for the purpose of getting rid of the wire-worm and all such pests. And, indeed, here it may be remarked that perhaps the cause of our failure in any particular branch of gardening, that we now and then devote ourselves to, may very likely arise from the fact that we do not pay enough attention to the preparation of our compost. It is rather a dreary operation, pulling about a few barrow-loads of earth; and so our laziness tempts us to experiment upon ill-prepared or perhaps exhausted soil. The object, again, of our putting decayed cow-dung at the bottom of our tulip-bed is to prevent the roots of our tulip from striking below into any unsuited soil that may lie at a greater depth; and it will be found that the tulip will now spread its fibres all over the surface of the dung, and this towards the end of the blooming season, and at a time when the root is making its most important growth. To return, however, to the actual preparation of our bed for planting.

Along the centre of our bed we now stretch the garden-line, pressing it gently into the soil, say, with our rake, just so as merely to leave a mark; then we move it six inches, and make another line; and so on until we have three lines on either side of the first-made and centre one. Next we make our cross-lines, along the *breadth* of our bed, with a straight rod or stick, and again at intervals of six inches, gently pressing the rod, as we did our line, so as to leave its mark. And here is our bed, all carefully prepared for the insertion of the bulbs. These bulbs we have of course previously sorted out as to colour, quality, &c., and in the same order we now transfer them to the bed. Gently press each bulb into the soil so as to make it stand upright, and, lastly, cover all over with your four inches of soil.

Thus we have now seven rows of tulips, and they will look best if you have them arranged as follows:—Rows one and seven alike, two and six alike, three and five alike, while the centre row (number four), should be in thorough contrast to those on each side of it. This arrangement is by far the most effective. To revert, however, for a moment to the preparation of the bed for planting; if you wish to avoid the necessity of procuring the two inches' depth of cow-dung at the bottom of your bed, use entirely fresh and maiden loam, though of course you must previously go over it all, have it well chopped up, thoroughly pulverised, and purified from grub and wire-worm. All the after-rain, snow, and frost, will do no harm up to the time when we begin to remark the little green spear in this month of February thrusting itself above the ground, and reminding us that the bright but treacherous season of spring has set in. Tulips are for the most part regarded as hardy, and some gardeners allow their tulips—unless they be a very choice selection—to take their chance. Others there are, however, who attribute every faded colour, every notch, and every split petal, to the action of frost. But we prefer in an English spring giving a little protection to our tender crop, in the shape of some gauze or light covering kept pretty closely down during the prevalence of frost; and at a little later date than this, when they begin to show colour, they will only care for the early morning and evening sun, so that from the full blaze of a warm spring-day sun they require protection as well. Who has not sometimes found a tulip completely dropped and withered from exposure to a sudden hot day's sun? Thus much, then, for this pretty spring-show of bulbs. Our hyacinths, and certainly our crocuses, will not give us so much trouble; but the long stems of both tulips and hyacinths will frequently want the support of tying to a small stake. Very busy are we also this month going over our greenhouse stock, carefully re-potting in many cases—an operation to which February has always been sacred.

DADDY PIPES: A SKETCH.

LIMITATION of the sense of human fellowship by a keener sense of human grossness and ignorance is hardly separable from a high degree of refinement, and perhaps the natural antagonism between nicety of perception and neighbourly goodwill becomes more apparent according as we seek for their union lower in the social scale. A man whose personal surroundings are all in harmony with his cultivated tastes may extend a facile friendliness to classes destitute of all that makes life dear to him, but he knows nothing of the irritation excited in a beauty-loving nature by constant and inevitable association with ugly realities.

Such association had been the lifelong trial of old Thomas Hope, a man whose every feeling, every taste, fitted him for the æsthetic enjoyment of a gentle life, and who had yet never had the push necessary to lift himself above the sphere of the skilled artisan. As designer for an eminent firm of decorators he had always had congenial and well-paid employment, but he spent every penny he could spare in what he simply called "beautiful things," and now that he was sixty, lived as plainly as he had at twenty in the two back

rooms of a little suburban house. The struggle between his instinctive shrinking from uncultivated neighbours and his strong theoretic belief in the duty of sympathy with them, was one that recurred continually, but it had never been more severe than when the house adjoining his was taken by a butcher, of whose innate vulgarity he soon had experience, and whose ten children were the noisiest and rudest in the parish. Hope longed to find some valid excuse for avoiding them, but in the end resolved to put theory into practice, saying to himself with a sigh, "There's no help for it, I must be neighbourly. Who am I that I should hold aloof?"

A few evenings later he was at work in the little garden, which formed one of his chief delights, when a general shrieking and howling announced the arrival of the children next door, and presently the butcher himself opened up a conversation over the wall.

"Evening, sir—Mr. Hope, I believe. Nice little gardens these, ain't they? I see you go in for the dingy sort; now I'd like to make a fine blaze o' mine, but law bless yer, where's the good when you've ten brats messing about! Ten of 'em under thirteen, as I stand here; come and make their acquaintance, Mr. Hope. Wait half a second and I'll put 'em all up on the wall for yer to see."

Old Thomas put on his spectacles and looked on with good-natured amusement while his new neighbour lifted his dirty, chubby offspring on to the wall; but when as if with one accord they began to beat their strong young legs against his carefully trained fruit-trees, the designer grew disturbed and approached quickly.

"Very fine children indeed, Mr. Meredith," he said nervously, "but would you mind turning them round? I—I'd like to see their backs!"

Meredith gave a hearty guffaw, and the children, apparently enjoying the situation, increased the vigour of their tattoo upon the trees.

"I really must beg of you to forbid this!" exclaimed Hope, in great agitation. "They are doing my trees irreparable damage. That big boy ought to know better."

Sam eyed the old man in a frankly hostile fashion, and promptly made up his mind to lead him an awful life. He was a tall boy, strongly built, bright complexioned, and with the solid squareness of jaw that at his age usually indicates independence of authority, indifference to punishment, and a peculiar enjoyment of all brutal forms of amusement. While his father, wisely ignoring him, hustled the younger children off the wall, he carelessly whistled the last new street tune, keeping time with his still offending feet.

Hope came towards him, painfully affected by resentment such as he had not felt for years. If there be natures to whom the sensations of anger are not misery, certainly his was not one of them; at this moment he suffered even more from his own state of mind than from the boy's insolence. The deeply-lined sensitive face contracted nervously, and the pipe he had been smoking fell from his trembling hands.

The young bully sat regarding his adversary with disdain. "If you touch me, Daddy Pipes, I'll kick," he remarked coolly.

There was a long minute's silence, and then Thomas, mastering himself, said slowly, "I shall not touch you, my lad, I shall leave you to enjoy yourself."

Therewith he stooped to pick up his pipe, and went wearily, with footsteps that faltered more than usual, into the house. For awhile Sam continued his whistling, and kept an eye on the windows in the hope that the designer's appearance at one of them might justify, so to speak, his proceeding to further mischief; but at the end of some minutes, no one being visible, he became oppressed by a general sense of the flatness of existence, and, somewhat discomfited, dropped into his father's garden.

Meantime Hope sat restlessly in his chair, forcing down his vexation and arguing with himself that neighbourliness and peace were blossoms better worth cultivating than those he had just seen so wantonly destroyed. It was hard to "get the right feeling," but he succeeded so well, that when presently Meredith entered without ceremony and offered to smoke with him, it cost the old man no great additional effort to make him welcome. He even recognised in Meredith's visit more kindliness of intention than had actually come into play, the truth being that nothing gratified the butcher so much as pouring a history of himself into fresh ears.

"I've a pretty good head on my shoulders," he declared, "and considerin' I've eleven mouths to feed besides my own, you may guess I'm not one as has put nothing but his 'ands into his pockets. There ain't a better man at a bargin in London than your 'umble servant, an' it's not a bad time for butchers. Don't yer ever believe this forrin meat's ruinin' the English market, Mr. Hope. The farmers mayn't like it, but that's not *my* look-out, and I could tell yer a tale or two, in confidence o' coorse, o' the way to buy forrin' and sell English as 'ud soon show yer the other side o' the cloth."

Old Thomas, whose absolutely Quixotic notions of fairness had long ago induced him to decline an increase of pay on grounds that were simply communistic (though that word was repugnant to him as connected with "claptrap and foolishness"), could not repress his disapproval.

"But, neighbour, neighbour," he broke in, with a restless eagerness always perceptible in him when roused to opposition, "it's just these bad dealings of man with man that are the ruin of the nation. Every time you get more profit out of a joint than is fair to the consumer, you are injuring the whole of trade."

Meredith was hugely tickled by this view.

"You're a rare 'un and no mistake, Mr. Hope, but you see you won't persuade me I'm injurin' *myself*, and that's the point. I've got to think o' myself and my family. Mind yer, I'm as honest as the day!"

Hope shook his head, and feeling too keenly on the subject to let this pass, spoke again with gathering warmth, his eyes fixed on the other's face, and yet never seeing in it the imperviousness of the man to the considerations he was urging.

The butcher was not in the least angry. He merely gave vent to a chuckle from time to time, and ended, as he rose to go, by assuring Hope he was a roaring joke if ever there was one.

After this, Hope shrank more and more from his new neighbours; but avoidance of them was out of the question, as it became part of the day's work to defend his garden from the younger ones, who, except during school hours, swarmed, shrieked, and squabbled at the back, and were not to be convinced that the party wall existed for any purpose save that of being climbed over. At the end of a week or two he knew all his little enemies by name and by sight, and had discovered that Sam, mischievous and impudent as he could be on his own account, was an excellent elder brother, and by no means destitute of other good qualities. In fact there presently sprang up in Hope's heart a kind of admiration for this sturdy boy, whose fearlessness and independence, whose very ingenuity in mischief and youthful dare-devilry, compared favourably with his own timid boyhood. He began to make diffident advances to the lad, which would probably, however, have remained without effect had not the following incident served to break down Sam's natural hostility towards one who had had occasion to find fault with him.

The designer was sitting one evening at his writing-table, conscious of the usual cries without, but too intent upon a design he was studying to let the hubbub disturb him, when a large stone crashed through the window, shattering the glass in all directions, and smashing to atoms a delicate and valuable vase that stood beside him. Hope had never been a man of much nerve, and felt too shaken for the moment to rush out after the offender, but looking out he saw Sam Meredith standing on the wall in an erect, defiant attitude, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, his eyes fixed on the broken pane. Hope struggled to get it open, but his strength failed him, and feeling quite unstrung, he sat down again and began feebly to collect the broken glass and porcelain. Then suddenly the door opened with a bang that startled him afresh, and Sam burst in, flushed and bright-eyed.

"I came to see if you was hurt, sir," he blurted out, "and to say it was an accident, sir, an' I didn't do it, and I won't say who did, but I know, and I promise you I'll punish 'im well. I'll see to the hidin' of him myself, sir. They all cut into the house, but that shan't help 'em. I'll give it 'em all, and the one as threw the stone shall 'ave the biggest wollopin' he ever had in his life! You sit back, sir—I'll pick up them bits in half a second; 'tain't you as should do that."

Hope leant back and slowly recovered himself, while Sam, busy on his knees with the pieces, continued frankly: "An' I'll tell you now, sir, as I'm sorry I spoilt your trees, and I'll never call you Daddy Pipes again!"

Hope looked at the boy doubtfully, then earnestly. Sam sustained his gaze well, and presently the designer, putting out a hand which was instantly gripped as if in a vice by hard young fingers, said gently—

"Call me Daddy Pipes as much as you like, lad, but let us be good friends."

From this time an affection stronger than any he had known since certain half-forgotten dreams of his youth, took possession of the old man, and even ousted at times his devotion to art. For Sam's Philistinism was unqualified, and Hope soon found that his companionship was only to be had at the cost of his own cherished enjoyments. Sam yawned so unfeignedly over the contents of picture galleries and museums, and begged so hard to be taken to "something jollier," that Hope gave up trying to educate his taste, and deserting his own favourite haunts, took the lad to the circus, and Madame Tussaud's.

Meantime Sam, while failing altogether to develop a feeling for art, was unconsciously learning a more important lesson. Blind to beauty of form and colour, he was not blind to the beauty of a character like Hope's, and slowly but surely the designer's conceptions of rectitude sank into his mind. Inevitably he became alive to the gulf between his father's boasted "honesty" and Hope's "common fairness," and the comparison could not but weaken his filial confidence. The subject of his father's business principles was one never broached between him and the designer, but he gave it much anxious thought, and fretted inwardly over his father's habitual breaches of good faith towards the public. It was a good thing that just as he was ready to begin life on his own account, a situation offered itself and was accepted for him by Meredith, at the local telegraph office. Hope had feared that the boy would be put to work in the shop at once, but this apprehension removed, was able for two or three years contentedly to watch his progress.

The danger, however, was only postponed, and the day came when Sam, calling in on his way to work, stood beside the old man's table with a cloud on his brow, and said abruptly—

"Daddy Pipes, I'm to turn butcher after all. Father wants me in the business."

The designer's repugnance to the scheme returned with tenfold strength.

"Don't do it, Sam," he said vehemently. "It 'ud be a downright bad thing for you. Stick where you are, lad, and leave your father's business alone."

"Why, Daddy Pipes?" asked Sam with an effort, knowing well enough what the answer would be, but feeling that if Hope was to advise him, reserve on this point could no longer be maintained.

Hope recognised the same necessity. "It's just this, Sam," he continued warmly: "you've been like a son to me, and I can't bear the idea of your doing any work that—that falls short of honesty. Your father's ideas of what's right don't agree with mine, and I hope they wouldn't agree with yours; but you're only eighteen, and you'd have to work according to his notions, and then who knows but you might find 'em pay best, and learn to like 'em best."

Sam set his square jaw resolutely. "No, Daddy Pipes, don't you fear that. You know you've never

been able to make me like pictures and things, 'cos it isn't in me; and father 'll never bring me round to his way of thinking 'cos that isn't in me either. What I'm afraid of is that there'd be rows between us: he was a little sore last night 'cos I didn't jump at his plan, and I hate the idea of sparrin' with him."

"Just so," said Hope eagerly. "Don't you see, lad, you're good friends now because you're rowing in different boats, but how could you help quarrelling if you got pulling different ways in the same craft? No, no, keep out of it. See here, I'll call round to-morrow and have a talk with your father—perhaps a quiet word or two will show him he's making a mistake."

Sam left, and all day old Thomas, as he sat at work, rehearsed the arguments he would use. Unfortunately, when he found himself next day face to face with the burly Meredith, the carefully planned sentences fled, and a fatal nervousness seized him. There was something about the big frame and coarse face of the butcher, something in his blatant voice and self-congratulatory manner, that had an annihilating effect on the old man. It was only with difficulty that he found strength to say—

"So you want Sam in the business?"

"Yes," said Meredith, "he's a sharp lad and 'll pick up my ways in no time. I dessay it do seem a pity as he should leave a place where he's doing well, but I'm a long-sighted feller, and it's clear to me as he and I could do a thrivin' trade. He's a chip o' the old block, he is."

There was much in this speech that grated on Hope, and his very nervousness, by destroying his judgment, led him into danger. Rushing on to perilous ground, he spoke with a heat most unlikely to further his object, and wound up by an attack on Meredith's mode of conducting business, at which the butcher's brow darkened.

"Look 'ere, Hope," he said, suddenly blazing out, "this ain't no joke, this ain't, and I'm blowed if I'll stand it. Who asked you to come preachin' to me, and playin' the mischief-maker between me and my boy? I can tell yer, it's lucky you're an old man, or I'd a bundled you out pretty sharp. No, no, yer don't go now"—for Hope had taken up his hat and stick—"jest wait a bit if you please."

He opened the door and called to his wife and Sam. "Now then," he said harshly, addressing the latter, "jest listen to me, and answer me up sharp. Are you Hope's son or mine?"

"Yours of course, father." Sam looked very anxious, but answered without hesitation.

"Haven't I bin a good father to yer? Haven't I worked hard to keep you and all your brothers and sisters?"

"Yes."

"I should jest think I had," said Meredith emphatically. "Well then, ain't your dooty doo to *me?*—Arn't you bound to respect *my* wishes?"

Sam's answer, though still "Yes," came in a much lower voice.

"Speak up, can't yer? You've jest got to make up your mind; will yer come into the business, or will you listen to this man Hope, and tell me you think me a rascal and 'ud rather have nothing to do with me?"

The boy looked desperately from one to another of the three faces; his father's red and threatening, his mother's pale and imploring, Hope's half hidden by thin, clasped hands, and yet appealing to him with more force than either. Not only was the old man's moral influence strong, but his physical weakness made it seem almost cowardly to hurt him. On the other hand, Sam, when he contemplated going against the wishes of a father who had been uniformly kind to him, felt the ground slipping from under him. Even if Meredith had transgressed against the principles of ideal rectitude which lent a beauty to Hope's life, was it the part of a son to withhold the hand of fellowship? After a short struggle he looked up at Meredith.

"I'll keep along o' you, father," he said steadily.

Meredith clapped his hand into the boy's triumphantly. Hope made neither sound nor movement, and Sam, crossing the room, leant anxiously over him.

"Daddy Pipes, don't be angry with me."

Hope made an effort, and got up slowly. "It's a bad business, you're doing wrong Sam, though it may seem like right. No, you needn't help me; I can walk alone. Let me get home."

"Yes, get along home," said Meredith brutally, "and p'r'aps another time you'll know better than to meddle in what don't concern yer. Let him go, Sam."

Sam glanced up with an odd light in his grey eyes, and Meredith had sense enough to see that it was dangerous to demand further concessions.

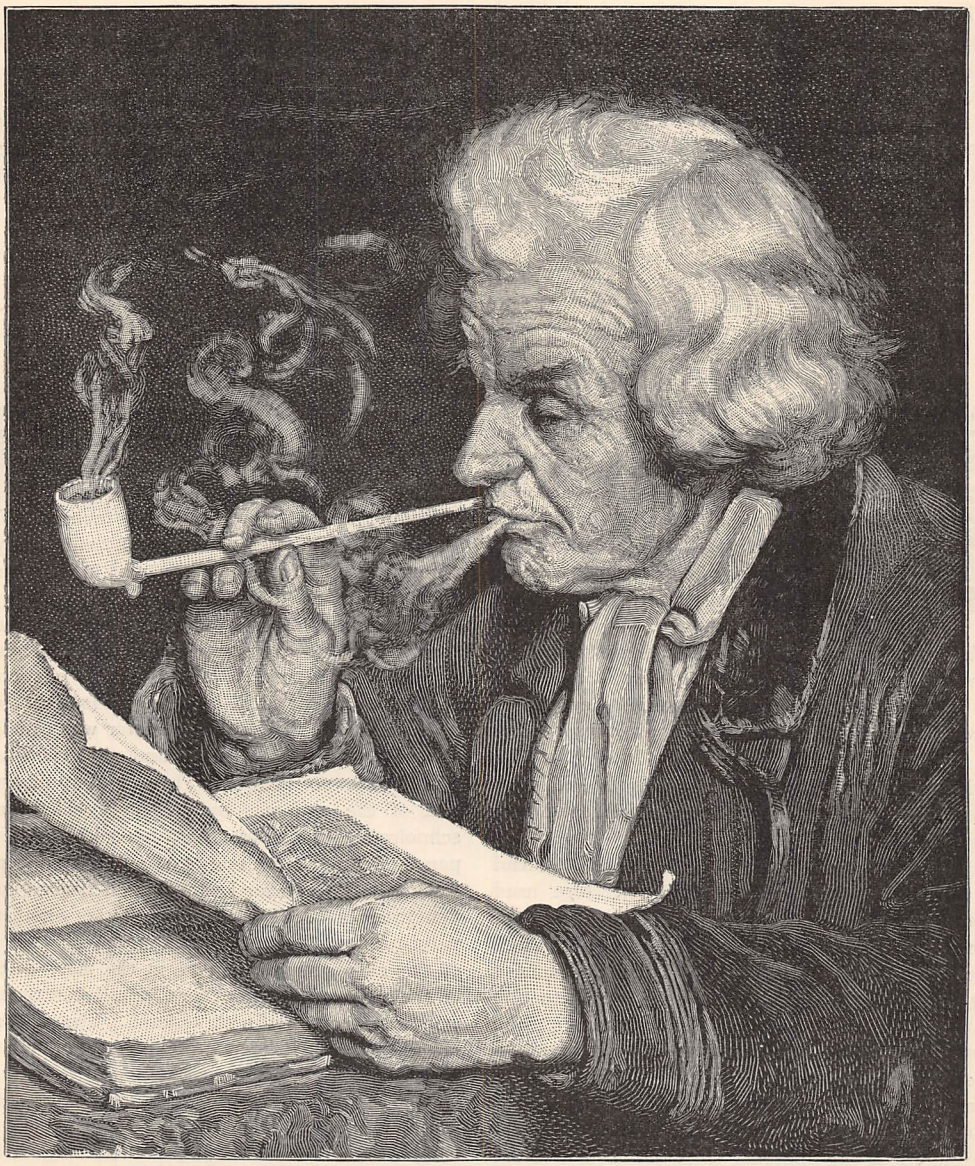
"Well, well," he added hastily, "I don't exactly mean that, but jest remember you've promised to hold by me."

So Sam went into the business, only to feel at the end of a single month that he had made a terrible mistake. Matters were far worse than he anticipated, and his act of filial submission soon led to a loss of all filial respect. Meredith's notions of honesty were not merely lax, they were based on the conviction that every trick was fair that was not found out; and day after day the son, remonstrating in vain, had to stand by feeling himself a participator in petty frauds.

In vain he held on in the hope of counteracting some of the mischief; the day came when Meredith, having overreached himself to the extent of alienating nearly all his customers, found ruin staring him in the face. It was characteristic of the man that, retaining his self-complacency, he should turn and rail at Sam. "It's your canting nonsense as has done it," he declared; "if you'd ha' helped me as you said yer would, we'd be making a pot o' money now. I thought you had some of my brains, and law, your head's an empty wind-bag!"

Sam never answered any of these outbursts, but went about heavy-hearted; all the pluck and energy of early days still in him, but pent up and wasted for want of an honest channel. At last his chance came. Meredith, who had taken to drinking a good deal, became involved in a serious street accident, and was

carried to the hospital with his leg broken and his back incurably injured. It seemed as if nothing more had been wanting to clinch the overthrow of the business, but the sequel proved the contrary. Sam, on whom now rested the whole responsibility of a



"INTENT UPON A DESIGN HE WAS STUDYING" (*p.* 147).

sorely straitened household, and a business upon the verge of bankruptcy, could not unaided have accomplished anything, courageous and hard-working as he was, but Hope came to the fore with a generous offer.

"Look here, Sam," he said, "I'll settle with your creditors and lend you something into the bargain. You stick to the shop and manage it as it ought to be managed."

Sam vehemently opposed this scheme, but Hope pressed it on him.

"You might be right to say no, lad, if you only had yourself to think of, but there's all the family," he urged. "Besides, you'll get on well and repay me, and I shall only be the poorer by a few things it'll be good discipline for me to do without."

Sam was obliged to yield, and Hope, not without a terrible pang, sold the greater part of the treasures which represented his wealth. Each one had been

worked for, some had cost a year's earnings, all were dear to him, but the triumph of human affection was complete, and the sum he handed over to Sam was enough to put the young fellow well on his feet.

It was uphill work to pull the business round, for customers, once alienated, were slow to return; but in the end Sam's straightforwardness and energy told, and when once the change in the management was recognised, success was insured.

At last came the day when, seeing his way to the full discharge of his debt to Hope, he was able to take round to the designer, by way of first-fruits, a vase that had formed part of the old collection.

"There, Daddy Pipes, there's an old friend for you. Of course I can't see the beauty of the thing, but I know it was always a favourite of yours. It shan't be the only one to find its way home, I promise you."

Too moved to speak, Hope took the vase from him and literally fondled it, passing his hand lovingly over the shapely outline, holding it up to the light and dwelling with tender interest on every detail of the well-remembered design.

"God bless you, Sam!" he said at last; "I never could have believed the pleasure of having it back would make up in a moment for all the missing of it, but it is so—it is so. You're better than a son to me, Sam, and you've gone the way for a long time now to make me perfectly happy—proud of you, lad, and perfectly happy."

H. L.

"THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH."

BY THE REV. S. BARING-GOULD, M.A.

IT was said in the Middle Ages that the Evil One gave to mortals a certain Elixir of Youth, on condition that he or she who received it should eventually become his prey. This elixir was supposed to confer perpetual youth on those who consumed it; age had no effect on them to dim the eye, to blanch the hair, to furrow the skin. Very seldom do we find these old myths without some foundation in fact, on which they were reared, or out of which, as a root, they threw up their fantastic outgrowth. It was so with the fabled Elixir of Youth. That elixir is still sold, still produces some of its fabled effects, and still brings with it a Nemesis.

That elixir is arsenic, a mineral that has a powerful effect on the blood and skin, and is therefore used as a medicine, but which is also a virulent poison. The name is derived from the Greek *arsen*, which signifies male, and, metaphorically, that which is strong and mighty; and the name is given to this mineral because of its vigorous properties. The ancients only knew it as orpiment; and Avicenna, in the eleventh century, is the first to speak of white arsenic, as well as its sublimate; and it is precisely at the time that arsenic began to be known, that the first rumours of the compact with the Evil One for the Elixir of Youth began to spread. It is well known that among horse-dealers arsenic is used to give plumpness and gloss to the beasts they desire to sell; but it is not as generally known that there are men and women who take arsenic habitually to improve their complexions and ward off the advance of age.

We generally suppose that the use of artificial methods of preserving or enhancing beauty is confined to the wealthy, but the eating of arsenic is most prevalent precisely where we should least expect to find it—among the hardy, lusty dwellers in the Alps. Throughout the Tyrol there are to be found peasant-girls and men who secretly are addicted to this habit; but it is chiefly in Styria and Carinthia that arsenic-eating has become a habit.

Before, however, we come to consider this mischievous habit, with its effects, I wish to say a word about the inhaling of arsenic, which is unconsciously done in England and elsewhere.

A few years ago my children suffered from sores that formed about the wrists and ankles, and at the corners of the mouth. They were obstinate, and would not yield to the ordinary treatment for heated or poor blood. The country doctor was called in, and the whole family was visited and physicked for a fortnight, with no results. Then I was convinced the seat of the evil was to be sought elsewhere. The schoolroom was papered with an æsthetic olive-green paper obtained from one of the first art decorators in London. This paper I found when rubbed gave off a fine green dust. The adhesive matter which fixed the paint to the paper had lost its strength; thin particles of the coloured dust floated in the air. I sent some of the paper to be analysed, and ascertained that it was largely charged with arsenic. The children were all sent out of the house, the paper removed, and the little patients rapidly recovered.

A few months later we went abroad for the winter. My first call on settling in a South German city was on a colonel of my acquaintance. Almost the first thing the colonel said to me, on my inquiry as to the health of his family, was, "The young people have suffered for some time with sores about their faces and joints, which will not heal."

"Oh!" said I, at once, "you have arsenical wall-papers in the house."

We went together to the bedrooms and tore off pieces of the paper, and they were sent to the city analyst. In one room were three layers of paper, one over the other, all laden with arsenic.

"This," said the colonel—"this is very strange.

My neighbour, General von Birkenheim, has had his family suffering in the same way, and we supposed it was an epidemic. I will run in to him and inquire about his papers."

Suffice it to say, the general's wall-papers were also charged with arsenic. Here were three families being slowly poisoned by arsenic, within my knowledge, in one month.

I may add that I went to the art decorator and complained, but the only answer I got was that no other colour met artistic sense like orpiment; consequently it could not be done without. It is a mistake to suppose that the crude green papers are the most dangerous—it is those of a yellowish tone; but arsenic combined with sulphur gives also a red which is employed. And now to return to the eaters.

In 1875 a congress of naturalists assembled at Gratz, in Styria, when the subject of arsenic-eating came under discussion; and two men, whom public report affirmed to be inveterate arsenic-eaters, were brought before the congress to be examined. One came from Stainz, the other from Liegist; they were vigorous, well-built men, and no apparent injury had been done to their constitutions by the amount of the poison they had consumed. According to their account they had taken to the habit to protect them from infection, and to assist their digestion. To the astonishment of the naturalists, these men swallowed before their eyes several grains of the poison, sufficient to have killed any two who had not become accustomed to it.

The poison is bought by the peasants as rat poison; the foresters also have it, as arsenic facilitates the running of bullets and shot in globular form; and from these men it can be sometimes procured. The pedlars also dispose of it secretly. There is, however, a good deal of difficulty in obtaining regular supplies, and the traffic in it is kept secret.

It is said that the manager of a Salzburg arsenic manufactory, who began at seventeen with three grains, in his later years was able to consume as much as twenty-three grains at a time, and that he reached an advanced age. This seems incredible; but one who intimately knows the people writes: "I have found arsenic-eaters in the neighbourhood of Eisenerz, in Judenburg, at Köflach, and Voitsberg. In the valley of the Suhn this poison is largely used, and is derived from Carniola. At first it is taken in small particles, or in the drink, or strewn as a powder on bread or bacon, once a week, or every two days, in very small doses, gradually increasing the amount to ten grains, and even as much as twenty grains, taken daily; and those who take it have assured me that it makes them strong and lively, that it gives brightness to the eye and a youthful appearance."

In the conscience of the people, the indulgence in arsenic is regarded as sinful, and the clergy use their utmost influence to hold the habit in check. Doctors dissuade from it. Lovers make inquiries, before they commit themselves, whether the girls of their choice are arsenic-eaters, for even the most ardent lover will draw back if he thinks that the girl he desires to take to his heart and home keeps a supply of deadly poison always by her.

But priest and doctor, and public opinion and private conscience, are powerless to prevail on one who has acquired the habit to break it off; for to give up arsenic means to wither and die.

It is said that wives gradually accustom their husbands to arsenic, the man being unconscious that he is given it; and the woman's object is to have her husband so completely in her power that, if he gives her occasion to be jealous or angry, she withholds the amount put daily with his food, and his collapse is certain. It is also said that on more than one occasion farmers or their wives have taught their servants to take arsenic, and then have held them in their power. The servants are afraid to leave, or ask for increase of wage, lest they should be denied their daily dose, and so prematurely decay. Whether the cessation from taking arsenic is certainly fatal can hardly be said, as it is difficult to obtain statistics and accurate observations in these cases, but the prevailing conviction is that if the dose be intermitted the cheeks fall in, the hair loses its gloss, the eyes grow dull, and the health fails altogether. Death rapidly ensues unless the medicine be again promptly resorted to. The arsenic-eater is said to be known by the brightness, but somewhat metallic lustre, of the eye, by a nervous excitability and irritability, by transparency of complexion, and plumpness of flesh. Even when advanced in age, the arsenic-eater preserves an unusual freshness of appearance and absence of wrinkles. Medicines have no effect on arsenic-eaters, and many an one addicted to this habit ends his days by an overdose taken purposely to relieve him of pains which the physician is unable to overcome.

The old fable is, after all, true in many cases, that the Evil One claims his tribute unexpectedly if once this Elixir of Youth be had recourse to; for among arsenic-eaters it happens, as with the takers of chloral, that they exaggerate their powers of withstanding the poison, or on certain occasions think they require extraordinary doses, and these extraordinary doses of the beloved medicine kill them.

That the possession of the mineral may be a temptation to use it as a poison is also, unfortunately, true; and it is precisely the fear of this that causes those who are suspected of arsenic-eating to be regarded by the public of their own class with disapproval. As a young man will not take a wife who he has reason to think eats arsenic, so will no farmer or farmer's wife engage a servant whom popular opinion declares to be a poison-eater. Master and mistress have to be sharp with their domestics sometimes, and do not like to think that the domestics have the means of revenge accessible, and easily employed without much chance of detection.

A Styrian writer says that when he was a student he knew very well a young groom who attended to a farmer's horses. One day this fellow showed him a paper cornet in which he had what he called "sugar," and which he gave to his master's horses to give them a glossy coat and to keep them plump.

"I've a mind to try it myself," said he. "It makes one strong and able to have wind for mountain climbing."

He took a little crumb between his fingers, put it in his mouth, and swallowed it.

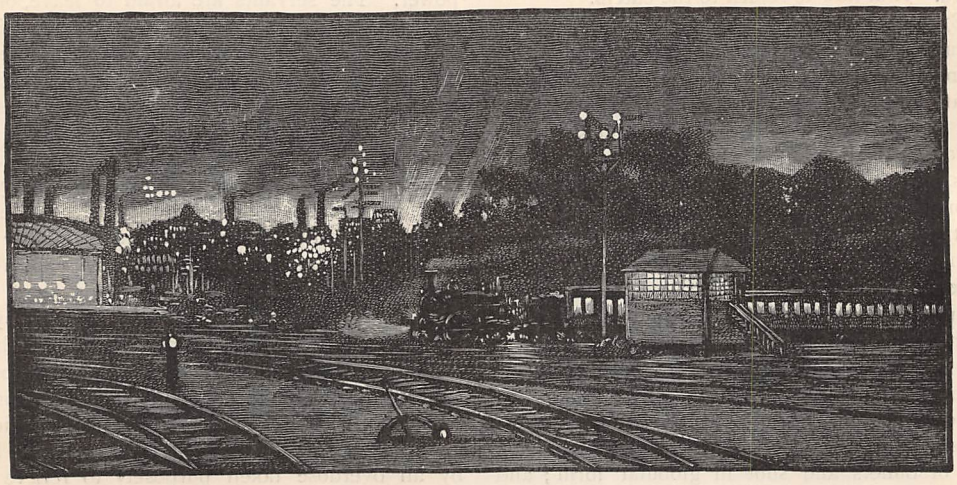
Next morning he saw the groom again.

"Look at me," said the fellow, stretching himself and showing his muscular arms; "I feel as if I had taken a draught of strong fiery wine. To-morrow I will take another crumb. I look forward to it."

Years passed, and the two did not meet. At length one day they encountered each other once more.

"Well," said our informant, "do you still nibble sugar?"

"Nibble! I eat now daily as much as a pea in size." He looked hale, young, fresh. "Ah!" he continued, "it is all right with me; but my Josephine —the girl I wanted to marry—she's dead with it. Women grow old faster than men, and so are not as patient and leisurely in increasing their doses. She took a grain too much, just before a fête, where we were to have met, and it cost her her life. I am very sorry for her, heartily sorry; but—there are more fishes in the sea than are brought up by the net."



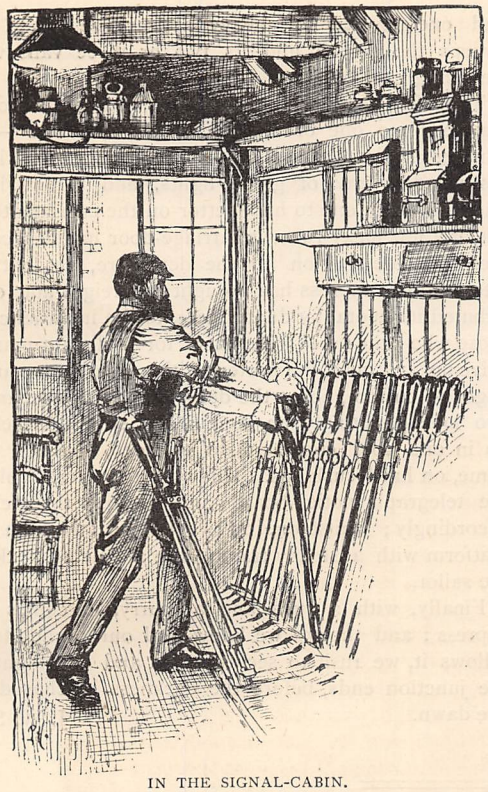
"CERTAINLY A STRANGE SCENE" (*p.* 153).

ALL NIGHT AT A JUNCTION.

AN OFFICE-CLEANER.

WE travel so much now-a-days that there are few who have not had occasion at times to pass some hours at a railway station. Trains do not "fit" in; steamships are delayed, and belated passengers arriving at ports find that after a few hours' travel there is detention and delay. It is a common experience —I have known it in the three kingdoms, and in Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, not to mention smaller countries. And the rule is that these junction-stations are bleak, bare, and uninteresting, so that it is a problem how to pass the time. But there are occasions when a stay at some great junction in the night-time is needful, and this is the case before us. Let us explore, with or without leave, what there is to see; and first we will wander a few hundred yards from the station, and look out for the whereabouts of railway officials who are the sweet little cherubs sitting up aloft to care for travelling Jack and Jill.

Let us enter the signal-cabin. It is nearly square in form; it is well lit day and night, the sides being nearly all window, and abundant gas-jets flaring forth. On a shelf are lamps with coloured "spectacles;" there are three chairs, and little furniture beyond. There is on one side of the cabin a long row of levers, coloured red, white, and black, and a brass plate attached to each one, which bears a distinctive word or words: "Station to Junc.," "Main dist. off," "Clear for main in," and other similar inscriptions. There are two painted gongs, and there are some magnetic instruments, with a telegraphic index. A "Bell Signal Code" indicates in part the use: a given



IN THE SIGNAL-CABIN.

number of rings indicates a "down passenger" train has left the station; another number that an "up ordinary" is signalled from another signal-cabin lower down the line, and so on. A boom of the gong, a ring of the bell, tells the signalman what train is coming; he pulls the appropriate lever, and the signals are shown which point a clear line for the train. When the levers are at rest, the signal-arms and "spectacles" which cover the signal-lights are raised, and the path is barred, but the approach of an engine causes the lowering of the arm and the "spectacle," unless there be some obstacle which causes the signalman to refuse passage.

Now let us look out at what is certainly a strange scene. Just before and behind us, along the line, a glance around shows stars and lights, ranged in rows high up — squares, diamonds, and triangles formed by stars of red, of white, and of bluish-green; further off are the long lines of globe lights at the station, and now and then as we watch a green light is transformed into white, a white one into red, as the levers work. Trees are in gloomy masses, but every passing breeze shakes them, and alters slightly the outline. A huge glow of light arises from some great manufactory, and there are red-lighted windows of houses, which colour the scene. The gong rings out, the bell tinkles, and there pass by the trains of many kinds, showing gleams of light, pencils of flame, and now and then coruscations of sparks. Now an express dashes along—a long streak of light, or rather one in which momentary gleams of light intervene, and in their brilliancy the forms of passengers reading, reposing, dozing, are seen; then there is the rumble of a heavy train of coal-waggons, the only light spot in which is a fierce gleam that falls on the face and breast of the stoker, as he throws a shovelful of coals into the grate; and now there is the well-laden "excursionist" dashing home in the night, songs and jollity breaking in upon the quiet "box." These are the sights, little varied, which in day and night the signalmen look on, as they pursue their laborious and useful calling.

A strange contrast to this is the station platform even of a great town in the early hours of the morning. The platforms are deserted; the lights are dim; the bookstalls are shut; and in the waiting-rooms there are few persons to be seen, whilst an occasional porter or two crosses the path now and then, and disappears in the bright light which some opening door throws on the gloomy path. An office-cleaner pursues her useful career, and comes with a brush; an attendant carries coals to "mend the fires" in the waiting-room, and as you watch you find that fingers were the predecessors of tongs, and they do the duty of handling the Wallsend. The one hard sofa in the waiting-room is occupied by a sleeper; another dozes before the fire; and after the weary would-be passenger has waited long, and extracted all the mental pabulum obtainable from a card showing how communication was kept up between the Great Western and the wilds of Wales last year, an adjournment to the open platform will result. A few paces up and

THE STOKER.

down, the reading of the huge advertisements of the Atlantic liners, and there is an outburst of light, as an express comes puffing in. Porters have sprung suddenly up, the refreshment rooms are open, and steaming coffee is prepared, whilst a score of passengers rush out in headgear and habiliments that give more or less indication of attempts to sleep, and betray the degree of the accustomedness to travel. There is the bustle of the coming train—the rough rattle of the luggage-barrows, the "crack" of the air-brake as some carriage is detached, and finally the command which, in the chilly night air, is sharp and decisive—"Take your seats." Then with a slamming of doors, a shrill whistling, and a few slow, preliminary puffs, the dark locomotive creeps away, increasing its pace as it goes. The train has left work for some of the few attendants at the station: there are hampers of fish, crates of yeast, and a multitude of small parcels to be examined, sorted, and carried away; there are mail-bags and parcels to be seen to, and it is a little time before the platform resumes its quiet—if quiet there is possible, when shunting and rumbling seem so frequent, and when the "goods," the "mineral," and the "passenger" seem almost to alternate.

Look out! Steaming through the station goes one of the few newspaper trains, and as it goes there are thrown out fifty or sixty little bundles of papers, and one or two of heavy appearance; and off sweeps the engine and its two or three vans with steadying carriages.

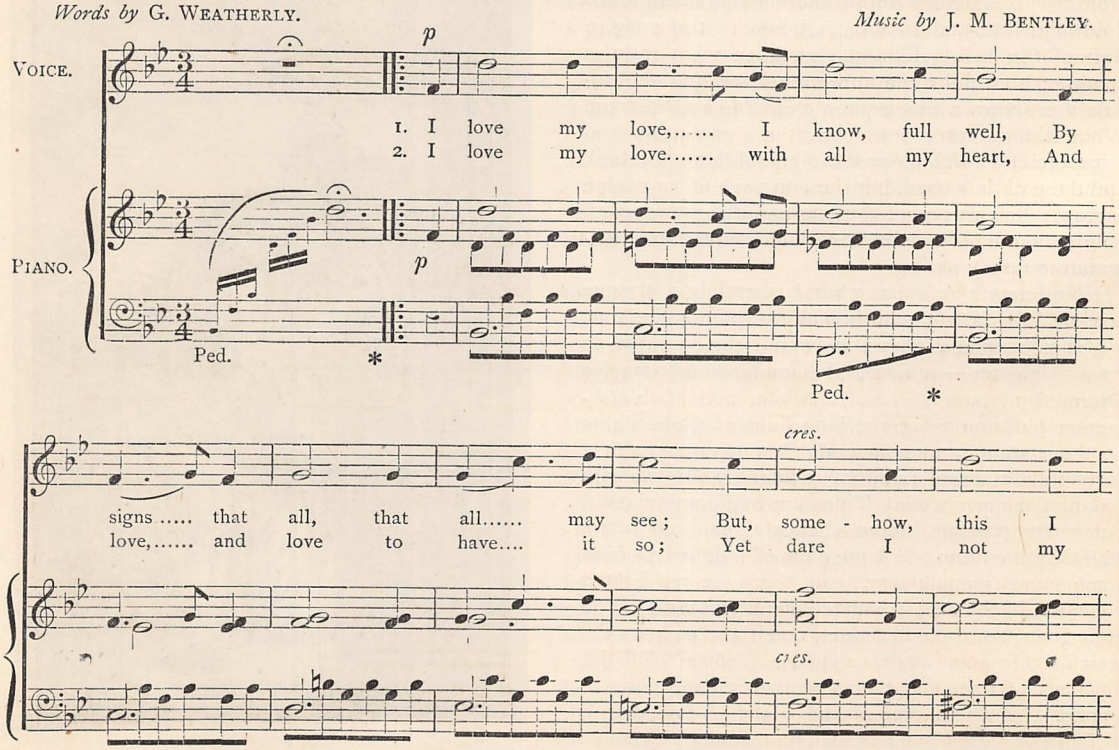
Then from one of the sidings a "parly" is slowly shunted into one of the docks, and "Lamps"—as Charles Dickens called that functionary—rolls along his wooden tray of globe lights, and throws here one and there one to his abettor on the carriage-tops, whilst a few hasty rubs at carriage-door handles complete the preparation for the departure, but not till after another express has brought its freight and contributed its quota, by dilatoriness, to the impatience of those who wait for it. Butchers for a distant market drive up, and chaff the porters with an easy assurance, begot of custom, about the delay; a weary woman or two look doubtingly on, and finally shut themselves up in one cold compartment to sleep, if sleep will come, on hard cushions. Knowing travellers look to the telegraph notice-board and dispose themselves accordingly; whilst one or two persistently pace the platform with a steady tramp and a gait bespeaking the sailor.

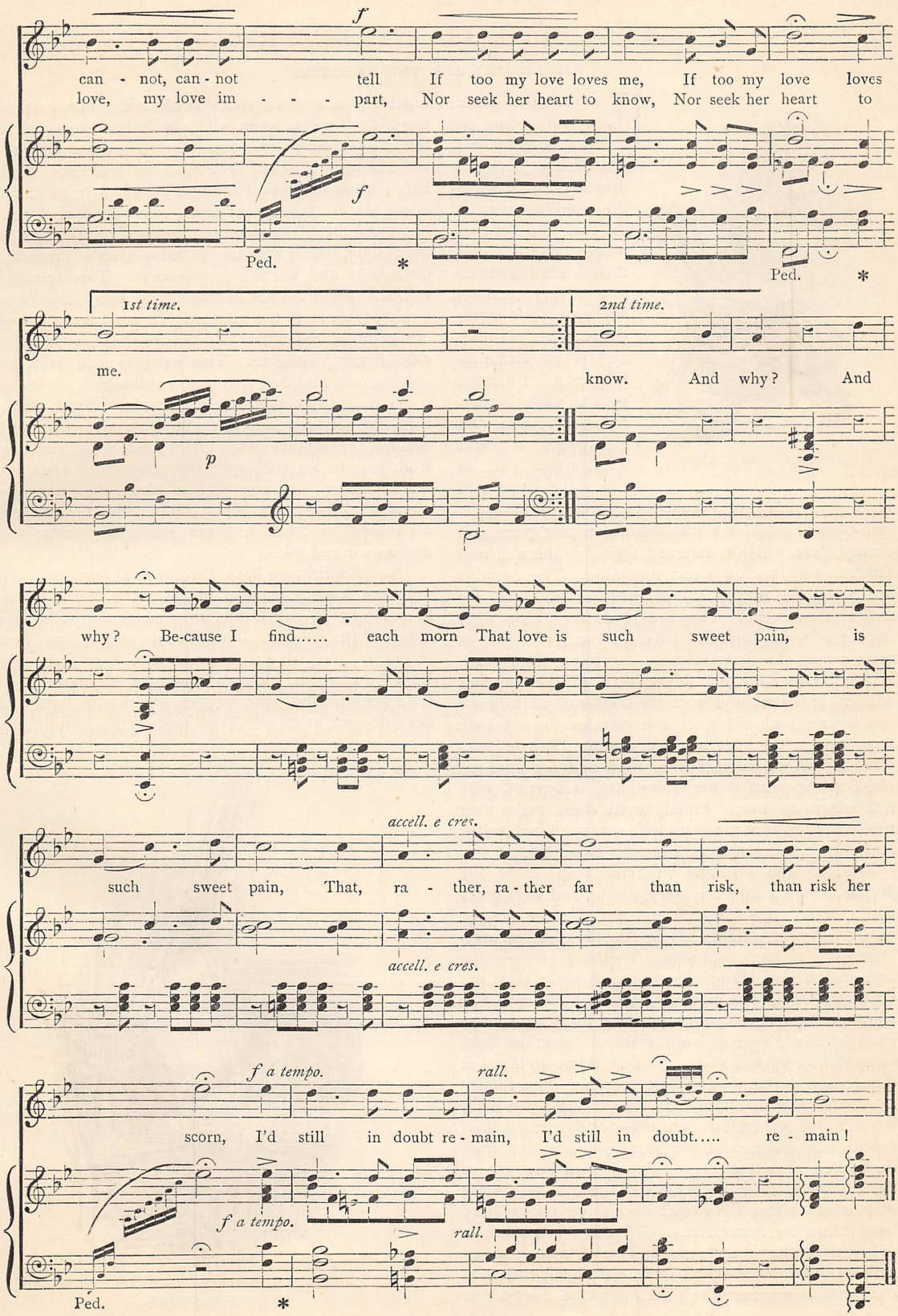
Finally, with a rush and a scurry, in comes the express; and though we know well our branch train follows it, we rush to secure seats, and our night at the junction ends, before the darkness is chased by the dawn.

J. W. S.

In Doubt.

Words by G. WEATHERLY. *Music by* J. M. BENTLEY.

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OUR NEW HOUSE AND ITS PLENISHINGS.

THE LIBRARY AND THE NURSERY.

A CORNER OF THE NURSERY.

IN this house there are four rooms on the ground floor; the library joins the drawing-room, while the smoking-room is at the end of an inner passage. Although not luxurious, it is a very comfortable room; the carpet goes all over the floor and is an Oriental-patterned Brussels, with a wide border, which cost two and eightpence a yard. The upper part of the walls is painted in oils a shade of sage-green, while a dado is formed of a piece of China matting in pale green and straw-colour, which is fastened tightly to the wall and finished by a narrow wood moulding. The curtains are made of Madagascar mats, which cost about two and sixpence each. They are made up with a wide border of gold Imperial plush, a band of which is sewn across the centre to hide the join. This plush is fifty inches wide, not fifteen as I said in my first paper. It is well to double the border so as to have it alike on both sides, as the curtains do not look nice lined. A border made of Indian Dhurrie looks quite as well as one of plush. An arm-chair from the old drawing-room is used here, and is covered with a Madagascar mat. Plainly used, these make very nice coverings, but made up with scraps of red velvet and plush they altogether lose their character.

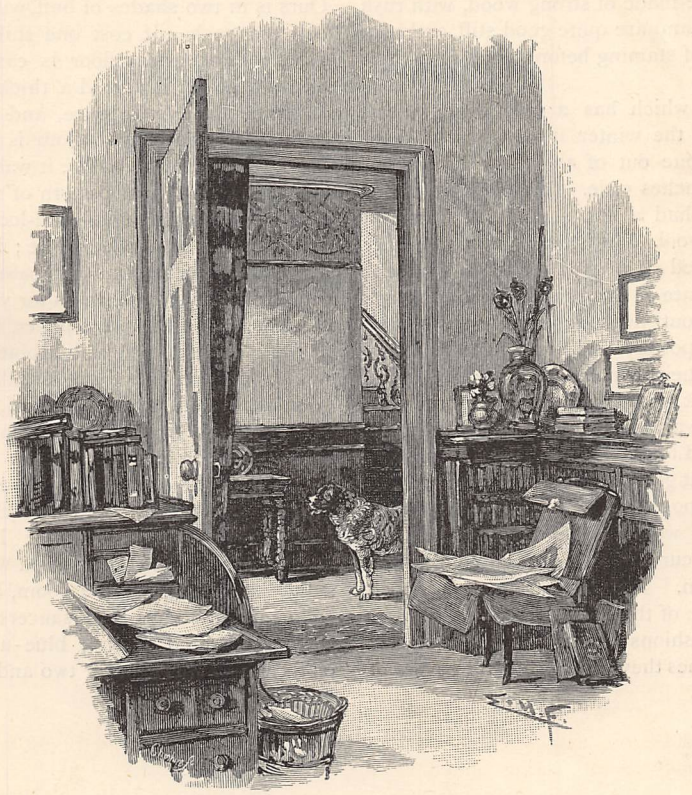
Most of the furniture in this room is of the Indian rattan kind; it is very strong, and does away with any need of upholstery work. The lounge cost twenty-six shillings, while the high-backed arm-chair was eighteen and nine. We have two wooden arm-chairs, six shillings each unpolished; they are ebonised now. The other chairs and tables are very simple. There is no gas in the room, but the exquisite wrought-iron hanging lamp gives a beautiful light through its coloured glass. It cost thirty shillings at the Italian Exhibition of last season. The library is wonderfully characteristic of its owner; you enter it, and feel yourself in an old-world room full of repose and calm, and yet when you see that high desk piled with papers you know that you are in the workshop of a literary man; there is no feeling of newness about the room: everything might have been there for generations. All the wood-work is of brightly-polished mahogany. The walls are covered with an unpatterned drab paper; a drab felt carpet at three and threepence the yard covers the floor; it is lined with a material called cedar felt. The curtains are of drab serge, made with a wide band of velvet at top and bottom; the chairs are also covered with the same thing. The old drawing-room bookcase stands here; it has had other shelves joined to it, so that it now goes all round the room. It is only four shelves high, and the black wood top makes a pretty shelf for blue china, which with the varied colours of the books gives tone and warmth to the room. The high desk of black wood stands in the centre; the dining-room writing-table is in the window. In one corner stands our greatest treasure and last acquisition, a Chippendale corner cupboard. The writing-chair is a revolving one, and cost twenty-five shillings.

We have two carved wood Flemish chairs at seventeen and sixpence, and a comfortable arm-chair with springs. The other chairs are of black wood, and cost from four to six shillings; they have rush seats and no cushions. At one end of the room hangs a circular mirror in a black frame; the pictures are all framed in black, and are principally prints and etchings in red ink.

Most Englishmen have their special hero, and this man has hung a print of his over the mantel-piece. It is in a wide oak frame, upon which daffodils have been painted in oils. There are no photographs near it, but on the wall just in front of the writing-table, where during his "leisure" moments so many books have been planned and written, hangs a miniature of his wife, and at its side, in all the serenity of a beauty

HALL WINDOW CORNER.

which even that wife thinks unequalled, is a little water-colour sketch of the girl who was to have been his wife, if only death would have spared her to earth and to him. There is no shadow of coming trouble upon her face; her eyes are so full of joy that the picture would do as a representation of happiness. And sometimes in the firelight-time, when the woman whom he married is not painting furniture, or covering chairs, or cutting out children's pinafores, she steals into that quiet library, where, gazing at that lovely face, she wonders and thinks of many things.



THE HALL, FROM THE LIBRARY.

The hall is a very large one, with a fine window at one end. It was paved with stones, which we found so cold that we resolved to have it covered with linoleum. As it is an expensive thing to buy, and we did not wish to have to renew it, we took pains to get a good one, and therefore chose a make with the pattern stamped right through it, down to the fibre at the bottom, so that if the top gets scraped or worn off there is still a pattern beneath. It is called the "Granit Linoleum," and is three and sixpence the square yard. The walls of the hall and of the stairs and landing have been distempered deep orange. It was a bold experiment, but it has answered. The wooden dado is painted black, as is all the wood-work. We have a beautiful painted frieze, which is fastened to the wall with a black wood moulding. Painted upon a ground of Pompeian red is a conventional pattern of horse-chestnuts, with yellowish-brown leaves—just the thing for the orange walls. Had I had time, I could have painted it all myself, but as it was I drew out the pattern upon the different strips, painted a quarter of a yard as a copy on each, and found some ladies who could paint, and who were willing to do it for me at about three and sixpence the yard. We drew the pattern in chalk, and the material used was called "Pompeian Linoleum." It is better than anything else for the purpose, because it is so smooth to paint on and so thick in substance. A great deal of white was used in painting the chestnuts to make them look raised up, and white should be used with all the paint.

No fine work should be put into these friezes, as the bolder the style the better for this kind of decoration. We bought our linoleum by the square yard, and cut it, which gave us a great deal of trouble. But since then the firm from whom we obtained it have begun to keep it for this purpose, and will cut it in long strips of exactly the length required, so that it only has to be joined at the corners. They also supply these friezes painted, and sell the wood moulding and prepared paste for fastening them up. They ought not to be varnished till after they are fastened upon the

wall. They take a high place in home decoration, as anything hand-painted is far more artistic and valuable than the most expensive paper. The hall ceiling was washed a pale Pompeian red. The furniture which looks best with this style of decoration is old oak, and we mean to furnish the hall with it, though at present we have not very much. We have a nice old settle and a black oak hall table, also an arm-chair, but we must wait for the rest till the ships come home! For the present our old dining-room chairs are used in the hall. They are made of strong wood, with rush seats, stained black; and are quite good still, and only required a new coat of staining before they began their new work!

Our hall window, which has a nice window-seat, looks north, and in the winter it requires a thick curtain. We made one out of the thick brown felt which is forty-eight inches wide. To give some colour to the bordering, we had a fringe made of Cameron pottery and crewel wool. It is quite new and very pretty, and is composed of a quantity of little tassels, which are sold separate at threepence three-farthings each. They are about five inches in length, and are made of yellow pottery and wool of all colours. Some people make their bordering of many colours, but I found the effect was best if only two sorts were used, and if they were arranged in twos. For instance, on the curtain I sewed two pale blue, then two orange, then blue again. That gives four colours in the fringe, as each tassel is composed of two. They should be sewn on with crewel wool of the same shades, and when used on muslin curtains it is as well to line the edge with a false hem. The hall curtains are looped back with bands made of the same pottery balls.

The window-seat cushions are made of thick felt, but when the summer comes they will have loose covers of chintz, and striped Syran curtains will take the place of the thick ones. Till we can get an oak umbrella-stand we use a high round one made of plaited rush, which cost six and sixpence. At each door is a pretty Smyrna mat, for which we gave half-a-crown. The stair carpets are dark blue Wilton, and the first landing is covered with the same, but for the other landings and passages we have used a material which I am very fond of, though I am not sure if it is called hemp or cocoa matting. It looks like plaited string. Ours is in two shades of buff, with a narrow black line between each. It cost one shilling and a penny the yard. The nursery floor is carpeted with it, but in front of the fire is spread a thick soft Axminster rug, at seven and elevenpence, and in the centre of the room a Barnsley crumb-cloth is laid down. A pretty paper decorates the walls: it was ninepence the piece, and is a well-drawn pattern of roses and jasmine in china-blue, upon a white-satin-looking ground. All the wood-work is enamelled white; it is rather more expensive than other kinds of paint, but can be washed for ever and ever, and wears for years. The blinds are of a pattern very like the paper, while the curtains are of white dimity, lined with a blue-and-white cretonne.

The furniture is of the usual nursery kind: two good deal tables, a toy-cupboard, a work-cupboard, an arm-chair on rockers, children's high chairs, &c. The doors of the cupboards are decorated with large bunches of blue corn-flowers and ox-eyed daisies, painted on the deal and French-polished. All the furniture is of polished deal; I like it better for a nursery than stained or painted wood. A tiny dresser stands at the end of the room, upon which the blue willow-pattern cups and saucers shine. The lower shelf is covered with a blue-and-white sideboard-cloth, which I bought for two and sixpence.

COLONEL STORMER'S MISTAKE.

(THE CHRONICLES OF CARDEWE MANOR.)

BY MRS. MARTYN-HENRY.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

AN AMERICAN BELLE.

"THE Cardewes have asked us over to the Manor for a skating party—a 'little house-warming,' they say. Shall we accept, dear?"

My husband — Major Martyn-Henry—at once assented, and the invitation was accepted by that day's post.

It may seem somewhat strange to the readers of these Chronicles that Mrs. Farmer is not the narrator of this somewhat remarkable experience which happened to the party at Cardewe Manor, but as I was the chaperon of the young lady who figured most prominently in the little drama—which was nearly a tragedy—I have taken up my pen to describe the incidents.

When the invitation had been accepted, and my arrangements made, I received a letter from Miss Fallutine, a young American friend whom we had met in London just after Christmas, and had invited to spend a few days with us at any time. It so frequently happens that, if one gives a general invitation, it is sure to be accepted at the very time one is engaged oneself.

Of course I consulted my husband, and showed him the letter. "What can we do, dear?" I asked.

"Why not write to Mrs. Cardewe, and tell her the facts? We cannot put Miss Fallutine off, Gladys,

and if she will permit us to bring the young lady—well. If not we must remain here."

"Very well, dear," said I, "I think that will be the best plan; but I do hope that Colonel Stormer won't take it into his head to follow Miss Fallutine here. What *should* we do with him?"

"Colonel Stormer! why, I fancied young Green-Englefield was the favourite with this New England belle!" said my husband.

I thought not, and said so. The matter very soon dropped. I wrote to the young lady, and again to Mrs. Cardewe, stating the circumstances. There was just a week to make our preparations in, but before that we had heard from the Manor. We were quite at liberty to bring our young guest for the skating tournament, which we heard was to be continued for three days. This letter reached me at breakfast, so I read extracts from it aloud to my husband.

"I think you must be right," I remarked. "Mr. Green-Englefield is already staying with the Cardewes."

My husband smiled, and said, looking up from his correspondence, "I think we shall see some pretty fun over there, particularly if the colonel should turn up. He is quite 'gone' over Miss Loftie!"

"What a curious name hers is! Patience Loftie Fallutine! It sounds almost contradictory, does it not?"

"Well, if appearances be not deceptive, she will change it before Easter, or soon after, at any rate. When will she arrive?"

"On Monday; and we go to the Manor on Wednesday till Tuesday. I hope Miss Fallutine will not mind!"

Monday came quickly. The weather, which had threatened to break up, became hard again; all hunting was stopped; the horses were only exercised, and got quite frisky. We drove a pair to the station at Westcombe, and Major Henry declared he had his hands full.

Miss Fallutine amused me very much. She is so frank and cheerful, yet so self-possessed, and with a good deal of "manner." Of course she dresses well, and manages to look about eighteen, though she is, I believe, one-and-twenty. To my surprise she came alone.

"Is not your maid with you, Miss Fallutine?"

"No; I guess she didn't want to come, and refused. So I sent her away then and there. Mrs. Statten—my aunt, you know—says I was wrong, but when maids give themselves airs they'd best clear out, I think. How's Major Henry?"

"Quite well, thank you. He is in the wagonette, as the horses are rather fresh. Is all this your luggage?" I asked, in dismay.

"That is *all* my luggage. Not much, is it? Only three boxes! Put them up on the cart, please," she said to the porter.

"We will send down the cart," I said. "We have not room for all three boxes; and I must tell you that we have accepted an invitation for you to our old friends the Cardewes at the Manor. Do you mind accompanying us there for the skating tournament?"

"Not a little bit! Think it real nice of you, Mrs. Martyn-Henry, to let me go with you. It's fun skating, and we can do a kind of spread-eagle in America. Ever been in Canada? How d'ye do, Major Henry? Nice pair you've got; I love horses!"

"I am afraid they are rather fidgety," said my husband, "and as we didn't bring the groom I was obliged to remain out here. Where's your luggage, Miss Fallutine?"

"Coming along; it will be all right. The man will see to it. No, Mrs. Henry, I'll get in after you, please. I mean it! What a nice carriage, I declare!"

Thus she kept chattering the whole time, telling us many amusing anecdotes of acquaintances and of strangers in town. According to her account American ladies were quite usurping the best and most desirable *partis* in society. Why this should be I am unable to perceive. Certainly American girls are very attractive, and have self-confidence; are generally well-read, and dress well; but they are not so domestic, I fancy, as we are.

But Miss Patience Loftie Fallutine was a decided acquisition. She was amusing and easily amused. She wanted no looking after. She played extremely well, but couldn't "hoot" a note, as she playfully termed singing. So we didn't ask her to "hoot." She talked well, and thus compensated for "hooting."

"Oh," she exclaimed on the Wednesday morning, "I declare if there isn't a letter from Colonel Stormer! He says he's coming to see me, but we are going away this afternoon, ain't we, Mrs. Henry?"

"Yes," I replied, glancing at my husband. "Do you wish Colonel Stormer to find you here?"

"Well, not exactly. He's a bore, you know, and thinks I'm goin' to marry him, but I am not! Best let him alone, I guess. He won't come uninvited. I'll write and tell him. Ah, two o'clock I think you said? Then I'll be ready."

She quitted the room, and we saw no more of her until luncheon-time.

CHAPTER THE SECOND

AN AWKWARD MEETING.

"THINGS will get a bit mixed if the Colonel *do* come to the Manor-house," remarked Miss Fallutine, as we drove across to the Cardewes. "He's rather a bear when annoyed, and don't stick at trifles—impulsive, you understand!"

We made no reply, and it did not appear that Miss Fallutine expected one. She seemed the essence of good-nature, and when she descended from the carriage she was as much at home in the Manor as at her aunt's residence in New England. She criticised the house, the furniture, the decorations; was very nice to Mr. and Mrs. Cardewe, and quite distant with Mr. Green-Englefield, who came to shake hands with her. She wondered who Lucy Farmer was, and insisted on being introduced.

"Guess I've heard of you, Mrs. Farmer," she said. "My aunt has told me."

"You are very kind, miss," was Lucy's reply, for we all came out into the hall with Miss Fallutine—"very kind, and your aunt as well. Nice weather, miss."

"I shall see you again, depend upon it," said Miss Fallutine. Then we dispersed to our rooms, and, as usual, Lucy Farmer came to me. She always does when she is in the house.

"Well, Lucy," I said, "any more wonderful things going to happen? You generally have some curious experiences."

"No, ma'am, there is nothing new—only the Long Pond is frozen over, a thing which hasn't happened since Peter Bellows was nearly drowned; and not before that, except when Bessie Mitchell was nipped by her neck in the ice, and held up till the men rescued her. Don't you go on it, Mrs. Henry. Mark my words!"

"Why, Lucy? Are you superstitious?"

"Not all out, ma'am. But Charley, my husband, ma'am, says I have what he calls 'second-hand sight,' and he declares I can see a hole in a mill-stone; he often says so!"

"No doubt you have excellent eyes, Lucy, but how can you have second-sight about the pond?"

"Because, ma'am, it's certain to drown some one, or try to! Never a winter when it is frozen that it doesn't do mischief, and you won't go on it, will you, ma'am? It will open and swallow you up, as it did Bessie Mitchell, who had the red scar round her neck all her life after, and in frosty weather she felt the ice round her throat choking her! She died of ice pudding at the big Christmas dinner up at the Hall. It froze her throat, ma'am!"

"Nonsense, Lucy. Now that will do, thank you. How do you like Miss Fallutine?"

"Miss Fallutine! The American young lady? Curious her name should be the same as other Americans', ma'am."

"The same, Lucy? Gently, please. How do you mean the same?" I asked.

"Why, Charley says all Americans is high Fallutins, and I supposed the young lady was American when I heard her name."

"I am afraid Mr. Farmer does not understand Americans, Lucy. Thank you, that will do. I had a letter from Mrs. Ellerton the other day—Miss Grey, you remember."

Then we had a few minutes' conversation on other matters, for Lucy is decidedly loquacious, and somehow manages to pick up many curious anecdotes, and to arrive at shrewd conclusions. The tea-bell rang, and I found many of the guests assembled in the drawing-room.

The gentlemen were discussing the shooting—lamenting the absence of hunting, or anticipating the skating, according to their several tastes. We ladies listened a little, and talked a little of the fashions, the latest reports from London, and a little village gossip. The skating tournament, which was to begin on the morrow, at length occupied general attention, and the conversation became animated.

"I have been warned against the Long Pond," I said, "and I think it right to say so."

"There is really no danger," said Mr. Cardewe. "In a couple of days, at the very latest, the ice will bear everywhere. We can commence on the smaller ponds if you like."

The chances were discussed, and I saw that Mr. Englefield was particularly anxious to engage Miss Fallutine in conversation. She did not in any way avoid him, but it seemed to me that she treated him coldly. This was the more remarkable, as he is the Hon. Reginald Green-Englefield, and has a good position in the diplomatic service. If Miss Patience wanted to mate with an English gentleman she could not have chosen a more aristocratic partner, and there were other ladies present who would not have objected had Mr. Englefield paid them one-half the attention he paid to the fair American. She, I think, liked to tease him with her Americanisms, which she could assume, and at which he visibly winced at times. Poor Englefield!

"Your terms puzzle me," he remarked once in my hearing. "I confess I cannot appreciate all you say, Miss Fallutine. You are clever and brilliant, but your way of putting things is, at least, novel."

"Why, Mr. Englefield, I'm only an *Amurcan*, you see, and haven't quite got grip of all your institutions here. When I've lived in your old country another year, and talked with the Prince, then, I guess, I'll just be about the correct level of your society. I'm being educated a bit now—some!"

Mr. Englefield gazed, and was charmed—if she only wouldn't "guess" and "fix up," and use "some" and "reckon!" What a charming, lively, stylish girl she was! Why *would* she use slang terms and make him shudder again? If she had only been "aristocratic," he thought, no doubt she would have been perfection!

Nevertheless, he was smitten deeply, and tried hard to overcome his scruples. He was not a very young man, and so had greater difficulty to rid himself of his prejudices. The dinner-bell rang. We separated. We dined, and passed a pleasant evening in various ways. At luncheon next day an unexpected addition was made to our party—the new arrival being no less a personage than the redoubtable Colonel Stormer.

My husband and I had heard of this colonel from Miss Fallutine, and had also ascertained from one of the guests at the Manor that Miss Patience had been—and perhaps was still—engaged to him! We could scarcely credit this latter statement, for the young lady was certainly not one to play with any man's feelings, and she as certainly liked Mr. Englefield. If not, she would not, I am convinced, have permitted his evident attention, and would not have teased him as she did.

Things would now "get mixed," as she had already remarked. We soon found that Miss Patience was likely to belie her name, for she displayed certain

"MISS FALLUTINE PREFERRED TO WALK" (*p.* 162).

signals of impatience as soon as the colonel appeared. She had not been informed of his arrival, and greeted him with a somewhat cold surprise.

"Oh, Colonel Stormer, I did not know you had been invited here!" she said.

"Well, Miss Fallutine, your hostess here has been very kind to permit me to call, and has asked me to remain awhile under the circumstances, you understand—I have explained—and here I am!"

"So I perceive," replied Miss Fallutine; "but I am quite unaware of any special circumstances which can affect *me!*"

"Indeed, Miss Patty! Guess I'll open some eyes, then!" said he warningly.

Of course this little passage of arms was not unnoticed. Many of those present expected some *piquant* disclosure. Had this somewhat rough-and-ready colonel any claim upon the young lady? His manner carried some sort of proprietorship in her, and many of those present anticipated a little comedy.

"You will sit here, won't you?" asked the colonel —"if Mrs. Cardewe will excuse me changing the table."

"Thank you, Colonel Stormer, I prefer my place next my friend Mr. Englefield," she replied wickedly. "You can stay where you are!"

This wrangle before so many guests was not edifying, and Mrs. Cardewe was slightly annoyed by it. Several of the house party had not returned from their shooting that morning, for an expedition against wild-fowl had been organised very early. Major Henry, Mr. Cardewe, and other gentlemen were absent, but all the ladies had met at luncheon.

The colonel scowled at Mr. Englefield, and bowed to Miss Fallutine. His temper was evidently ruffled. The conversation then became general, but the angry colonel rarely joined in it; and as soon as he had finished, rose, bowed again, and left the room. Mr. Englefield, meanwhile, was paying Miss Fallutine considerable attention; and when the luncheon party dispersed to find skates or books or other facilities for amusement, the colonel came in, and, addressing Mr. Englefield, requested a few minutes' private conversation with him.

The storm was brewing, evidently.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

A SKATING MATCH AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

"MY dearest Gladys, what *am* I to do with this ferocious colonel?" cried Mrs. Cardewe, as she came into my room before dinner, when Lucy Farmer was dressing me. "You need not leave the room, Lucy," she continued; "go on with your duties, please."

To do Mrs. Farmer justice, she had not displayed any violent desire to go away. She likes to hear all that passes. So she remained willingly enough.

"What has the man been doing?" I asked.

"I am informed that he has challenged Mr. Englefield. One of the men overheard him, so he *says*. We cannot permit any such wicked nonsense, Gladys!"

"Of course not. Mr. Cardewe and the major will interfere at once. What does your husband say?"

"Heatherington was inclined to suggest the colonel's departure, but we cannot turn the man out this weather. To-morrow will be Saturday, and our final tournament on the Long Pond."

"Is the ice safe?" I inquired. "Mrs. Farmer has been warning me about it."

"What? Is Lucy again apprehensive?" cried her mistress. "You ought to have got over your fears by this time," she continued, turning to my tiring-woman.

"Well, ma'am, it isn't my wish. You know yourself how many accidents have happened there. The ice is haunted, they say, and——"

"Nonsense!" retorted Mrs. Cardewe. "You are full of old wives' fables, Lucy."

"I'm not so old as you may think, ma'am; and if I was, I make bold to say I'm not a horse to have my age thrown in my teeth, as the saying is. Faithful service, ma'am, is——"

"Hush, Mrs. Farmer," I said. "No offence was intended. But when you have done you can leave the room."

"And will, if you please, Mrs. Henry. I think you will do now, ma'am. Old wife, indeed!" she muttered, as she left the room.

"Lucy is touchy, Gladys, you see. Seriously, what shall I do? I am afraid Miss Fallutine is to blame in this matter. It seems that this colonel, or whatever he is, has been attached to Miss Fallutine for many years; she herself confessed as much to me; but she declares that no definite arrangement, or any kind of engagement, was ever made between her and her admirer. It was a childish fancy on her part long ago, and she has entirely grown out of it. Still the man maintains his rights, and is jealous of Mr. Englefield."

"It will all blow over, dear. Never mind; Mr. Englefield will not fight. Leave me to sift the matter. I will myself occupy the colonel's attention this evening and 'pump' him."

"Do, dear. You have taken a load off my shoulders, Gladys!"

"And saddled myself! Never mind! There shall be no fighting, at any rate. Trust me!"

"A thousand thanks," said Mrs. Cardewe, kissing me warmly. "There is the second bell. Come and tame the lion, Gladys. It will be a reproduction of Una in modern guise!"

"Well, I shall certainly 'sit on him' if he is rude. There, isn't that an elegant speech? Come quickly. They must not be kept waiting for their dinner, these hungry husbands!"

Dinner passed off very well. The "lion"—or bear, according to some—was quiet, but rather ill-tempered. The challenge was only a challenge to skate five miles round the pond, and the party separated, to all appearance, on the most friendly terms. Next day we all again assembled at the ponds, and the match between Mr. Englefield and Colonel Stormer was the chief theme of conversation.

Miss Fallutine, dressed in becoming costume, declined the escort of both gentlemen, and preferred to

walk down the lane with Emily Cardewe, who was one of her aunt's guests. She was a nice quiet girl, and had taken quite a fancy to the vivacious American girl. It was decided that the match should come off first, while we ladies and our cavaliers cut figures more or less gracefully in the centre of the pond.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Henry," said Lucy Farmer; "excuse me, but the colonel means mischief! I've seen him looking at the ice yonder. Charley says it isn't safe—not *true*, I mean, ma'am."

"You cannot surely suspect any gentleman of such unfair play, Lucy. Don't say any more, please. You should not be so ungenerous and suspicious!"

She made no reply. I put on my skates and joined the others. Colonel Stormer looked black, for Miss Fallutine had almost ignored him, and he was madly jealous, I could perceive. He addressed Mr. Englefield very rudely, and *dared* him to compete! The gentlemen were soon ready, and in five minutes they had started.

The colonel led the way, and at a great pace. His face was not pleasant. The object of the trial and what depended on it no one knew. There was something behind it all, I was certain. After the first mile or so the colonel did not gain so fast. Mr. Englefield came up and looked like winning. Miss Fallutine encouraged him, and this annoyed the colonel, who led the way towards the end of the pond, jeeringly addressing his competitor.

Mr. Englefield replied; the colonel rushed on faster, the other responded. Suddenly the American turned so swiftly as to appear influenced by some unseen force. His opponent could not swerve so quickly; he proceeded beyond the colonel's track, and in a moment a loud crack was heard; the ice gave way, and Mr. Englefield disappeared!

"Foul!" cried some one. "Get ladders, ropes, anything."

The ladies screamed, the men ran to the nearest rope; all but one person avoided the hole in the ice. Miss Fallutine rapidly skated up, tore off her skates, grasped the straps, and lay down her full length upon the ice. In a moment an arm appeared. With cool dexterity she cast her strap-lasso, and caught the hand of Mr. Englefield. In a second or two his head appeared. With his disengaged hand he clutched the ice-rim. It broke, and but for Miss Fallutine, he would have again disappeared.

She sustained him bravely, and with wonderful strength of arm, until two of the gentlemen came with the rope, and after some trouble, owing to his exhausted condition, extricated poor Mr. Englefield, who could not even thank his preserver. Colonel Stormer, very pale, looked on, and then offered his hand to assist his young compatriot to rise.

She looked at him with intense scorn as she rose unassisted. "You had better leave here, Colonel Stormer," she said. "You nearly succeeded *that* time."

"Miss Fallutine, I swear—!" he began.

"Don't perjure yourself, sir. He is safe—no thanks to you." Then she turned her back on him and went indoors.

There was terrible confusion. The colonel's distress was genuine; he had himself had a narrow escape, but no one doubted that, on the impulse of jealousy, he had intended to have sacrificed his rival! This was a very serious matter, and Mr. Cardewe was obliged to take some notice of the rumour which, I am under the impression, had been set in motion by our friend Mrs. Farmer.

Some investigation was made, and the colonel was politely interrogated on the subject. When the matter was put plainly to him he quite broke down, and my husband told me that it was a pitiful sight to see the big, strong man give way so utterly. He then made a statement which was to this effect.

It appeared, from his replies to various questions, that he had been acquainted with Miss Fallutine for some twelve years, and had always greatly admired her. Her father (her mother was dead) had made no objection to the colonel as a son-in-law, and Patience had consented to regard him as a husband, thinking it a by no means bad idea to have a chaperon—for, as we know, young ladies in America are permitted to go about with the gentlemen to whom they are engaged.

But when Miss Fallutine "came out," she discovered that she did not love the colonel. At fifteen or sixteen she did not reflect, but at eighteen she desired to choose for herself, and told the colonel he was not her choice. He persisted; she was firm; so hoping to cut the Gordian knot she came with her aunt, Mrs. Kansas Statten, to Europe and the United Kingdom. After awhile Stormer followed. Meanwhile Miss Fallutine had become more independent, and refused the colonel steadily. Then Mr. Englefield's devotion had fired the train of the colonel's wrath; he heard of his being in the same house with the lady, and hence the incident we all deplored.

I may as well say that Colonel Stormer was *really* penitent. The impulse to which he had yielded was repented of. He requested and obtained forgiveness. Mr. Englefield would not trample on a vanquished foe, and Colonel Stormer, humbled and sorrowful, quitted Cardewe Manor for ever on the Monday morning.

My husband, myself, and Miss Fallutine left on the day following, but Mr. Englefield begged to be permitted to ride over and see our young guest. There was no mistaking his devotion, and she then made no secret of her liking for him. They are excellently matched. He is a clever fellow, well connected; and she is well-read, self-possessed, and rich. She "guesses" they will "get out all right," and I am sure we all trust they will be happy.

"Well, Lucy," I said, as I left the Manor, after making a call one day, "you will hear of another wedding soon!"

"Yes, ma'am," she replied. "And begging your pardon, Mrs. Henry, you see I was not far out about the colonel after all!"

She *will* have the last word, so I said no more; and really she is a good-hearted and faithful person, if somewhat loquacious and fanciful, so I let her be.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

FEBRUARY—SPARROW.

THE Robin steals your praise away,
In vain you brave the winter cold;
For all have eyes for feathers gay,
But no one marks your jerkin old.

STAMMERING AND STUTTERING.

BY A SUFFERER.

DURING the present generation great advances have been made in nearly all departments of science, and it is somewhat astonishing that hitherto so little has been done with regard to the treatment of impediments of the speech, which (in England, at all events) are undoubtedly becoming very common. Probably the reason for this is to be found in the fact that, as a rule, people underrate the gravity of these afflictions, and indeed look upon them as affording occasion for mirth. It is with a desire to draw attention to the greatness of the evil that I take up my pen.

Many treatises have been written on the subject of stammering and stuttering, but with no great results. Learned professors have devoted much time and attention to the study of these curious affections, and have developed ingenious theories, which unfortunately are, for the most part, of no practical benefit, and my apology for adding a little more to the literature upon the subject is that I speak from a totally different standpoint—that of the sufferer.

By most people stammering and stuttering are supposed to be one and the same thing, but this is a mistake. In the case of stammerers there is an inability to pronounce certain consonants, and a more or less violent effort is required to force them out. Stutterers, on the contrary, experience no difficulty in pronouncing the consonants; the trouble is to leave them and pass on to the vowels. For instance, in the word "pin" a stutterer repeats the initial consonant several times before he can part with it; thus "p-p-p-p-pin;" whilst a stammerer (if that is a consonant with which he has any difficulty) comes to a dead stop at the *p*. When at last it is forced out, there is no repetition of it, as in the other case.

A stutterer, again, speaks very quickly; when he has surmounted the first difficulty he rushes over several words before coming to another. The stammerer speaks slowly, and, in very bad cases, hesitates at nearly every other word.

The stutterer is usually loquacious, and does not

appear to be much disheartened by his impediment; but the stammerer is timid and reserved, rarely speaks unless addressed, and then says as little as possible.

The causes of these affections are many. Illnesses of various kinds (brain fever especially) will leave them as terrible legacies. Mimicry is a prolific cause. Whilst at school two boys, with whom I was not on good terms, contracted the habit of stammering by mocking me. One recovered shortly afterwards, but the other, after the lapse of many years, is a stammerer still, and far worse than myself. Accidents and blows on the head have been known to produce these impediments.

The cause in my own case—and, I believe, in that of many others—was anxiety to do well in my studies. Naturally slow, but plodding and industrious, I was generally at the head of my classes, and strove hard to retain that position. When called on to answer a question, I would, from over-anxiety, hesitate, stumble, and stop in my reply. Gradually this habit grew upon me, until at last I became a confirmed stammerer. Then my teacher, in mistaken kindness, committed an error for which I have blamed him ever since; he allowed me to write down my answers! From that time I rapidly deteriorated.

Those who have never stammered have no adequate idea of the misery suffered by the habit's unfortunate victims—that is, if the latter have a grain of sensibility. There are those who, engaged in manual labour and without a spark of ambition, contrive to enjoy life pretty well in spite of their affliction; but to those who, like myself, are engaged in commercial life, where every hour of the day they are compelled, in the ordinary course of business, to be speaking or reading, and to those who have a laudable ambition to improve their position, life is continually miserable. My own case is, I know, only a sample of many others; and if I give a brief sketch of it, it will, I hope, be understood that I do so simply for the purpose of showing clearly the direness of the evil, and of rousing the attention of parents to their duty in this matter.

After vegetating for several years in an office, where I could see no prospect, owing to my impediment, of much advancement, I conceived the idea of competing for a situation in the Excise department of the Civil Service, where, in receipt of a fair income, I might make the best of my affliction. For five or six months I worked with might and main in the time I had to spare from office work, up at four or five every morning, and at it till nearly midnight. My exertions were rewarded, for after a stiff examination I learned that I was well up in the list of successful candidates. Before I could be appointed, however, it was necessary to pass a medical examination. Strong and healthy, the doctor told me I had nothing to fear; but he must have enlarged on my defective speech, for in a few days I was told to appear before the head of the department in the town in which I reside. This I did, and after conversing at considerable length I left, under the impression that he would give a favourable report. But, alas! my doom was sealed, for soon afterwards I received a large blue envelope, on opening which I learned that I could not be appointed.

This was a terrible blow to me, for, apart from the waste of so much time and energy, the verdict appeared to be a death-blow to all my prospects.

Since then I have been some years with a large firm. A skilful shorthand writer, type-writer, with a knowledge of French, and well up in business matters generally, I give satisfaction; but when I mention any improvement of position I am told—"We are exceedingly sorry for you, M——, but really we do not see how we can put you in a more responsible position; your impediment is so very much against you. If you could but get cured, we should be indeed glad to push you forward." And because I cannot get cured I am, I suppose, to stop in a subordinate position all my life, seeing others, whom I feel to be my inferiors, rising before me. Other and better positions I could have obtained, time after time, but for this defect.

I wish to show parents and guardians what a dreadful thing to a high-spirited and ambitious boy stammering is. I say emphatically, if taken in its earliest stages, it can be effectually checked. People are apt to imagine that it is a thing of small moment, and a defect which the boy will "grow out of." Fathers, I tell you plainly that, trifling as it may appear to you, it is a matter of terrible importance to the lad's future welfare, comfort, and happiness. In some odd cases, undoubtedly, sufferers do "grow out of it;" but in the great majority it grows upon them till they become confirmed stammerers, and their whole life is overshadowed by a dark cloud.

A few words to the general public as to their treatment of stammerers or stutterers.

Many kind-hearted men and women endeavour to help the sufferer by saying the word which they imagine he is striving to utter. Friends, don't do this. In the majority of cases you will get hold of the wrong word, and make his confusion worse confounded. And, apart from this, it is extremely galling to him to be dependent on other people in this way. If you wish to earn his gratitude and respect, endeavour to listen to him as if you had not noticed anything peculiar in his speech.

Never laugh at a stammerer. If you could for once put yourself in his place and feel the unutterable humiliation which he experiences, you would never again let the ghost of a smile cross your face when talking to one. When I have gone into shops or offices, and, whilst striving hard to make myself intelligible, have seen the clerks or assistants grinning as though they thought it fine fun, it has sometimes been very difficult to restrain myself from "going for them" and administering a salutary lesson.

And now a few words as to the cure of these afflictions. I may at once say that I know of no unfailing remedy for confirmed sufferers, and have been unable to find one to meet my own case, though I have tried everything within my power. Filling the lungs with air before trying to speak, keeping artificial substances

in the mouth, and many other "unfailing" remedies have all been useless.

Mesmerism has been recommended, and several eminent professors have experimented upon me; but, it being found impossible to exercise "influence" over me, the efficacy of this remedy has not been ascertained.

I paid a large sum of money to—and resided for two months with—a gentleman who has, I believe, worked several cures. I must not divulge the particulars of his treatment, but it had no effect upon me.

When the impediment has obtained firm hold of a person, I am afraid that in the majority of cases there is not much hope of cure. But I have known several stammerers who have imperceptibly shaken it off as they advanced in life, and, with maturer years, acquired more calmness and self-control. It is to some extent a nervous affliction, as when excited the sufferer is always worse. Although somewhat of a pessimist, I think I have reached the lowest point; my friends, indeed, say I am improving, and flatter me with the prospect of being in a few years quite free from my impediment.

But my desire is to put parents on their guard when the first signs of an impediment appear, for I say confidently it can then be stopped if properly dealt with.

Do not be harsh with the child. A person (I cannot give him the noble title of "man") once said to me, "Had I been your father I would have cured you. I'd have thrashed you every time you stammered." I should be sorry to call such a person my father, and assuredly he would only have frightened me and made me worse.

Do not laugh at a stammering child; it will do more harm than good. Be kind and calm, but firm.

When you notice the first signs of an impediment, say, "Come, John, I am sure you can do better than that." Make him take a gentle inspiration (not a violent or prolonged one), and then repeat the sentence slowly and distinctly. You will probably find that he will do so without hesitation; if he should not succeed at the first attempt, make him try again. Persist in this whenever you hear the slightest hesitation, and you will have your reward; but neglect it, and before many months the impediment will have obtained such a hold upon him that your efforts will be unavailing. It is some consolation to me to know that by giving this advice I have been the means of saving several boys, and I now give it thus publicly, in the earnest hope that more good may result than can possibly be the case if I restrict my advice to cases which come under my cognisance.

Endeavour as much as possible to awaken the boy to a sense of the vital necessity, for the sake of his future welfare, that he should throw off the bad habit; for such, in the majority of cases, I believe it to be. I know well that this is a difficult task, for the young are proverbially thoughtless; but if it be done, they will in after-life render you their heartfelt thanks.

I feel very strongly upon this matter, and "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." I have no hesitation in saying that a parent who will permit his child to grow up a stammerer is guilty, if not of absolute cruelty, at least of culpable indifference. If my short paper has the effect of drawing attention to the subject, I shall be satisfied.

OUR SECOND VOYAGE TO MARS.

FROM OUR ROVING CORRESPONDENT.

I.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

WE dashed from the mighty Sun back into space. The metallic mists of copper, of iron, of calcium, of magnesium, of barium, of cobalt, of nickel, of sodium, of manganese, which had blazed forth in every hue of prismatic colour—an inconceivable pyrotechnic display—slowly amalgamated into the one white glare. From a gorgeous hurly-burly of intensely blazing clouds of many colours the Sun slowly became a brilliant white luminary in the heavens, gradually diminishing in size from extending all over one side of the view to first a half, then a quarter, and at length a tenth of the expanse of the heavens.

Back we went into the outer darkness of space. The huge spots appeared again, not as vast regions—territories, so to speak, of an open expanse, traversed in many directions with brilliant clouds—not of water as the Earth's cloudland, but of metallic mist—of iron, of magnesium, of sodium, and numbers of other metals—through which the inner and darker orb of the huge world might be seen. The "rice-grains" of the Sun no more appeared as little worlds of dazzling light, but were merged together on his mottled surface. The rose-clouds even began to melt undistinguished amid the general blaze of light of the huge orb of day.

Back our aërial car dashed through space away from that vast region of light and force and motion which we had dared to approach. We passed through the realm of the corona, on to where what you call the "zodiacal light"—the distant solar atmosphere—extended itself. On we went through regions of meteors—systems on systems—sometimes rushing to the right, sometimes to the left of us, sometimes above, sometimes beneath, sometimes cannonading on our car with their bombardments and crushing in flames against its surface.

We passed the orbit of Mercury, but he seemed

now but as a little star in the dark heavens, for the planet had now moved in his rotation far from our line of travel, and we approached our own world of Venus.

The prow of our car was turned towards the great plateau of the North Pole of Venus, where the mountain ranges arise from the Arctic Ocean to colossal heights, and where the snows can be seen even by Earthly telescopes. There, in those Polar regions, at heights of ten to twenty miles, the mountains, compared to which Mount Everest and Mont Blanc would be but hills, lift their tall peaks crowned with eternal snows, which even the summer heats of our sphere (so much hotter than yours because so much nearer to the Sun) cannot melt.

The glorious blaze of these huge glacial mountains reflecting the Sun's light is inconceivably grand. Even coming from the wonderful and awful realms of eternal light, it seemed most beautiful. It is partly to these glacial regions of the polar table-lands, as well as to the white clouds that circle our world, that the brightness of Venus, many times greater than that of the Moon, is due.

II.

THE CONGRESS.

WE landed at the City of the North Pole, which is built in a deep valley encircled by colossal mountains from ten to eighteen miles high, and sheltering it from the bitter Arctic blasts. As the Sun does not shine upon it for much of the year (on account partly of the mountain shadows, partly of its being in the Arctic regions), the heat and light are mainly artificial. It happened now, however, to be the Northern summer, and myriads of our countrymen had come from divers lands to see the wonders and beauties of the Arctic regions, and to stay awhile at the City of the North Pole, just as a few adventurous tourists on Earth annually go to see the "Land of the Midnight Sun"—*i.e.*, Norway. With us it is thought pleasant and desirable for every one occasionally to spend a summer in the Arctic regions, and to stay, a few days at least, at the Pole itself. Perhaps the time may come when this will be the case on Earth, but it seems far distant, for—firstly, the sun is farther from your world than from ours of Venus; next, from the tilting of the planet the summer is warmer; and, thirdly, vast progress in command over nature will be required before men can even reach the Poles. I expect it can only be done by perfecting the art of flight, or aëronautics, for the only convenient way of reaching the North or South Pole of either Venus or Earth is by flight.

We descended amid the great ring chain of mountains, down which, in the summer thaw, the cascades were pouring from the glaciers, and we poised our car over the glittering domes and towers of the great City of the North Pole. Then we slowly descended, amid the plaudits of the crowds who welcomed us home.

As we alighted we were welcomed by the thousands of visitors at the Polar city. Joyous was our welcome, and deep our gratitude to Divine Providence, as we descended from the car which had borne us so well through the dangers of our awful, yet glorious, solar journey. We now noticed how it was encrusted with many metals which had fallen on it in the form of metallic rain as we had got near the Sun-spot, and now were crystallised around it in a strange form of metallic efflorescence. Tiny cubes of copper, iron, magnesium, cobalt, were there. The record of our near approach to the Sun was on the car itself.

A congress was summoned, the third day after our arrival, in the assembly-place near the city—a vast amphitheatre enclosed by mountains, and close to a beautiful cascade which in winter was frozen, but now rushed down the mountain crags. The scene in the summer sun was very beautiful as the congress assembled to receive us. Tens of thousands were ranged on the terraces and ledges of the rocks to see us, and to hear what we could relate of our journey to the Sun.

I need not narrate the account of the congress, which was something like the former one, which I have described before. We told all we had seen, and showed the specimens we had collected from Mercury and the solar regions. Then questions were asked, and for several days the congress lasted. At length Azarian, one of the Princes of the City of the Stars, suggested that the work of communicating between world and world of our system, and of studying our

"WE POISED OUR CAR OVER THE GLITTERING DOMES AND TOWERS OF THE GREAT CITY OF THE NORTH POLE."

sister-worlds by actually visiting them, should be continued, and another journey should be planned. Ezariel was the chief speaker of our party. He assented to the view that now, since we had as mere voyagers visited the worlds around us, and even seen the mighty centre of our system, a more thorough exploration of one or two worlds would be desirable. The two that especially presented themselves to his mind for further inquiry were Mars and the Earth. But he urged that a larger car and a larger party of specialists, who would make a thorough inquiry, were a large quantity of specimens, and also all requisite apparatus, could be stored.

III.

THE CANALS OF MARS.

I RESOLVED to join the expedition, and in less than a quarter of one of our years I was once more flying through infinite space to the regions of the ruddy world of Mars.

I need not describe our journey thither. The spot

MARS BY NIGHT.

desirable. The difficulty was urged by Axorian, the Prince of the City of the North Pole, that there would be a danger of our being observed and detected both in Mars and on Earth if we went in so large a party. But Ezariel, who had visited, as I told you, both worlds before, parried this serious difficulty by proposing that our party should confine itself to going around the two planets and photographing carefully all the scenery of each, and to land in some remote part of Mars, and on the Earth to rest in the wilds of Central Australia and perhaps in Equatorial Africa, where men would not be likely to find us out, and where we could examine the animal and vegetable life of the Earth, and many other matters of interest, without any fear or risk of interruption or discovery.

This view was accepted by the congress. We each proceeded to our homes, and the great nature-subduer, Ornalion, was entrusted with the construction of a large car for twenty specialists to go through space to Mars and the Earth, to examine in each world the wondrous works of the great Creator. It was provided with powerful magnets and anti-gravitating machinery, and was of the strongest materials. In it we chose to rest on was Hall's Snow Island, as an unfrequented and desolate region, yet not far from the great centres of Martian life. Here we landed by night, and remained two days on one of its lofty peaks, whence we could see part of Copernicus Land, and the Schiaparelli Lake, beyond which Kepler Land shone in rich crimson glory on the horizon.

The sun rose on the ruddy land, shining over the crimson forests, varied by the green seas, which in richest hues adorned a landscape glorious in its gorgeous colourings. On one side the De la Rue Ocean expanded its green surface to the horizon, now rippled by ridges of white foam, now tranquil like a sheet of green glass. Kepler Land on the other side and Copernicus Land spread their crimson expanse to the faint green horizon of the Terby Sea. Along the shore in green lines, here and there, were the great straight canals of Mars, that diffused the waters over the land, and which here stretched to both the Schiaparelli and the Bessel Lakes.

It was arranged that after two days' stay on the snowy peak, which was wellnigh inaccessible to the Martians, the rest of the party should start on an

aërial expedition around Mars, and, poised in mid-air at great heights above his atmosphere, should photograph the divers scenes of the planet, and so record all that was to be observed for the philosophers and museums of our world, and that Ulnorion should accompany me on or near the surface of the planet, and that we should be disguised, as nearly as we could, in the Martian costume and aspect, which, in truth, was very difficult, on account of our smaller size.

According to this plan we flew across to the Lagrange peninsula, and thence by the shores of Pratt Bay passed into the interior of Secchi Continent. Here the great system of canals of vast length and width struck our attention. They looked artificial, yet in width were like sounds or straits, but stretched for hundreds of miles, as clear from any undulation or bend as if they had been drawn with a ruler. Their green lines marked the red land, like lines ruled on a music book, varied land with water. On their surfaces were floating islands of the Martians, crowded with houses and factories and towers (like moving cities). On their shores were also vast edifices, where we could see the great machines of the Martians working and moving. Like a huge spider's web they spread over the crimson expanse of land.

From here we resolved to go to where my former Martian guide lived, that by his aid we might both obtain more information about this gorgeous world, and also that Ulnorion might, by his separate report, be able to add to or correct what I had learnt about Mars.

I found without difficulty the home of my former Martian friend and instructor. There it was—the domed house glittering with metal ornaments beneath the ruddy foliage of the forest. I led Ulnorion to the door, and then, noticing one of the windows open, I signed to him to fly in after me. My old friend was there, and was much alarmed at first at the unexpected apparition of two beings from another world, for I had cast off my disguise, so that he might know me. But then recovering himself, he recognised me as his former friend and guest.*

"I have returned again to your bright and gorgeous world, as I longed to know more about it. May I have your help to see it again, unknown and unobserved?"

"Welcome!" was the reply. "I often have thought of you and of your bright world, and all you told me."

And then he welcomed us with the Martian rites of greeting, and lighted the sacred fire upon the pillar, and offered us warm food. This we gladly accepted. Ulnorion, I noticed, however, was timid and ill at ease. There is a natural shrinking of all creatures from beings of another world, and so I found Ulnorion and our Martian host shrank from each other instinctively.

But as time went on this lessened. I asked our Martian friend about the events of my past visit, and showed him how I remembered what he had told me. Then I suggested to Ulnorion that he might ask any questions he wished about the ruddy world in which we were, and I would interpret his queries. As I expected, the first question he asked was about the wonderful canals we had recently seen.

"Will you explain to me," said Ulnorion, through me as his interpreter, "those huge canals that, straight as a line, mark several of your continents? They do not seem natural, for nowhere by natural laws are such straight lines formed; nature is ever devious, and tends to undulations, but these look like vast engineering works. Are they such, or do the laws of nature work in this world differently to the way they work in other planets?"

"They are mainly artificial works," said our Martian friend, "though utilising our rivers and lakes. Our command over natural forces has in recent times become very great. So we resolved, for our own convenience, to turn the rivers and lakes into great canals or sounds. It was for the advantage of the country that water and land should be evenly distributed. By machinery and the use of natural forces we were able to correct nature to our own purposes. These straight canals are of great value. Water and land combined produce food, and on the water we can travel with rapidity and comfort from one part of our world to the other. Since we have had no wars we have been able to devote our force to the arts of peace."

"What are those huge floating islands I saw on the canals?" asked Ulnorion.

"They are the floating cities. Instead of staying in one place, it is more convenient to move about. Thus we can live in a perpetual summer, and not merely leave our homes, but take our houses and our gardens with us over the waters from ocean to ocean, from land to land, and draw food both from land and water."

"There is," I said, "on Earth a far-off approach to this moving population in the floating hotels or great steamers of the Mississippi, and, on a very small scale, in the floating population of the little Chinese canals."

"There is another point," said our Martian instructor; "on Earth and in your world of Venus there is no scarcity of water. Our population is great, and our supply of water is not enough. The rains are insufficient. If we depended on nature alone, the inner parts of many of our continents would be desert and want moisture. Now we open them up by these canals, and diffuse water everywhere on the land as is most convenient to us and likely to develop the production of the soil. So land and water brought together produce food. Left to themselves we should have land in one part and sea in the other, and our planet could not then support so much life as it does now."†

The fact was, as he said, the Martians lived mostly on what (to use Earthly language to explain unearthly organisms) you would call aquatic plants. The ruddy vegetation of the land (similar in some

* See "Aleriel; or, a Voyage to other Worlds," pp. 115, 153.

† Some very interesting discoveries have recently been made by M. Perrotin about the "canals of Mars," and a map of these extraordinary green straight lines on the red surface of the planet has been constructed by him. They look on it very like the aspect of a railway system on a colossal scale.

points to the food-bearing plants of Earth) is insufficient for the teeming population. But, fortunately, the algæ or sea-plants of Mars are far more nourishing and agreeable than those of Earth. They form an exhaustless store of food, with the huge heaps of edible molluscs (somewhat like your oysters) which fill the Martian seas. But the great ocean-depths are less useful for these aquatic plants and animals than the shallow waters of the huge Martian canals. In ancient times, indeed, the Martians looked to the ocean for supplies of food; but as population increased and also their power of controlling nature, they found it better to construct long shallow seas (which could be drained as required) in which vast oceanic farms could be formed for supplying food. Even on Earth the supply of food by the ocean would be inexhaustible; and perhaps in ages to come, when every land is over-populated, man may be forced as the Martians to establish fish-farms in shallow artificial seas to supplement the food supply.

"There is much wisdom in what you say," I replied. "If Northern Africa or Australia had some such system of canals as this, they would produce much more and suffer less from drought and desert."

We issued forth from the house, and mounting on a hill close by, watched the Sun slowly descend over the crimson plain and the vast green network of canals which stretched in all directions at our feet. Our Martian friend named the canals to us and told us where they led.

Thus we conversed until the shadows of evening gathered in; and then Ulnorion and I waited for awhile to watch the dying rays of the Sun shine on the ruddy forest-glades, over which soon shone in the still sky the two bright evening stars—*i.e.*, Earth with her little satellite the Moon, and Venus our bright home; and besides these, the two moons of Mars, Deimos and Phobos. And then, as the constellations appeared, we returned to the domed house, and under its hospitable shelter rested for the night.

ALERIEL.

MR. TRENCH OF BRASENOSE.

THE ROMANCE OF A LONG VACATION.

By MARY L. ARMITT.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

FROM this time the intercourse between the fellow-lodgers at Tyn-y-bran continued very freely. There was no more talk on the part of the tutor and the students of moving from that part of the country to avoid the ladies. On the contrary, they not only very frequently met them out during the day, but they seized every excuse that offered itself of spending the evenings with them. Music was one of the most fertile of their excuses, it having been discovered that several of the party had excellent voices; and great was the exercise that the ancient spinet in the upstairs parlour went through at this period.

In congenial ditties and duets with George, in which Jean loved to indulge, her spirits were at their brightest. But in some ways she was changed. She was more variable in mood: sometimes oppressively gay; sometimes enchantingly serious and gentle; and then again indefinably guarded in manner. The change was reflected in George. She was not carrying out their unspoken compact to have a little fun together with all the simple force he had expected; her intentions and her desires he could no longer fathom or seek to follow with laudable devotion. He was still her cavalier, her comrade to whom she must turn for sympathy and smiling glances, but the simplicity of their intercourse was broken, and George was watchful and uneasy.

It was on one of these musical evenings, when Jean had as usual risen from the piano, when Mr. Trench approached to sing, with the remark that he would probably like to accompany himself, that George followed her to a remote part of the room by the window curtain.

"You are, after all, afraid of Mr. Trench, I believe," he moodily remarked.

She gave him a quick, suspicious look, sighed, and then laughed.

"Do you know, I am beginning to think I am," she confessed, with a gentle confidence. But George was not mollified.

"You!" he said in a savage undertone; "I thought you were afraid of nothing!"

"So did I," agreed Jean; but her face was turned away now, and she was looking out on the hills and the lake.

"Then why are you changed?" George asked, persistently and angrily. The hand of hers that lay on the window-sill he suddenly covered with his and pressed it tightly.

"Oh! hush, hush!" Jean said hurriedly, drawing her hand away; "they will hear you. And listen!"

The tutor was singing that most pathetic song, "Der Linden-baum," from Schubert's "Winter-reise." Jean was manifestly affected by it; her countenance showed it, though she tried to hide it. "Oh! I wish

he wouldn't sing that," she murmured rather incoherently ; "it nearly kills me ; it's so sad."

"Yet you tell me not to talk," George reproached her.

Mr. Trench knew for his part that he could move Jean by his songs ; he had found that out at once. It was all the more a satisfaction to him that he was able to force her musical susceptibilities to respond to his, because she seemingly steeled her mind against the influence, and had once for all pointedly declined to sing with him, when he had invited her to try the duet "My true love has my heart." In a small way, it was a revenge to make her sympathise and feel without her consent ; and, piqued as he was by her manner, he was not sorry to take it. It seemed the easiest mode at present of communicating with her ; for in her eyes, which were ordinarily so speaking and expressive, he no longer read the gay, indifferent defiance with which she used to meet him ; he looked, and found avoidance. He asked himself the reason. He watched, as George did ; and he no longer watched his pupil, whose safety he had considered imperilled, but the girl who, he had told himself, had set herself to captivate that pupil's unguarded affections.

But if these three were conscious of brooding heats in the mental atmosphere, such as precede a thunderstorm, the rest were placidly enjoying the novel intercourse. The elderly ladies had distinct leanings towards these bright, open-hearted young Australians, and were becoming accustomed to the colder manners of the Oxford tutor. Maria tolerated them with a fine, calm indifference ; and went on drawing in their presence, with the skilful hand of an artist, as well as the technical knowledge of a botanist, her beautiful designs from nature. As for Lillie, Arthur might not be making any violent inroads into her gentle heart, but she could not be insensible to the pleasures of companionship with the steadfast and quiet nature that showed itself in considerate, unselfish service, and in friendly glances from quiet, dark eyes. There are some girls who are not ready to pay attention to men unless that attention is imperatively demanded of them. And Lillie was beginning to find that Arthur, in a quiet way, was demanding a great deal from her. Still waters run deep. It might have been wiser if Mr. Trench had turned his eyes from the fire-brand Jean, with her wicked intentions, to placid Lillie, with her sweet mouth and prim manners ; from effusive George, who wore his heart on his sleeve, to quiet Arthur, whose intentions often remained a hidden force.

And so the days passed, until an evening came when the three men sat rather late at their quiet meal. They had little to say beyond a few remarks on the fishing and the weather. After a rainy night, the morning had been fine, and bright with an illusory sunshine ; but the clouds had gathered and closed long since, and now they lay, or slowly trailed their skirts, on the lowest of the mountain slopes. The twilight promised to be premature.

"It is but a chilly outlook," the tutor remarked, "and not inviting for a stroll."

"By no means," George replied.

He meant his stroll to take the direction of the parlour upstairs, but he was not prepared to mention it so long beforehand. The door was ajar, and in the silence that followed they heard sounds of a conversation on the landing that seemed to be occupying the landlady to the delay of their meal. Then she returned, and began hastily to hand round the pudding.

"Mrs. Langton is very uneasy," she explained, "about the young ladies not being back."

"What is that?" Mr. Trench demanded sharply. "Are the young ladies out?"

The stout Welshwoman started at the sound of his voice, and then perceived that the "young gentlemen" were likewise looking at her very fixedly.

"Well, sir, it is this way," she hastened to say. "The two young ladies went off this morning up the mountain, and said they would be back by two or three o'clock. But it is not very late yet, sir, and, as I tell Mrs. Langton, they may be back any minute."

This comfortable theory, whether it had quieted the mother's fears or not, had no effect on Mr. Trench. He rose at once.

"George," he said, "I will go upstairs and speak to Mrs. Langton. I don't like to think of her enduring a helpless alarm, as no doubt she is doing."

"Quite right, sir," George replied. He sat chafing in silence, for he would have liked to go himself; but neither Arthur nor he touched the savoury concoction on their plates. Mr. Trench came down again very soon, and explained matters briefly and rapidly.

"Mrs. Langton is alarmed, and with cause, I think. Miss Jean and Miss Lillie started at half-past nine for Llyn Clwyd. They had neither of them been there before ; and the lake, as you know, lies in a recess in the mountains difficult to find. They have not returned, and the mists have been down on the mountains about three hours now. I have told Mrs. Langton that I will go at once to see after them, and you perhaps——"

"Certainly," George responded with decision, and a certain jealous fierceness ; "Arthur and I will go along with you." They were both standing, and now they silently made for the door.

"Don't forget to put your flasks and compasses in your pocket," Mr. Trench said ; "and, Mrs. Jones, cut as fast as you can some beef sandwiches. The young ladies will be hungry, wherever they are."

In a few minutes more the three men left the house, fully equipped for a mountain expedition, and followed by a sheep-dog that belonged to the house. Outside they found Maria Langton, dressed in hat and cloak.

"I meant to have gone to the village for a guide," she explained ; "but since Mrs. Jones's boy has been sent, I will walk on with you."

"But you must not go," Mr. Trench said. "If your sisters have lost their way down the mountain, or are foolishly waiting for the mists to clear, we will find them. But you cannot be of any use. Stay with your mother and cheer her up."

"No," answered Maria ; "at least I will go with you until you leave the road. If Jean and Lillie have got

lost and frightened, they will be glad for me to meet them."

Mr. Trench saw she was not to be dissuaded. "Then you shall wait at the farmhouse," he said, "that stands where the path leaves the road. The Tindalls and I will turn up there, and some distance higher we shall separate and begin the search. If we have not been successful by the time dark comes on, we shall come down and get some more help. Detain the guide, who will follow us from the village for that purpose. But don't fear; long before that we shall have met your sisters coming down the path, having frightened us all for nothing. Don't you think, indeed," he continued, with an attempt at gaiety, "that Miss Jean may have contrived all this by way of enlivening a dull day?"

"No, I'm sure she has not," George answered snappishly. Mr. Trench went on without noticing him.

"Don't think us unkind, Miss Maria, but we are going to outstep you. Wait at the farm, and see that the farmer's wife has a good fire burning and the kettle on the hob."

They strode on, and Mr. Trench's face settled into an expression that belied his cheerful words. The prospect before them was desolate. It was a long, trough-like valley they had entered—wide and deep and tolerably level. The range of mountain slopes on either hand was uniform in character, hardly pierced by the brawling torrents that coursed here and there down their sides. Few signs of cultivation were to be seen, for the ground was rocky and barren. The only trees of the valley were some stunted specimens planted to shelter a lonely farmstead. But for the highway that led to the town of Brandon seventeen miles away, and which ran the whole length of the valley, the place would have been forsaken and unvisited. Three miles from the entrance of the valley, a rough cart-track led from the high road to the farmhouse, which stood, surrounded by a few cultivated fields, on rising ground. Past the farm, almost unnoticeable to the eye, a little straggling path began the ascent of the rocky hill-side. It climbed slantingly, crossed a boulder-strewn torrent or two, skirted high and mortarless walls; scaled one of them by means of rough steps; and so, having surmounted the first heights, it led through sedge-grown reaches of bog, with dreary, desolate mountain wastes spreading round, until it reached a dark and lonely lake, far from any haunt of man. It was to find this lake that Jean and Lillie, attracted by its appearance on the map, had started out this morning with the zeal of young explorers. It was up this path, erratic and intermittent, they had climbed in the cheerful morning sunlight. As he strode along, Mr. Trench's thoughts were intent on the path and the country it traversed. He knew the path, for he had carried his rod that way one fine day. He knew how easy it was to lose in the clearest weather; how awkward the streams were to cross, even when unswollen by rains. Now they were full and brawling. The white mists lay low on the mountain-sides; and the path, climbing the black rocks for a few hundred feet, was then lost to sight in a softly-moving, vaporous level of cloud. Where, in all that desolate expanse between that spot and Llyn Clwyd, were Jean and Lillie? The mists had begun to enfold the mountain-tops by three o'clock; where had it caught them up? Had they lost their way before it came on, or had it bewildered them and sent them astray? Now it was seven o'clock, and scarcely more than an hour's daylight could be reckoned on, for already a ghostly kind of twilight prevailed under the low clouds. If the search went on after dark, it would become much more difficult. In his anxiety, Mr. Trench felt inclined to anathematise the foolhardiness of women, and the firelight that fell upon him as he opened the door of the farmhouse kitchen showed the rigid, stern lines of his face.

"Have two young ladies passed this way up the hill-side to-day?" he asked, rapidly, of the astonished farmer's wife.

She replied circuitously that her husband had gone to Tyn-y-bran, but he had told her, when he was in for his dinner, that he had seen two young ladies on the mountain-side that morning. He was looking after his sheep then.

"What time was that?"

She could not tell.

"And you have seen nothing of them since?"

No, she had not.

"Those young ladies have not returned," he briefly explained. "We are going to seek them, and their sister will be here shortly to wait for them. Make things as comfortable for her as you can."

He shut the door, and he and the boys turned to the path, and began to breast the mountain slope. It was a dreary climb. The first stream they came to was overflowing, and had spread itself across the little foot-track, and would have compelled, for less reckless walkers than they, a short détour over awkward, rocky ground.

"It's a nasty place for them to have come along at any time," Arthur remarked feelingly.

"Yes, alone," George added with emphasis. He seemed glad to have the silence broken. "If they had only told us what they had meant to do! I asked Jean last night where they would go to-day, but she wouldn't tell me."

Perhaps Mr. Trench noticed the familiar use of the Christian name; the tone of his answer was sharp.

"You have yet to learn, George, my boy, that when women go into difficult places they generally choose the worst times for it, out of unconscious stupidity, it seems. But I will credit Miss Jean Langton with picking consciously as bad a time and as bad a place as possible, from pure perversity."

The young men did not reply. By this time they had risen to the level of the mist; and as they entered the white wall, its clammy touch sent a chill through them.

"Are we still on the track?" Arthur presently asked with some uneasiness.

"Yes; see, here it is again," the tutor replied; "it was lost a bit in the heather."

"'HUSH, HUSH!' JEAN SAID HURRIEDLY . . . 'AND LISTEN!'" (*p.* 170).

Just as he spoke, they heard a little cry, and a figure emerged from the vapour close by them.

"Thank God! they are here!" George cried.

"It is Miss Lillie!" Arthur exclaimed. And truly Lillie it was, breathless, white, and eager. Mr. Trench strained his eyes, but no second figure followed her from the mist.

"Where is Miss Jean?" he asked rapidly, with a tone of unspoken terror in his voice.

But it seemed as if the shock of relief their presence gave her deprived Lillie for an instant of speech. They gathered close round her.

"Oh! I have lost Jean," she then cried in a sobbing sort of tone, "I lost her hours ago, and have been seeking her ever since. Now I was going down to get some one to help me."

"Quite right," Mr. Trench said. "Can you tell us now all about it, and where you lost her? Sit down; you are exhausted." He was full of impatience, but it was impossible even for him not to feel compassion for the weary, frightened girl in her distress. "Did you and your sister reach Llyn Clwyd?"

"Yes," Lillie answered; she was too eager to tell her tale to think of rest. "We got there about twelve. It was not easy to find, and we had to cross a long stretch of boggy land. We stayed there too long, for the clouds were gathering. But Jean was not a bit frightened. She said if we had found our way there we could get back easily enough. Well, the mist came upon us when we were recrossing the bog, and we missed the path. There was hardly any slope in the land to show us our direction. But we kept on,

and when we got on to broken, rocky ground with a steep descent we made sure we were right. Then we came to a high stone wall. Jean said it was very likely the one we had found stepping-stones over on our way up, and we had better search for them. We separated and turned different ways along the wall. It was agreed that each was to return to the spot where we separated after finding the stones or after going a good distance without finding them. That was the last I saw of Jean. I walked along the wall, but came to no steps; then the mist lifted a little, and I saw not far off another wall, that seemed to go more down the slope. I thought *that* one more likely, so I climbed the wall I had come along, and tried the other; and in a little while I did find the steps, and what was evidently our path crossing them. I went back then for Jean. I climbed back over the wall as near as I could to the place I had climbed it before, and I retraced my steps along it. But I could not find Jean. I have walked about for hours. I have called her and called her until my throat seemed to close. And I could never see more than my arm's length before me, and my voice seemed scarcely to sound through the fog. Oh! where do you think she can be?"

Her absorbing anxiety and distress were painful to see. Arthur laid his hand softly on her arm. "She must be safe" he said, unreasoningly, "and we will find her."

Mr. Trench had listened to her tale with acute attention. "Are you sure," he asked, "that when you turned back, after finding the steps, you really reached the spot where you had left your sister?"

"I think so. I could not be certain of the exact spot, but I walked right along the wall till another turned off at right angles and blocked my way."

"Could you take me to the place where you left her?"

"Very near it, I think."

"Then let us go."

"Is she fit," asked Arthur doubtfully, looking at her white and weary face, "without rest and food?"

"Yes, yes," she answered impatiently; "I can walk, but I cannot eat; let us go."

They turned again to the path, and continued the climb. But their steps were slow. Lillie was more weary than she liked to own. Arthur looked at her with concerned and compassionate eyes. At last he said, with the gentleness of a brother, "Let me put my arm within yours, Miss Lillie; it will help you."

"Sensible lad, Arthur!" Mr. Trench commented, relieved by the suggestion. "Shall I give a helping hand at the other side, Miss Lillie?"

"Oh, no, thank you! One strong arm is enough for me," she answered; and Arthur was conscious, in spite of the dreary anxiety of the moment, of a sense of pleasure in her reply.

But still they went slowly; and the minutes seemed an age to Mr. Trench, as, with shorter stride, he took the mountain-side. At last they came to the steps in the wall where Lillie had regained the path. Here she led them, and they skirted the wall for some distance, then turned off and struck upwards across broken ground.

"It must have been extremely difficult to make your way back after regaining the path," Mr. Trench remarked, "and yet you retraced it again after your search."

"Yes, but I was very careful to notice the lie of the wall and the rocks when I turned back for Jean, and the sound of the stream helped me. I am afraid I was not so careful when I left her. I never thought I should have to leave that wall at all."

Mr. Trench thought to himself that she never should have left it without her sister, but he could not say so. And she was hardly responsible for Jean. Jean was more active and courageous than herself; and why it had been left for the weaker sister to make a weary search for hours, and finally descend alone for help, remained yet to be explained. Of course Jean might have been pursuing a similar fruitless course on another part of the mountain, for it is fatally easy to get separated in a mist on unknown ground, and to wander aimlessly on a mistaken track. Still, Jean's practical sense would have brought her down the mountain long before this, even without her sister, he felt certain, if there had been no preventing cause. What was that cause? With a shuddering sense of fear new to him his mind stopped short in its workings; he refused to think out those tragic possibilities that were creeping in like a ghostly presence through a closed door.

Then they reached the wall which their guide said she had climbed, and they stopped.

"Arthur," Mr. Trench said, "take Miss Lillie back. She cannot help us farther, and she is not fit to go on. This is the wall, she thinks, on the other side of which she parted from Miss Jean. That is all she can tell us. George and I will go on with the search. When you have taken her home, come back as far as the farm, and wait there. It is possible we may have to organise a more extensive search before long."

Then, as the two figures disappeared into the mist, he took out his compass and laid his plans with George. "Here we will separate," he said. "Suppose you take this wall, and make it the basis of your search. I will try the ground further north, for I am inclined to think Miss Lillie mistook her direction in returning to the tryst. But we had better not go too far a-field. If we have not found her in an hour"—he took out his watch—"we must go down and get more help. Now, have you everything you want?"

"Yes; and if I have not found her when the hour is up, I will meet you at the farm."

And without another word he climbed the wall and was gone, and the tutor was left standing alone. Which of these two men would find the missing girl, and how would he find her? The wonder was present in both their minds, though they did not utter it. It seemed to Mr. Trench a good omen that the sheep-dog remained with him, and he strode on with a momentary sense of relief. It was good to be alone, to have no longer to consider speech, to guard looks, to dread a silence that betrayed an oppressive anxiety.

Now the stillness of nature was apparent. The moving mists swept past without sound or sign of change. It seemed a shroud that wrapped a dead earth; even the voices of the rills were stifled under its vaporous pressure. Where in all this bewildering world of cloud was Jean? What could she be doing? Was she lost, weary, hurt, or—— ? No, unless she had wandered far afield, there was no very dangerous ground, nor any deep precipice over which she could have slipped.

And now from two points on the mountain-side the mist was pierced by cries of "Jean!" It was an easy word to sound, much better than a whistle or a senseless call. Mr. Trench's voice had volume, yet it seemed to fall back upon him with a fatal want of force. Those white walls that closed him round, ever moving yet ever present, seemed impenetrable by sound. As the minutes went slowly on, and he climbed and called in vain, that sensation came to him that we have in nightmare. He seemed through a long existence to have been walking in this hopeless and endless mist; and hopelessly and endlessly he would go on walking in it. He had been for some time now traversing open, rocky ground, mainly north, in the direction of Llyn Clwyd. For the hundredth time he called, with a purely mechanical cry, "Jean!" and was thinking that he would have to strike a match to see his watch in the rapidly gathering darkness, when the dog at his heels stopped short and barked. There was a little cry in advance, and then, as he moved on, he saw, close to him, Jean, sitting white and helpless against a rock.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THE shock of relief at the sight of her was a sensation totally new to him.

"Jean!" he called, more softly now, as he approached; "it is really you! What is wrong? Are you hurt?"

She did not answer immediately, and waited with a spot of colour in her pale cheeks until he came up to her. He stooped over her, and looked eagerly at her.

"I thought it was your voice," she said then. "Did you come to look for me?"

"For what other purpose? And why are you still here?"

"Is Lillie down and safe?"

"Lillie is safe."

"And mother anxious?"

"Of course your mother is anxious, and not your mother only. Now, tell me at once, why are you here? Are you hurt, or only tired?"

"I am both," Jean answered. "My foot is badly sprained, and I could not get farther. How many hours I have been sitting here now! I began to think I must pass the night in this plight."

But though Jean's eyes were sombre with pain and weariness, and her face white and chilled, and her wavy hair heavy and curlless with damp, there was not so much fright in her aspect as Lillie had shown. A certain courage seemed to possess her yet.

"It is very nice to be found," she said, with a little laugh, as she turned her face aside to avoid his gaze, "though I don't know how you are going to get me down. No, don't touch my foot, please; it is too painful."

"Never fear. Now you are once found, the rest will be easy. We will consider about getting down presently. Now, you must eat something. But first unbutton your cloak; it is dripping; and I have a plaid here to wrap about you that will help to warm you. Brandy, I hope, will do the rest. And by-and-by you must tell me all about your misadventure."

Jean was hungry and exhausted, and glad of food. "It was really thoughtful of you to bring this," she said, as he opened the parcel of sandwiches. "But I don't like to eat alone. It makes me feel so ravenous."

"Very well," Mr. Trench replied; "I will eat, too." And he possessed himself of a sandwich.

"What made you come?" Jean now asked, having satisfied herself that this was to be a dual meal in the twilight of mist.

"Oh, what an unreasonable woman's question!" he broke out, in more of his old tone. "What made me come? If you had asked me what made me *not* come earlier, I should tell you that it was only because I was ignorant until half-past six that you had set out on this wildgoose expedition on a doubtful morning."

Jean laughed a little. "Still I ask, what made you come? Was it Lillie's return without me that frightened mother?"

"No; we only met Miss Lillie, less than an hour ago, coming down the mountain. She had been wandering about till then in search of you."

"Poor Lillie! What a fright she would be in! But I can't think why she did not find me. I am not far from the place where we parted. This wall," pointing to the one close by, "is the one we were to keep to."

"Is that so?" Mr. Trench asked. "But tell me how it happened."

"Well, I know now that I made a great mistake to suggest that we should part at all in this mist, even for a few yards. And I soon found out that this was not the wall we had crossed on the way up by stepping-stones. I thought then it would be best to make our way straight down hill, without troubling to find the path. But before I returned for Lillie I climbed the wall to see if the stream below was fordable; and it was then I got hurt. The wall was rickety, though not very high. At the top I felt a stone was slipping, and I had to jump before I saw the ground below me. I came down upon a rock, and my foot bent under me. I could only limp, and that was very painful, so I settled myself here and waited for Lillie. I made sure she would be back along the wall before long, and I called from time to time. That was—how many hours since! It seemed longer than I could make you understand. I was beginning to feel lost and despairing. I wondered if the pain and cold

would let me sleep at all in the night, and if any one would find me in the morning light" She gave her companion a dewy glance, that spoke her relief, and unconsciously demanded sympathy.

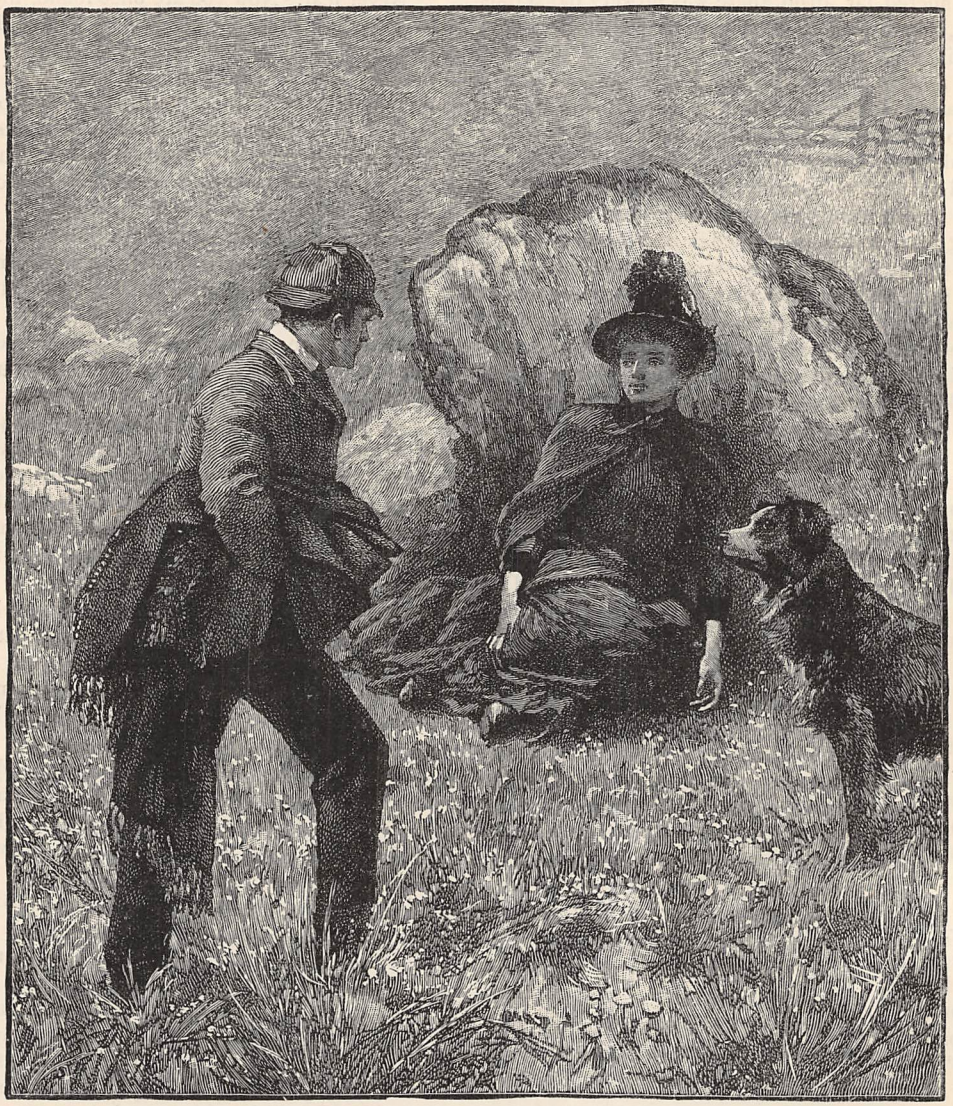
"Poor—Miss Jean!" he responded, but the awk-

"If you like to say so, yes. We started as soon as we knew the fact of your long absence."

"You were not alone, then?"

"No."

"Was——?" she hesitated.



"HE SAW JEAN SITTING WHITE AND HELPLESS AGAINST A ROCK" (*p.* 175).

ward pause between the words destroyed their soothing effect. "Are you warmer?" he asked.

"Yes, much warmer." And certainly her face had more colour and her looks were brighter.

"Your sister found the path soon after she left you," he went on to explain; "but in returning for you she apparently mistook the direction, and searched for you some distance away."

"Then it was mother's anxiety made you start?"

"If you wish to know if George Tindall was with me, why, of course he was, and Arthur as well. Arthur went down with Miss Lillie; George and I parted a while ago, and it is a mere chance he did not find you instead of me. At present he is wandering on the mountain not far from where your sister searched for you."

"Ah, what a pity!" exclaimed Jean. "If only——" But Mr. Trench did not wait for her to finish.

"If you are going to tell me, in your usual frank way, how much more welcome his appearance would have been than mine, I really must beg you to desist for once."

Jean's combativeness rose at once.

"I never have said so," she retorted.

"If you have not in words, you have by every other mode of expression you have at your command. And I confess I would rather not hear it to-night."

"You are unkind."

"I unkind?" he echoed.

"Ah, well," she exclaimed, "let us go down. I can eat nothing more. And I have forgotten how anxious mother will still be."

But going down was not an easy matter. It was hard work for Jean even to stand up, on her stiffened and swollen limb, and she had to support herself by grasping Mr. Trench's arm. She plainly looked as if she did not like it.

"Fancy me George for half an hour," he suggested revengefully.

She did not reply, but shot him an upward glance that was full of pain and reproach. He closed his arm about her, and without a word lifted her across the stream. They began then to descend, and she limped slowly and painfully on, using his help as little as she could; while he kept a watchful look-out, both on the ground they crossed and on her lagging steps. He whistled from time to time, and before long an answering whistle came again, very close at hand.

"Ah! here he is already," Mr. Trench said. "Now," he continued, low and rapidly, "tell me what I am to do. Am I to deliver you over to George?"

She stopped, disentangled herself from him, and stood alone. A more passionate look came into her eyes than he had ever seen there; then her face paled, and settled into a serious and distant coldness. Whatever struggle had taken place within herself, she had fought it through in silence.

"You will do just as you please," she answered in reserved tones. "You have found me, and you can dispose of me as you like."

She would not look to see how he took her sentence, though he followed her the step she had moved away, as if he thought she might need his arm. She turned to George, who was appearing through the mist, and welcomed him with a wan and friendly smile.

"Ah! what trouble I have given you," she said gently. "I am so sorry."

"So Mr. Trench found you!" he exclaimed, with a certain jealous accent, as he came impetuously towards her. "Yes, Miss Jean, you have given us a horrible time. But never mind now, since you are actually here, safe and sound."

"Hardly sound, though maybe safe," Mr. Trench interposed. "She is hurt, and we must think about getting her home."

"Hurt! How?"

"Her ankle is sprained, rather badly, it seems. And I think, George, the best plan will be for you to go forward as fast as you can, and let Mrs. Langton know she is safe, and bring a carriage back to the farmhouse. Meanwhile, we will be getting slowly down the hill. Let the carriage be as low a one as you can get; and stay—send off a messenger, when you reach Tyn-y-bran, for the nearest surgeon."

There was a moment's hesitation on George's part. He looked significantly at Jean, and she repaid him with a smile; then he turned, and, without a parting salutation, disappeared into the near white haze.

"Now, shall we go on?" Mr. Trench suggested, with a milder accent than he had for some time used. "I took my own way, you see; and I can't hope you will forgive me for it. It was very cruel, of course."

"I think you *are* very cruel," Jean said with bitterness, as she once more took his arm and used it heavily, "more cruel even than I could have imagined—when you see that I am quite at your mercy."

"Quite at my mercy! that is strange. You venture, however, upon very trenchant little suggestions, as your 'more cruel even,' which are evidently meant to rankle. How do you act, Miss Jean, when other people are at your mercy?"

But Jean did not reply. She had enough to do to take each smarting step, to keep silent under the pain that began to be excruciating; and her face got set in rigid lines of suffering. It became impossible to refuse the assistance she would have liked to be without. She had to be lifted over brooks and awkward places; to lean with closed eyes, for minutes of rest against the arm she wished to leave; and to try to forget whose shoulder it was that her head fell wearily against. And always her companion did silently and skilfully what he could to help her, making his help as unobtrusive as possible.

"See," he said presently, in a comforting tone, "there is the light in the farmhouse kitchen. We shall soon be there."

It was with a sense of thankfulness that Jean saw the friendly glimmer, and hobbled the last few steps to the farmhouse threshold. As Mr. Trench threw open the door, the house-place looked cheerful and homely in the ruddy light of the glowing fire. The kettle was singing on the hob, and a big oaken settle stood near the tall clock, and Jean thought how blessed a thing it would be to sit down and bury her head in her arms and wait in silence. Mr. Trench looked round with what seemed an air of relief.

"No one is here?" he remarked to the woman who came forward from a doorway at the back to meet them.

"No, sir; the young gentleman went back with the two ladies. He said he would be here before long with a guide from Tyn-y-bran. But you have found the young lady, sure enough, sir."

"Yes, I have found her. And now, Mrs. Richards, I want you first of all to find her some dry clothes. After that, we will see to her foot."

"Oh, no," protested Jean; "it is not necessary; the carriage will soon be here. And I want to rest," she added pleadingly.

"You shall rest presently. But the carriage may not be here for an hour; and you cannot be left to take a chill or a fever through sitting in damp clothes.

You have gone through enough exposure already. Do as I tell you, please."

He looked quite determined, and Jean, who longed only to sink down on the settle, had to hobble off with Mrs. Richards. She was not long away, and reappeared in the back doorway in altered guise. She was still pale, though no longer wan. Her brown hair was already stiffening into its customary waves, and had been manifestly recombed from her brow. As she stood there in Mrs. Richard's best winsey gown, with a touch of embarrassment about her that she tried to hide, her beauties seemed heightened by their surroundings. Mr. Trench greeted her with an odd little smile, which he was kind enough to quickly suppress, and went at once to her to help her across the floor. He appeared to have been busy in her absence; the settle was drawn near the fire, and cushions were piled upon it; long white strips of linen and a basin stood on a table near.

"Now you may rest," he said, "while Mrs. Richards and I see what can be done for your foot."

"No, no; I would rather it was not touched until the doctor sees it."

"You will please to regard me as the doctor in this case, for I am quite determined to do for you what I know I ought to do, and what I can do. And if you will be sensible enough to put on one side for half an hour that feeling of enmity with which you are pleased to regard me, Miss Jean, the matter will be quite easy."

Jean had nothing more to say, and submitted with as good a grace as she could. And, indeed, the pain the handling of her foot gave her, left her little else to think of. Mrs. Richards' exclamations were loud and deep over the black and swollen joint, and Mr. Trench, who was going about the work of bandaging well and deftly, was soon tired of them. He sent her off to make some tea.

"How tiresome some women are!" he observed. "She is no good, and will make you believe you have a far worse sprain than you have."

Jean was beginning to feel eased. She watched with a sort of amazed stupor the clever, quick fingers as they manipulated the bandage. Presently she said, in the low "cosing" tone that bespoke increased physical comfort—

"Do all great classical scholars know how to bandage sprains?"

He smiled. "Am I a great classical scholar?"

"So I am told."

"Who told you?"

"Mr. George Tindall."

"And what else, I wonder? No, we don't go in for exams. in practical surgery before we take our Fellowships at Oxford. But, as it happens, I have not spent all my life in Oxford. I have a brother some years older than myself who is a successful London surgeon. I went to him when I had finished my usual college course, for I meant then to enter the medical profession."

"How unlikely that seems!"

"Why unlikely?"

"Oh, because doctors are so—so——" Here Jean floundered, but that made her all the more determined to proceed. She started afresh. "Because doctors never are sarcastic, and never look cold and superior, and—and—as if they didn't like people."

Mr. Trench turned to look at her with a kindling eye. "So I am sarcastic and cold, and look as if I don't like people! Ah! how I should like to punish you some day for the speeches you have made me in words and looks."

Jean was now ashamed of herself and her candour, and looked so.

"Yet you are quite right," he went on; "there are many people I don't like. But hasn't your woman's wit informed you by this time that there are some few persons I do like?"

Jean was silent, for she had no answer ready but the safe though irritating retort that she had formed no opinion on the matter, and at present it seemed hardly a fit one.

"There is your mother, for instance; I like her."

"Do you? I am glad. Dear mother!" Then she wondered why she mentioned her mother with effusion; it was not her habit.

"But don't imagine I am going to take you farther into my confidence, and finish the category. It probably would not please you. And there is no doubt that it would not exhibit that sweeping comprehensiveness that you could approve of—you, who smile on all alike."

"That is different from you," Jean retorted, "for you don't smile at all."

"Don't I? But I recall what I said. There are two notable exceptions to the equability of your smiles. In one case you withhold them altogether, in order, it seems, to lavish them doubly and wantonly in the other."

Jean's face went a very rosy red; she could not let the speech pass in silence. "I wish sometimes," she remarked with a lofty air, "that you would speak more plainly still, and then perhaps I could answer you."

"But then I think our quarrels would be of too deadly a nature."

Jean let her head drop again on the cushion; it seemed so hopeless contending with him while he bound her foot. He must clearly get the best of it to-night.

In a minute or two he went on in a more serious tone—"And there may be reasons, beyond my nature, for the cold manners of which you so much disapprove. I was not brought up in a pleasant home circle. My mother died early, and we were left to the care of a father who was before all things worldly in mind and satirical in manner. He had not even the grace to manage well his worldly affairs. My brother and I had to make our way in life unaided, and I started my career with a bitter sense of loneliness, and a feeling that every man's hand was against me, my father's into the bargain. Then the life in my brother's household, when I went to him, did not give me a better idea of human fellowship and love. Poor Ted! what a time he had with that woman, and how I got to hate

THE SECRET OF BEAUTY.

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her! I soon left his house, but it was there I picked up enough of surgery to know how to bind your ankle. Perhaps it is the old occupation that brings the old life back to me to-night, and sets me so oddly talking of it."

"Go on," said Jean; "I like to listen."

"But I have nothing more to tell."

"Had you no sister?"

"Yes, but I could not make a home with her, for she was by that time well married, and I disapproved of the match she had made, which was one of ambition and not of love."

"And what was your sister like?"

"I can hardly tell you. She is much older than myself, and I have never had anything in common with her. I begin to think, Miss Jean, that my experience of womankind has been an unfortunate one. However, in my disgust of things in general, and surgery, with its horrid details, in particular—I had no prophetic instinct of this evening, you see—I turned back to my old college life. I had won distinction there in a small way, and could win it again. I thought I could make myself a habitation, if not a home, in some nook of the beautiful old buildings, and pass my time in the society of men of like tastes as myself. As Fellow and tutor I have been in Oxford ever since."

"And has your life satisfied you?" Jean asked.

He paused again, and gave her rather a strange look.

"Are we any of us satisfied?" he inquired. "Is Jean Langton—happy in her home, and with her mother and sisters about her, to whom she is sincerely attached—is she altogether satisfied?"

"Yes, yes!" she eagerly asserted.

"Then if she has no secret corners in her own soul, let her not inquire too closely into those of others."

Jean turned her eyes away from the busy hands and the stooping head with a curious sense of shame. It was a relief to have Mrs. Richards bustling in with spread tea-tray and clattering pots. And Mr. Trench had soon finished and set her free. The table was placed before her bench, and then, when he had smartened himself up in the back premises, the two proceeded to make a meal together. It was certainly a novel situation: the homely surroundings, and possibly the pain and fatigue she had gone through, made it seem all the brighter and cosier. Jean's spirits began to return, and she made a quizzical remark on Mr. Trench's manipulations with the tea-pot.

"Women always disdain men when they handle their affairs," he remarked. "I wonder why? Are they jealous? If you had, through some extraordinary circumstances, to pour out tea for me now, I fancy I should look at you with less critical eyes."

It was just then, when they had ceased to think of it, that an interruption came. The house door flew open, and with an air of immense bustle and excitement two persons appeared in it. They seemed unprepared for the very tranquil, home-like scene disclosed, and stood for one brief second regarding it. Mr. Trench rose at once and went forward.

"Ah! Mrs. Langton, it is you. You need not have come, indeed. We have your daughter all safe. Mrs. Richards and I have bound her foot, and I think she is rested and refreshed. We have nothing to do now but get her home."

Mrs. Langton came forward, amazed and—he was sure he detected it—chagrined.

"We are very deeply indebted to you, Mr. Trench," she said. "What would have become of Jean but for you?"

There was a certain appeal in Jean's eyes, as if she were unwilling, at this moment, to encounter her mother in either explanations or regrets.

"We will not talk of that," Mr. Trench answered, making short work of the situation; "some one else would have found her if not I. George, what carriage have you got? The hotel phaeton with the back seat? Then, put Mrs. Langton up at the back, and keep the horse steady, while I get Miss Jean in. Pray forgive this arrangement, Mrs. Langton, but the front seat will give more room for the sprained foot. Now, Mrs. Richards, the shawls; one over her head, so!"

And Jean was, after all, left to limp across the kitchen on the same arm that helped her down the hill.

"You do with every one what you like," she could not refrain from saying before they reached the door that would put an end to their solitude.

"It is likely, since you gave up your will to mine on the mountain. It was a bad precedent."

"It was only for once, and when I really couldn't help it."

"Deeds, even single ones, have their consequences, as you will find," he answered her.

END OF CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THE SECRET OF BEAUTY.

I COULD not tell—I do not know
What classic lines, what curves of grace
Must meet, and blend, and intergrow,
To make a beauteous human face.

I do not know—I could not tell,
With all the lines and curves complete,
What look within that face must dwell
To make the faultless beauty sweet.

Unknown the laws that make it sweet,
And flower-like mould it as it grows;
Enough that when that face I meet
I know it as I know the rose!

WILFRED WOOLLAM.

WHAT TO WEAR IN FEBRUARY.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR LONDON AND PARIS CORRESPONDENTS.

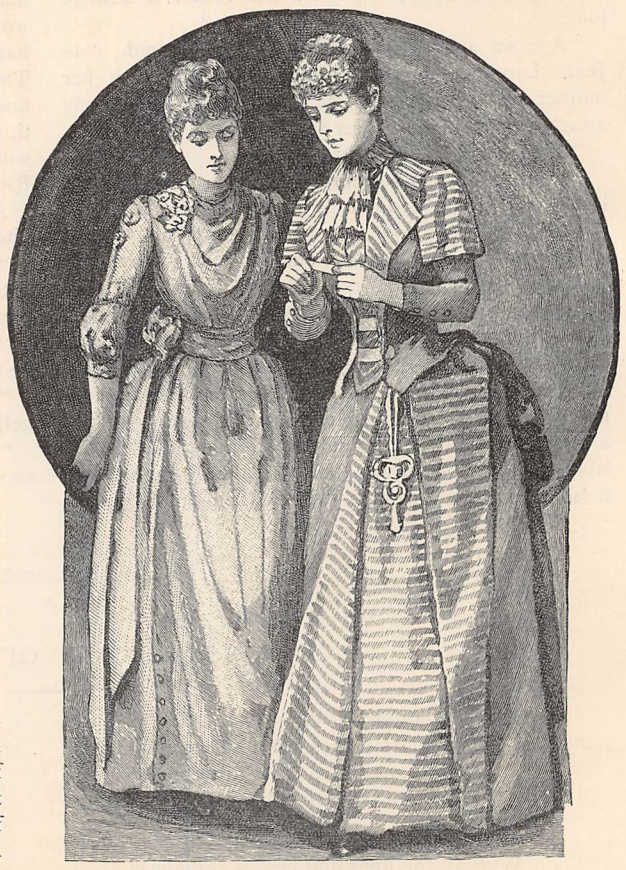
I.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

IN February, though now and then we are allowed to catch just a foretaste of that spring for which we are apt to long too ardently, rough Boreas will occasionally blow his blasts rudely. Indeed there is hardly a month in the year when warmer clothing is needed. Still many young girls seem to go out without risk in their indoor gowns, supplemented by fur boas and cuffs. In the initial letter a new and fashionable combination is shown, viz., a long tippet of sealskin or otter, with a grebe or Thibet lamb boa—white on brown—the same combination showing again in the cuffs and bordering the toque, the latter being supplemented by a tuft of flowers in front. There have been a great many new ideas brought to bear this year on boas and tippets. Many of the former have been attached to the back of bonnets and hats, thence brought round the throat and fastened in front. But although the boa is so comfortable that it is not likely to go out of general use, long tippets, at least six inches wide, and reaching to the hem of the dress, are largely worn now.

The gown which accompanies the fur in our illustration is striped, the stripe according exactly in colour with the tone of the darker skin. The proper treatment of stripes occasions much care and thought on the part of those women who make dresses. The side seams of bodices in front are always cut on the cross. This particular bodice is made with an admixture of plain material which is gathered from the neck and is eased into this side cross-cut seam; the plain fabric lines the draperies of the skirt, and is turned upwards here and there to show the contrast. The front of this gown is arranged in accordion pleats—a style which is revived from seven or eight years back, when the entire skirt was thus arranged.

In the next illustration the right-hand figure shows another treatment of stripes. The dress is composed of grey habit-cloth, trimmed with striped velvet of the same and a lighter tone. The principal part of the skirt is full and plain, with a very slight pouf at the waist, at the back. The stripe is introduced at the side as a half-breadth with revers on either side; but mark the novelty of treatment—instead of both graduating from the waist and becoming wider at the hem, the left-hand side only is made thus; the other is widest at the waist and narrower at the hem. The bodice combines much that is new, is smart, and trim-looking. Making the bust appear large, the waist small, the vest joins down the centre, and is so cut that the stripes form a series of points in the middle, the striped revers turning back from it. No fastenings are visible except the three bands, two being fastened with double buttons. The sleeves show a bias band of the stripe at the wrist, and have a short cape like upper sleeves in stripes at the top. Those who like to be beforehand with the world, and are beginning to plan their spring garments, should devote special attention to sleeves. The plain coat-sleeves as the season advances will only be worn with over puffed sleeves, or with slashings introduced at the top or wrist.

For tea and dinner-gowns, sleeves reach to the elbow and are profusely trimmed, and they are also made additionally long by a puffing of contrasting



"DO YOU KNOW THIS NAME?"

colour and material below. The other figure in the illustration has a bouillonné of pink disappearing in a band of gold galon matching the sash which encircles the waist, a vivid contrast to the apple-green soft poplin which composes the plain skirt and full drapery. The skirt has no trimming, save that at one side the breadth is bound and bordered with a close row of buttons. Large handsome gold gimp ornaments are placed on the shoulders, and gold trimming is carried down the outside of the arm. The arrangement of this bodice is original and graceful. The fastening is entirely concealed; the front is triangular, forming natural folds. Many low bodices are treated on a similar plan, which is to be specially recommended for crêpe de Chine and such fabrics as fall softly.

A FEBRUARY WALK.

The elaborate woollen cloakings, with large well-covering pine and other Oriental patterns on dark grounds, have been used for dresses of late. They answer well for coats and polonaises where there is no break in the line caused by draperies, and they are light, warm, and durable—all specially good qualities. These idealised homespuns are the most original new woollen fabrics of the season. Black and red is a popular mixture which shows them to advantage. Black trimmings continue to be worn on plain cloths, and contrast well with either red, green, or brown. They are of the nature of passementerie and black Spanish lace, heavy and important with waved edges like lappeting, so that they rest on the material, and constitute all the trimming required for panels and vests. The new polonaises fall over plain skirts, the drapery frequently starting in Greek fashion from the left shoulder. This class of arrangement is most graceful on the figures they suit, but their effect is easily spoiled, so home dressmakers would do well to avoid them. Metallic effects are introduced into the galons, gimps, and ornaments, and happily they do not tarnish, but are, as it were, tacked on to the colours, which are of slightly faded tone, made brilliant by the suspicion of glitter; reposeful colours have the preference over all others.

We have often been warned that things are not what they seem, and certainly this is true enough as far as clothes are concerned. Nearly every garment appears to be double, one laid over the other, which it certainly is not; and figured borderings look like a dress in themselves, whereas they only edge the plain cloths.

The uncurled ostrich trimming is quite novel, and looks well in light colours on satin. A beautiful gown of emerald velvet, that I recently saw, was made with an eau de Nil front of satin, trimmed with these feather bands exactly to match; and boas of the same and of the ostrich flue curled, suit the soft skins of Englishwomen so well, that where expense is no object they are extensively worn in full dress.

Even in evening gowns as well as morning ones it is becoming the fashion to have sleeves dissimilar to the bodice. For day costumes, velvet is most used, but unluckily this does not wear well where the sleeve is at all close-fitting.

Black crêpe lisse is embroidered with many-tinted flowers, and is more fashionable for the fronts of gowns than lace. The baby bodices are to be recommended to young girls, especially when gathered into a point with a colour in the centre. Some of the best-worn gowns at the winter's parties are made with a simple bodice, and have a very wide sash round the waist.

The long coats made in thin cloths, with long pointed sleeves, fitting closely at the back, but somewhat loosely in front, with close-set rows of narrow braid, are likely to be worn as the season advances.

II.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

It is quite curious in Paris to notice how, throughout all ranks of life, the one idea in bonnets would seem to prevail—viz., short and close at the back, the brim standing well forward over the face. The crowns are round and plate-like, both in hats and bonnets; in the former the brim is flat also, in the bonnet it is arched, and recalls the coal-scuttle shape of our grandmothers. Polonaises are the garments of the immediate future. The figures before you, in our illustration on the previous page, show the transition state. The Directoire bodice is cut in one with the skirt at the back, while in the braided dress the fulness of the skirt is gathered on to the basque of the all-round jacket.

The Directoire has been the favourite style all through the winter, and will, without doubt, be well worn far into the spring. In the present instance it is made in snuff-brown cloth bordered with fur, which is extremely narrow. The coat-sides of the skirt are further ornamented with leaf-shaped cord ornaments, and three large buttons below the revers carry out the style on the bodice. The vest is gathered horizontally, and a very wide black sash comes nearly to the bust, though the loop and ends of ribbon in front are but narrow. A gimp ornament secures the revers. A band of fur encircles the throat, and the sleeves are mousquetaire with important cuffs.

The black is repeated on the hat, in an ostrich ruche, and a tuft of ostrich-plumes immediately above the face intermixed with loops of ribbon. A band of embroidery worked on brown encircles the black crown. The other figure is more elaborately dressed in a brilliant tone of red, bordered with blue fox, which by-the-by is far more of a greyish-brown than blue. This encircles the neck, outlines the V-shaped trimming on the bodice, edges the bell-sleeves and the basque, is carried down the side of the skirt, round the back at the hem, and also borders the draped front breadth. The space at the side is filled in with elaborate braiding wrought in cord, and the corners of the back portion of the skirt are treated in the same way; they match the front of the bodice and the outside of the sleeve, the pattern being duplicated at the wrist.

The child is most suitably clad for skating in brown velvet over brown cloth, the latter braided. The dress is in the form of a coat, trimmed with grebe, gathered at the back, the sleeves put in very full at the shoulders; the revers in the cuffs are edged with grebe, the silk flap pockets being secured by gold buttons. The pointed silk revers at the neck are of a form now much worn. The hat is felt, with all the trimming at the back, and a stiff loop. The brim, which turns up at the back, is lined with velvet.

A pretty material has come to the fore of late for dinner-gowns and tea-gowns; it is a thick soft silk of a cream tone, with open-work gauze stripes of unequal width having floral bouquets between. When it serves only for the fronts of gowns, the backs are mousse or pink velvet, matching either the roses or the leaves.

Long scarves of silk, draped from the shoulder to the hem of the skirt, are a distinctive feature in many evening dresses, especially where the Greek drapery comes from the skirt on to the left shoulder. A beautiful front breadth for evening and tea-gowns is made of tulle worked all over in silk, with roses in relief, formed of crêpe and satin of a cream tone; other fronts are made of fine net printed with floral designs. Let them be made up with what colour they will, they seem to accord with it. Nearly all the evening gowns in Paris have the skirts fastening on the outside of the bodice at the back, beneath a large bow.

In Paris smooth cloths are altogether ignored, and all woollens must have a rough surface. Terra-cotta is the tone which Englishwomen affect; copper, the French—a true red-brown, but quite different from terra-cotta. The skirts are bordered with a ruche; there are no draperies, only flounces placed up the side with wide headings, starting about a quarter of a yard below the hips, a deep corselet belt about the waist, the vest embroidered and having revers opening over the waistband.

The ready-made skirts to be had in Paris now are certainly tempting, and most decidedly cheap. They are full and straight, "shirred," as the Americans call it—viz., gathered in many rows across the front. There is always a sash, and it is most frequently moire. The French jerseys are cheap, too, so that at the present moment it is quite easy to set oneself up with a stylish gown without calling in the aid of a dressmaker. The correspondence between the two countries is now so rapid and easy that Englishwomen can avail themselves of these facilities as readily almost as Frenchwomen. These bodices can be boned and made to look extremely well-fitting. They should, in every case, replace the dress bodice beneath a

long or close-fitting cloak, for nothing spoils a gown so much as wearing it beneath a mantle.

Tea-jackets are one of the prettiest novelties of our modern days ; they can be worn with any skirt for either morning or dinner wear. Louis XVI. brocades, plain soft silks, striped velvets, soft brocades, are all used for them ; but the colourings are generally faint and subdued. The jackets are lavishly trimmed with lace, the sleeves reach to the elbow, and lace borders the basque, and the paniers too, if the basque, as often happens, is caught up in that form. Sometimes embroidered velvet is used, and then the jacket is made with flap pockets, turn-back cuffs, and an embroidered satin waistcoat. Occasionally a wide sash of soft silk is tied low down beneath the waist, and has a huge bow and fringed ends at one side.

French people seek their fashions far afield, and there is hardly any time or style which they do not repeat. Old Venetian modes are modernised, and velvet skirts and high stiff bodices, with ruffs and bow, embroidered vests and petticoats, which might have graced the shores of the Adriatic when Venice claimed the sea for its bride. Paul Veronese, Raphael, Vandyke, and Holbein, have all furnished fashions, which are now copied ; and the slashed gowns have a revival wholly or in part. Of course evening dress affords most scope for such vagaries. The Directoire, however, is first favourite, and white sashes and belts have appeared in leather with elaborate metal mounts. The embroidery on such dresses is so open that a colour is laid beneath.

Shoes are worn low and pointed, showing embroidered stockings, which match the bouquets in the patterns of dress stuffs ; and odd gloves have been often seen, though it is to be hoped they will not be generally in favour, such follies detracting from personal dignity.

THE NEW COUNTY PARLIAMENTS OF ENGLAND

FOR the first time in its history every county in England and Wales now possesses an elected governing body, called the County Council. The change from the old order to the new has been effected very quietly, but it is so real and extensive that it may well be called a "bloodless revolution." Down to the present time all our county affairs have been managed by county magistrates sitting in Quarter Sessions, and it is not denied that, on the whole, these duties have been discharged efficiently and economically. But Justices of the Peace are appointed by the Lord Chancellor, and though they may not have been unmindful of the ratepayers' interests, they have been under no obligation to consider the ratepayers' opinions or wishes. In these days, however, those who pay the piper claim the right to call the tune ; and it was to meet this claim that the Local Government Act, 1888, was passed.

The Act occupies one hundred pages of the Statute Book, and it would have been much longer if its scope had been as extensive as that of the Bill which was first placed before Parliament. The original idea was to transfer to the County Councils, and to the District Councils proposed to be formed under them, most, if not all, of the duties now discharged by the Poor Law Guardians, licensing authorities, vestries, and other bodies. For the present such complaints as Mr. Goschen once made, that in one parish he had received eight rate-papers for a total demand of 12s. 4d., will continue to be heard. But the ratepayers will reap great advantage from the operation of the new law ; and the governing bodies created by it are endowed with powers and burdened with responsibilities almost as large and varied as those undertaken by Parliament itself.

Every county has at least one Council, but some counties have more than one. Yorkshire has a separate Council for each of its three Ridings, and Lincolnshire has one for each of its divisions. Suffolk and Sussex are likewise allowed dual Councils—one for the eastern and one for the western division of each county. The Isle of Ely has a Council to itself, quite independently of the rest of Cambridgeshire ; and the Soke of Peterborough enjoys the same privilege, although it is part of the county of Northampton.

The County Councils vary considerably as to numbers. The Act itself fixes the number for London —two Councillors for each Parliamentary borough or division, and four for the City of London. The Local Government Board is empowered by the Act to settle the number of Councillors for all other counties. Yorkshire has 210 members—90 for the West Riding Council, and 61 and 59 for the other Riding Councils respectively. Rutland has only 21 members, while Lancashire has 105, the other Councils varying in number between 50 and 60 members.

For electoral purposes every county is mapped out into divisions, and one Councillor is elected for each division. The County Council is not properly constituted until a County Chairman and County Aldermen have been elected. The number of Aldermen is one-third the number of Councillors, and both Chairman and Aldermen may be elected either from among the Councillors, or from those outside the Council who are qualified to be Councillors. All Councillors are elected for three years, and they retire together. County Aldermen are elected for six years, one-half retiring at the end of three years, and the other half at the end of the six years, the half to retire first being determined by ballot at the date of their election. If a Councillor is elected to and accepts the office of Alderman he vacates that of Councillor, and

another election is held to fill up the vacancy. The County Aldermen for London must not exceed one-sixth of the whole number of County Councillors.

A candidate for the County Council need not live in the county which he aspires to represent, but he must not live more than fifteen miles beyond it; and for London, his abode must be within seven miles of the borough or division he stands for. The persons eligible for election as Councillors are :—

1. All those having the burgess qualification.
2. Peers owning property in the county.
3. All those registered as Parliamentary voters in respect of the ownership of property in the county.
4. £10 occupiers.
5. Clergymen and other ministers of religion.

No one, however, can be a Councillor who holds any office or place of profit in the gift or disposal of the Council; neither can a partner in any firm employed by the Council or under contract with it. This disqualification does not apply to a lease, sale, or purchase of land, or to an agreement for the loan of money, or to the proprietor of any newspaper in which the Council's advertisements appear. A Councillor may be a shareholder in a company which contracts with the Council, but he cannot vote or take part in the discussion of any matter in which the company has any pecuniary interest.

By the County Electors Act, which was passed in connection with the Local Government Act, the burgess franchise of municipal boroughs was extended to county electors outside municipal boroughs, the effect being that all persons on the Parliamentary register, *with the exception of lodgers*, and with *the addition of women ratepayers*, are entitled to vote as county electors. The first election of County Councils throughout England and Wales was fixed by the Act to take place in January, but not earlier than the 14th, the exact date to be arranged by the Returning Officer, and notice of the election to be given by him in December. A period not exceeding six days must be fixed between nomination and election.

The nomination of a candidate is a very important matter, and must be made in strict accordance with the terms of the Act. He must be proposed and seconded by two electors, and "supported" by eight electors, all of whom must be electors for the particular division for which the candidate stands.

The election must be conducted by ballot, the poll being open from eight a.m. to eight p.m., as in the case of Parliamentary and municipal elections. The costs of the Returning Officer are to be defrayed as County Council expenses, and they are not to exceed £10 for every 1,000 electors. Each candidate's expenditure is limited to £25, with an additional amount of 3d. for each elector above 500 on the register.

The first meeting of the newly-elected Councillors was fixed by the Act to be held on the second Thursday after the election, and their first business the election of one of their number to act as Chairman of that meeting and of the one following. At the second meeting they are empowered to elect Aldermen, and thus constitute the Provisional Council, who are then directed to proceed to elect as their Chairman "a person qualified to be Chairman of the County Council." The Provisional Council must next take the necessary steps for bringing the provisions of the Act into full operation; they must make arrangements for "taking over" the offices and officers of the Quarter Sessions, and in general make adequate preparation for entering upon the full discharge of their duties as the County Council on the day named in the Act. That day is the 1st of April, but on the application of the Provisional Council a day earlier or later than that may be appointed by the Local Government Board.

The Act provides that the various officers appointed by the Quarter Sessions, or by any justices of the county—from the Clerk of the Peace and County Treasurer down to public analysts and Inspectors of Weights and Measures, &c.—shall forthwith become the officers and servants of the County Council. The machinery of local government will in this way be kept in working order, and no violent wrench will be experienced in the transition from an irresponsible to a responsible and representative governing power.

Within the limits available in these pages it is impossible to set forth adequately all the powers which are entrusted to the County Councils, and the important functions they will have to perform. They enter at once upon a most valuable heritage. All county buildings, asylums for pauper lunatics, reformatory and industrial schools, county bridges and roads, pass into their legal possession and under their absolute control. They have transferred to them the administrative business of the Courts of Quarter Sessions; they have to make, assess, and levy all county rates, police rates, and highway rates, and see to the proper application and expenditure thereof. They can appoint Medical Officers of Health if they see fit, and County Coroners must now be elected by the County Councils. They may, with the consent of the Local Government Board, borrow on the security of the County Fund and of the revenues of the Council, such sums as may be required for purchasing lands or buildings, and for any other purpose authorised by the Act. The division of the county into polling districts for the purpose of Parliamentary elections, the appointment of places of election, revision courts, and the costs of registration, are also matters transferred to them. The registration of the rules of scientific societies, the registration of charitable gifts, the certifying and recording of places of religious worship, and the confirmation and record of the rules of loan societies are comprised henceforth among the duties of County Councils. County Councils are also authorised to make advances to any persons or bodies of persons, corporate or otherwise, in aid of the emigration or colonisation of inhabitants of the county, with a guarantee for repayment of such advances from a local authority in the county or the Government of any colony.

The proceeds of certain Licence Duties, and a portion of the Probate Duties, which have hitherto been received by the Imperial Government, are now

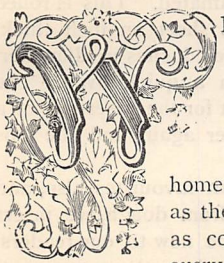
to be transferred to the County Councils, the amount estimated to be received from these sources being about five and a half millions; while, on the other hand, certain grants in aid of Local Taxation, amounting to two and a half millions, which have heretofore been paid out of the National Taxes, are now withdrawn.

The vexed question of the control of the police is disposed of under the Act by the appointment of a Joint Committee of the Quarter Sessions and County Council, the Committee consisting of an equal number of justices appointed by Quarter Sessions, and of members of the County Council appointed by that Council. Besides these great, varied, and most important tasks directly imposed upon the County Councils by the Local Government Act, there are certain other powers which may be entrusted to them under Provisional Orders issued by the Local Government Board. In this way the County Councils may have transferred to them many of the powers and duties now belonging to the Privy Council, the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, the Education Department, and other public authorities. Thus the County Councils may soon become, without further legislation, real County Parliaments, to a seat in which the wisest and most capable of British citizens may well aspire. J. T. G.

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

SECTION IV.—COOKERY.

HOME-MADE BREAD.



E are quite ready to admit that it is far easier now-a-days to obtain good, wholesome bread than it was a few years ago, and that it is not necessary to make and bake bread at home in order to insure purity; but as the improved gas-stoves, as well as cooking-ranges generally, afford every facility to those who *are* anxious to acquire the art of presenting at table a home-made loaf, we will endeavour to make the process clear to the least initiated of our readers.

A word as to the flour; this, whether white or whole meal, should be of the best quality; not the least of its advantages is that it will absorb more moisture, good flour being dry; hence, in the long run, it is more economical than inferior qualities, which feel damp and sticky, smell unpleasantly, and produce bread only distinguished by its "ropiness;" that is, when cut, it has a "stringy" appearance.

Whole meal bread—which, as its name implies, is made from flour from which nothing has been removed—will, in the majority of cases, be found more agreeable, as well as easier of digestion, if finely ground; sometimes the coarser grain proves irritating to the stomach. A very nice loaf may be made from white flour and whole meal in equal parts, especially suitable for those who hitherto have eaten white bread only, and contemplate the substitution of brown; as the latter will sometimes prove unpalatable if the change be made too suddenly.

Before giving any actual recipe for bread we would impress upon our readers that the following rules must be carried out in order to insure success; that is, so far as fermented bread (made from yeast) is concerned; the unfermented kinds require totally different treatment. Dried yeast, French or German, is now obtainable in most towns; a brand known as "pure rye yeast" is good and reliable.

Rule I.—The yeast must be fresh, sweet, and crumbly, *i.e.*, it should drop from the fingers freely; if it sticks and smells sour it will not make good bread.

Rule II.—Never add water to the yeast without "creaming" it first (as hereafter directed); hot water kills it, and cold water chills it; hence, in either case, its rising properties are diminished.

Rule III.—Pass the flour through a sieve, and in cold weather let it stand near the fire for an hour or two; the vessel used for making the dough in ought also to be warm and perfectly dry.

Rule IV.—The water used for mixing the dough must be tepid, namely, a mixture of one-third boiling and two-thirds cold water; a hap-hazard trial with the fingers is no test at all when accuracy is a desideratum.

Rule V.—Salt should be mixed with the dry flour; if added to the yeast and water it checks the rising.

Rule VI.—A warm even temperature is very necessary during the rising of the dough, for if allowed to get cold it is liable to be heavy, and *too much* heat sours it, and causes it to harden on the surface.

Rule VII.—The exact measure of water that a given weight of flour will absorb cannot be stated, as flour varies so much; but a general rule is a pint and a half for a quarter of a stone of flour.

Rule VIII.—The softer the dough (so that it can be handled easily without sticking) the nicer will be the loaf, and it will remain moist longer than if made from stiff dough.

Now for directions for a trial "batch," which shall be a small one; the ingredients required being half a stone of flour, two ounces of dried yeast, a level tablespoonful of salt, a dessert-spoonful of moist (white) sugar, and tepid water—quantity sufficient, *about* three pints.

Mode.—Put into a large vessel the flour and salt, and make a hollow in the centre, leaving some flour at the bottom—this forms the bed; in a separate basin put the crumbled yeast, add the sugar, and rub them

with the back of a wooden spoon until liquid—this is "creaming"; add the water, mix, and pour into the hollow. Stir in flour from the sides until it looks like thick batter—this is known as the leaven; sprinkle a little more flour lightly over the surface, then cover with a cloth, and leave in a warm place until the top of the leaven is covered with bubbles; the dry flour that was sprinkled over will have disappeared. It ought to have reached this point in about thirty minutes, and is then ready for mixing into dough with the hand. If it leaves the bottom and sides of the vessel quite clean, the consistence is right; but if it sticks, a little more dry flour must be sprinkled round—that is, between the dough and the vessel. Should it need more water, that, like the first, must be tepid. Now turn it out on a clean board, and knead it for a few minutes only; return it to the vessel (either of earthenware or wood) and cut the top twice with a knife, forming a cross; a cut surface always rises better. Again cover, and leave until the dough has doubled its bulk; it will take two hours at least, but good dough ought always, when ready for the oven, to be double its original size. This quantity will make four small loaves; if the dough is full of holes like a sponge, and feels springy and elastic, the only thing to insure good bread is to bake it properly.

First, knead each loaf until smooth all over, not a crack visible, then "shape" either into cottages, rolls, or cakes, or put into greased tins, leaving plenty of room for rising; for cottages, two-thirds for the bottom, and one-third for the top, are the right proportions.

As to the time required for kneading, many people are of opinion that it cannot be too long, but ten or fifteen minutes will suffice if the dough is properly mixed and well risen. The actual process of kneading is not easy to describe, though by no means difficult to acquire; it is a sort of backwards and forwards motion, the knuckles and "ball" of the hand being alternately used. The thing to avoid is flattening the dough; it must be kept round in form, and not allowed to stick to the board; experienced bread-makers can accomplish this without the addition of much dry flour: the less used the better; it hardens the surface, and does not allow it to expand in the oven as it ought. It is a common failing with amateurs, just as in pastry-making, to use too much.

Now to bake our bread: the oven should be hot enough at the commencement to fetch up the dough well, though not hot enough to scorch; a little experience will prove an efficient teacher; when the bread is about half baked, the heat may be reduced; this, in a gas-stove, is very easy. Half-quartern loaves will take *about* an hour and a quarter; when done they will sound firm if rapped on the bottom, besides emitting an unmistakable sweet odour, that underdone bread does not give out.

During the first part of the baking especially, avoid opening the oven door; many a batch of bread, as well as cakes and pastry, has been spoiled by a sudden inrush of cold air.

Although in the foregoing directions we have referred to dried yeast only, fresh barm can take its place whenever it is preferred, and can be obtained; and, as a rule, about a tea-cupful will be found equal to two ounces of dried yeast.

An excellent plain cake can be made by taking a pound of dough when ready for the oven, and working into it four ounces each of moist sugar, sultana raisins, and nice soft dripping; two ounces of shredded candied peel, and one egg. Put it in a greased tin, which it should only half fill, and let it stand near the fire for a quarter of an hour before baking. If at any time dough is specially made for cakes of this kind, should a quantity be required, milk may with advantage take the place of water in mixing the dough; and by way of variety, ginger or ground carraway seeds—which, by the way, are more wholesome than whole seeds—may be used instead of fruit.

German Tea Cakes are real delicacies in which our readers may indulge on baking-days. To every pound of dough, an egg, two ounces of castor sugar, and three ounces of butter, slightly warmed, are added, the whole being thoroughly amalgamated. This is rolled on a well-floured board, into a sheet an inch thick, then cut into rounds about three inches in diameter, and baked on greased tins in a quick oven. The cakes are split open while hot for the insertion of a little jam, then pressed together again, and the tops dredged with sugar.

Singing Hinnies are German favourites also, and though they cannot be made from dough, we insert the recipe, as it will probably be new to our readers. Mix together a pound of pastry flour, three ounces of corn flour, a small tea-spoonful of salt, two ounces of castor sugar, and two ounces of fresh butter finely rubbed in. Mix into a paste with an egg, a table-spoonful of lemon-juice, and half a pint of cold water. Roll out into an oblong sheet, spread two ounces of lard over two-thirds of the surface, then fold in three, turn it round, and roll out until half an inch thick; cut into rounds or squares, and bake in a brisk oven. These, although usually split while hot and buttered, are very good *minus* butter and eaten when cold, by those whose digestive organs are opposed to hot cakes.

We are indebted to a "Yankee" friend for the following, called *Yeast Gingerbread;* it is exceedingly nice, as well as more wholesome for children than rich cakes. Mix in a large bowl half a pound each of fine oatmeal, ground rice, brown flour and white flour; a good pinch of salt, and six ounces of brown sugar. Melt six ounces of dripping in a pound of treacle, add while still warm (not hot) two table-spoonfuls of fresh barm, a quarter of a pint of tepid milk, half an ounce of ground ginger, and a little ground nutmeg and coriander seeds. Add this mixture to the flour, &c., and when thoroughly amalgamated, cover, and leave to rise for an hour or more, then bake in bread-tins in a *slow* oven until a skewer will come from the centre perfectly clean.

In conclusion, we would urge our readers to try again if their first batch of bread is a failure; though, if they carry out our hints to the letter, success *ought*

to crown their efforts. As before stated, unfermented bread is differently made, and although the limits of the present paper do not admit of its treatment, we may point out that it is not so wholesome for every-day use as fermented bread, neither is it so satisfying or economical. There are many varieties, the most common being that made from baking powder; this is useful when bread is wanted in a hurry, or a change required in the shape of fancy bread, including scones, &c. It *must* be made quickly to be worth eating; the actual mixing, shaping, and transference to the oven should not occupy many minutes. Some may say, "Why is this?" Just because the fermentation should not commence until the bread is in the oven; it quickly ferments, and as quickly subsides; small loaves, for this reason, will be more satisfactory than large ones; they require a very sharp oven, and should be left on a sieve to cool—never taken at once into a colder atmosphere.

L. HERITAGE.

*** Our readers are reminded that, according to the curriculum published in December last, February 11 is the day on which the loaves, sent in competition for our prizes, are to reach us.

PASS LISTS. (SECTION I.)

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE.

The First Prize of One Guinea is awarded to

AMY NEWMAN, 3, Harrow Villas, Harrow Road, Harlesden, N.W.;

and the Second Prize of Half-a-Guinea to

CLARA THORNHAM, Studley House, The Park, Hull.

CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR.

Name.	*Address.*
Cobb, E.	Tunbridge Wells.
Fox, C. E.	Bideford.
Henry, May	West Hampstead, N.W.
Norris, C. M.	Somerset.
Osborne, Annie	Regent's Park, N.W.
Wassell, Rosalie	Bradford.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Biggs, Edith J.	Manchester.
Briggs, Lucy H.	Manchester.
Cooper, Miss...	Edinburgh.
Gardiner, Florence M.	Leicester.
Gordon, Laura	Brixton, S.W.
Hedgcock, Emily	Rochester.
Horan, Elizabeth H....	Rathkeale.
Parker, Kate	Glasgow.
Porter, Charlotte A.	Bridlington Quay.
Raper, S. J....	Thirsk.
Robinson, J. A.	Kirkham.
Russell, Gertrude M.	Ipswich.
Stevenson, Ellen	Sheffield.
Thomas, Sarah	Bristol.
Turner, Annie C.	Luton.
Wales, Amy H.	Upper Norwood.
Winter, Julia	Hornsey Lane, N.
Wright, Annie F.	Forest Gate, E.
Yates, Annie	Stockport.

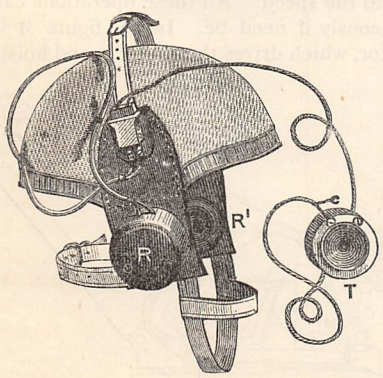
The successful candidates may have their Certificates posted to them, on their sending to the Editor a fully-addressed label, together with two penny postage stamps, to defray cost of postage and roller. The Editor cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to Certificates in the post, nor can he answer inquiries respecting unsuccessful work.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

The Diver's Telephone.



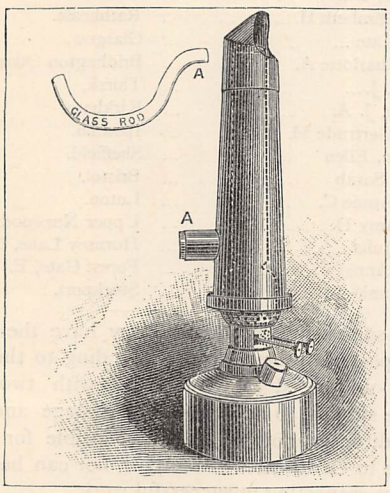
Our illustration shows the form of telephone which is used under a diver's helmet. The transmitter, T, or microphone, to which the diver speaks when he responds to a message, is shown detached from the headpiece, but it can be fitted into a recess in the helmet near his mouth. R and R¹ are two receivers, fitted into the sides of the headpiece at the diver's ears, thus enabling him to hear what is spoken to him without using his hands in the process. The arrangement leaves him free to work or defend himself while under water.

A Chemical Island.

According to Mr. MacIvor, a New Zealand geologist, the White Island, in the Bay of Plenty, is part of the crater of a submerged conical volcano. The whole of it is evidently of volcanic origin, and it contains much sulphur. Curious hollow spheres of gypsum and sulphur are found on the island, and in its midst is a lake whose atmosphere is very irritating through the evolution of hydrochloric acid gas. In connection with this subject it may be stated that a project is "on the cards" to tunnel through the volcanic crater of Popocatepetl in order to reach the stores of sulphur contained in it.

Metallising Wood.

Wood is made to take a hard polish and resemble metal by being steeped in a bath of caustic alkali for two or three days, according to its degree of permeability, at a temperature of between 164° and 197° Fahr. It is then placed in a second bath of hydrosulphide of calcium, to which a concentrated solution of sulphur is added after some twenty-four or thirty-six hours. The third bath is one of acetate of lead at a temperature of from 95° to 120° Fahr., and the wood remains in it for 30 to 50 hours. On being dried, it can be polished with lead, tin, or zinc, and burnished like metal.



Light for the Microscope.

A capital apparatus for microscope lamps has recently been introduced by Mr. Thomas Christy, F.L.S., who seeks to make it generally known for educational purposes, as there is no patent to bar its general use. The device consists of a most useful and simple adaptation for the communication of light for microscopic purposes. Any strong petroleum lamp with a glass chimney is covered with a copper or iron chimney, open at the top to allow of a good current of air passing through it (see illustration, A). Opposite to the flame a hole, from 1 to 1½ inches in diameter, is cut in the outer chimney, and in it is inserted a glass rod, held in position by a washer, and curved so that the opposite end comes under the object on the table of the microscope. A splendid light passes through this rod, and as all light and heat are prevented from passing from the lamp to the face, the greatest comfort is experienced in working with the microscope. If it should be desired to have two or three microscopes working at the same time, several glass rods of the shape shown can easily be inserted into the iron shield, and securely held there by pieces of cork, so that they may transmit the light in any direction required. The arrangement is so simple that any one having a microscope and an ordinary petroleum lamp can readily fit up a complete illuminating apparatus.

A Cure for Cinders or Dust in the Eye.

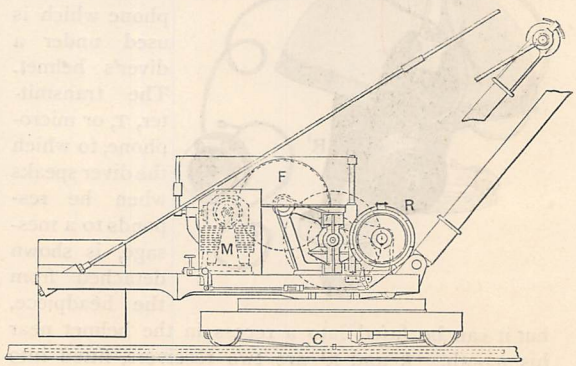
If you get a cinder or particle of dust in your eye, do not rub that one, *but the other one.* Rubbing the injured eye, as a rule, fails to remove the foreign body, but is very successful in setting up inflammation. Rub the uninjured eye very vigorously, however, and the cinder or particle of dust will very soon come out of its own accord. This remedy is said never to fail, unless the intruder is as sharp as a piece of steel, or cuts into the ball of the eye, necessitating an operation to insure removal.

Seamless Tubes.

Tubes of steel and toughened glass are useful in the arts, and by the new Mannesmann process a bar of solid steel or glass can now be turned into such tubes by a mill. The bar at a red heat passes between revolving conoidal rolls, so arranged that the varying velocities of revolution make a hollow in the centre of the bar, which ultimately transforms the bar into a tube. The tubes are very strong; for example, an iron bottle made in this way, and filled with water which was frozen to ice, only bulged out, and did not burst. Tubes can be produced a foot in diameter, and only a quarter-inch thick in the metal. Professor Hele-Shaw suggested that the process would supply stronger iron tubes for containing compressed gases than those now in use.

An Electric Crane.

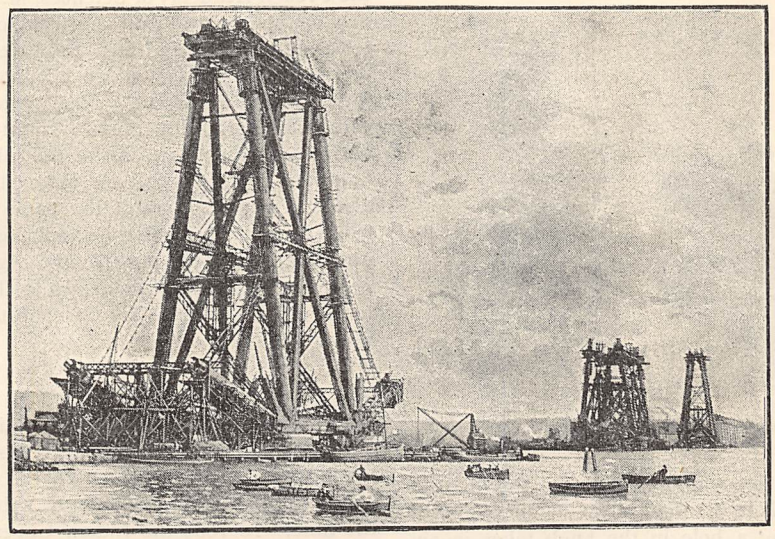
Steam-cranes are dangerous in wood-yards and other places where combustible materials are stored, hence the recent adoption of an electric crane at a well-known timber-yard in Limehouse. The power to make the crane travel on its rails, hoist the load, and slew it round is derived from a dynamo, also used to light a wood-factory. The current is conveyed by copper tubes laid along the tramway on which the crane travels, and it is conducted by contacts to the electric motor attached to the axles of the crane by suitable gearing of the Raworth type. The motor takes a current of fifty amperes to hoist the maximum load of fifteen or eighteen tons; it slews with thirty-five amperes, and travels with twenty-three to thirty-five, according to the speed. All these operations can go on simultaneously if need be. In the figure M is the electric motor, which drives the roller, B, and hoists



the chain, while the contacts with the conductors are shown at C. The total weight of the crane is about four tons. It performs its work well, and has given every satisfaction. The starting, stopping, and working is performed by the man in charge with turning handles, and a mirror is provided to show him what is going on in the barge below from which the timber is hoisted.

The Forth Bridge.

The great girder bridge spanning the Frith of Forth between North and South Queensferry is now advancing rapidly towards completion. The terminal lattice girders are in their places, and the enormous cantilevers which are intended to support the flying girders in mid-stream are nearly erected. Our illustration shows one of these structures in progress. It is that at North Queensferry, on the Fife shore of the river. The size of the cantilever will be gathered from a comparison of it and the neighbouring banks of the river, with other objects in the view. It is some 360 feet in height; and the line of railway is carried through it on lattice girders attached. There are three of these cantilevers in the width of the river—namely, another on the rocky island of Inch Garvie, and a third close to the Midlothian shore at South Queensferry. The extreme ones are founded on caissons sunk into the bed of the river, and the middle one on the rock at Inch Garvie. They spring from granite piers above water, and are being built over the piers by balancing the work done on both sides, so that the entire weight falls evenly downwards on the pier. When they are finished they will be interconnected by lattice girders to complete the bridge. The material of which they are built is Siemens-Martin, or open-hearth, steel. The limbs under compression are tubular in structure, and resemble prodigious quills. The members under tension are either lattice beams or long boxes of angle steel. The figure shows the platforms, cranes, and lifts required for the workmen. All the riveting is done quietly by hydraulic pressure on red-hot rivets, so that there is singularly little clamour heard at the works. Many of the steel pieces, which are all tried beforehand, are floated out on barges and hoisted up to their destination. Over 3,000 workmen are engaged on the bridge, and during the last three months no less than some 5,700 tons of steel were fixed in the work. The width of the channel is about a mile, and the total length of the structure 1⅝ miles. Some notion of its size, as compared with other works of the kind, may be gathered from the fact that it bears the same relation to the Britannia Bridge that a grenadier guard bears to a new-born infant. The railways in conjunction with it are also being pushed on rapidly. When all is finished, travellers to the north of Scotland will be able to go from Edinburgh to Perth in about an hour; and it is expected that many who now go north by Glasgow and the Caledonian Railway route will then proceed by Edinburgh.



THE FORTH BRIDGE.

(From a Photograph by Valentine and Sons, Dundee.)

Bellite.

A new and safe explosive termed "Bellite," and the invention of M. Carl Lamm, a Swedish engineer, was recently tried at Middlesbrough. Bellite consists of dinitro-benzole and nitrate of ammonia, mixed in certain proportions, and under certain conditions; then moulded into cartridges for mining or other purposes. The experiments referred to showed that bellite failed to explode under a severe concussion, or by the application of the heat of a smith's forge, and of burning gunpowder. The disruptive power of the material was greater than that of dynamite, which is an advantage in mining. A land mine of three pounds

of bellite was exploded, and the earth thrown up about 100 feet, leaving a crater 11 feet in diameter, and 9 feet deep. Another mine containing three pounds of gunpowder only made a hole 4 feet in diameter, and 2 feet deep. In actual mining a series of bellite cartridges gave results comparing favourably with compressed gunpowder cartridges of half the size, and the absence of noxious fumes was very marked. It is also claimed that bellite is flameless, and is not affected by atmospheric influences.

A Self-Pouring Tea-Pot.

The figure illustrates a new tea-pot, or coffee-pot, as the case may be, which is caused to pour out a cup of

the beverage by pressing the knob in the manner shown. The lid is in the form of a cylinder, which is raised up, and by a hole in the knob takes in air, that is prevented from escaping by closing the hole with the finger. On pressing the knob downwards, the pneumatic pressure forces the tea out of the spout.

A Large Globe.

In the centre of the Champs de Mars, at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition, there is to be a terrestrial globe about 13 metres in diameter. It will be a representation of the world on a scale of one-millionth — that is to say, a million times smaller than the actual world. To give some idea of the proportion, the city of Paris will barely cover a square centimetre. The globe will turn on its axis like an ordinary school globe, and is certain to form an interesting feature of the Exhibition.

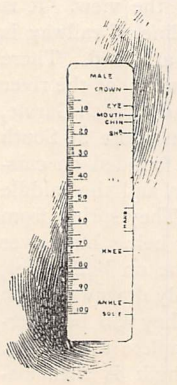
Spectro-telegraphy.

M. Paul la Cour, a Danish inventor, has exhibited at the Copenhagen Industrial Exhibition an experimental apparatus for signalling by light, of which we may hear more, if the inventor succeeds in bringing it into practical use. It is intended to supersede flag-signalling by day, and to signal by night. A beam of white light seen through a prism is broken into red, yellow, green, and violet light. If, therefore, some of these ingredients of white light be cut off at the source, this colour will be absent in the prism. The continuous line of the spectrum from the prism can thus be broken up into a Morse signal; for example, - — (dot, dash), which is the letter A of the alphabet. In this way all the letters of the Morse code can be telegraphed and received through the prism, which can be fitted into a telescopic tube. The suppression of rays can be effected in more ways than one. M. la Cour adopts the plan of scattering them by a prism, so that only certain rays which he chooses shall reach the distant observer through openings provided in a kind of shutter. The new method of telegraphing is applicable to lighthouses or harbour lights, as well as ships at sea.—At a recent meeting of the French Academy of Sciences, M. Ader described a new method of applying the telephone to submarine telegraphy. Positive and negative electric signals are used on cables, and two telephones are used, one for each kind of current. They are applied to the two ears of the receiving clerk. Vibrators interrupt the currents as they come out of the cable, and so cause humming sounds in the telephone; but local currents also interrupted, and of the same strength as the cable currents, traverse the telephones in the contrary direction, so that the positive and negative signals are neutralised in one telephone, while they are enhanced in the other, thus enabling the clerk to understand the message.

Ramie.

The Chinese grass known as Ramie, so valuable as a textile plant, and yielding a fibre as fine as silk, has not hitherto been cultivated to the extent desirable, owing to the lack of machinery suitable for extracting the fibre. In 1869 the Indian Government offered a prize of £5,000 for such a machine, and now the French Ministry of Agriculture offer 6,000 francs in prizes for machines or processes to that end. Ramie is grown near Paris, and some of the stems will be used to try the competing machines. A British agent, Mr. D. Morris, of Kew Gardens, will report upon these trials. Could Ramie be well manufactured, the growth of the plant would probably spread in our tropical colonies.

A Human Scale.



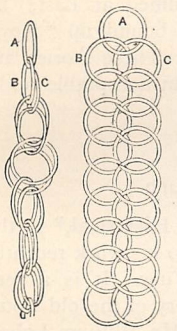
Draughtsmen frequently introduce human figures in their drawings to give the spectator some idea of the size of parts. Unless they have studied figure drawing they are apt to draw these out of proportion. Mr. Stanley, the well-known optician, has therefore devised the scale shown in the accompanying figure to enable them to draw the human figure correctly. It is based on Marshall's work entitled "A Rule of Proportion for the Human Figure." The proportions for males are on one side; for females on the other. If the drawing is large the scale can be held between

it and the eye. When something smaller than the scale has to be measured proportional compasses can be used.

A Substitute for Glass.

The great fault of glass is its fragility, and the "tough" varieties of it have not been quite successful. A substitute for this useful material in windows and roofs has been recently introduced. It is pliant like leather, but translucent, and of an amber tint. The material consists of iron wire netting enclosed in a varnish, of which the base is linseed oil. It is made in sheets ten feet by four feet, thus rendering joints rare. It can be cut with scissors, and no glazier is required to fix it, nails being employed. The material makes a cool awning in summer, as the sun's heat is said to pass through it with difficulty.

The Magic Chain.



The figure shows a ring illusion sometimes offered for sale in the streets. It consists of a chain formed of rings linked in the manner shown. If the chain is held up by the ring A, and the ring B raised while A is dropped, the latter will appear to fall through the ring C, and so down to the end of the chain. The illusion is due to the links in succession dropping so rapidly as to seem one ring all the time.

Peat for Iron Smelting.

It is proposed to apply the heat and gases given off in distilling peat by a "Rose" retort to the smelting of the rich deposits of ironstone in many parts of Ireland close to the peat-beds ; for instance, at Lough Allen and Creevelea in Leitrim. The volatile products of the peat are to be condensed, while the charcoal is compressed into fuel-bricks for smelting the ironstone. Ammonia, acetic acid, naphtha, and paraffin are obtainable from peat, and their production will form part of the process, which, we understand, will soon be put in operation, as a new Irish industry.

A New Gas.

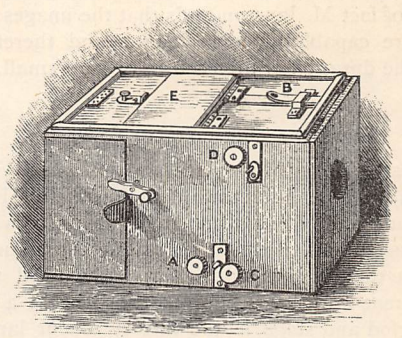
The Lawrence gas apparatus, an American invention, consists of a rectangular case, in which are placed perforated trays, holding wood shavings. Gasoline is allowed to trickle through these trays, and saturate the shavings. Gas, which may be the ordinary gas supplied to houses, ascends through the trays, and is charged with the gasoline vapour. According to recent trials, a No. 6 Bray burner, consuming 9·96 cubic feet of ordinary London gas per hour, gave an illumination approximately equal to a No. 0 Bray burner, consuming only 2 cubic feet of Lawrence gas per hour. The economy of the Lawrence gas is 40 per cent., according to the tests of Dr. J. Hopkinson, F.R.S. The consumption of gasoline is about 1 fluid ounce per cubic foot of gas. Hence, taking gas at 3s. per 1,000 cubic feet, and gasoline at 10d. per gallon, the cost of ordinary city gas, as compared with gas enriched by the Lawrence process, is 0·098d. as against 0·036d. per cubic foot of Lawrence gas. Dr. Hopkinson also says that for the same illumination the products of combustion are less in the case of the new gas ; therefore, it is healthier, and not so injurious to decorations. The system has already been adopted in some mills and country mansions in this country, and is said to have given satisfaction.

A Soap Battery.

Mr. Meserole has given a description of a voltaic battery made from common soap, which has the advantage of not spilling over. The soap is dissolved in boiling water together with a small quantity of brass and caustic soda or potash. The mixture is put into a jar while warm, together with a carbon plate and an amalgamated zinc rod to form the poles. The soap solution when cold forms into a jelly-like mass which does not readily evaporate or jilt over.

A Dressing-Case Camera.

A new detective camera, in the form of a dressing-case or a book, has been brought out by Mr.



McKellen. It is about eleven inches long by six inches square, and the operator can, if he wishes, see the picture he desires to take. The figure shows the apparatus, A being a milled head which is wound up. The aperture in front is opened by placing the eyelet in the strap on the top over the pin, B. The lid, E, is then opened, and the image can be seen on the screen. The focus is obtained by turning the milled head, C. The camera may be used under the arm, or held in the hands. The image being obtained the pin seen near A is pushed upwards, and the exposure made. The dry plates are $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in size.

The Sultan's Dog-cart.

The Sultan of Turkey has ordered an electric dog-cart, which has been constructed for him at Brighton by the maker of the dog-cart which we recently illustrated. The new vehicle is somewhat similar to the latter, the power being derived from twenty-four accumulators stowed under the seats. An Immisch electric motor, driven by the current, works a chain

passing round projections on the rim of a hind wheel, which is thereby turned. The two front wheels are guided by means of a rack and pinion actuated by a guiding shaft projecting up near one of the front occupants of the car, who can also apply the breaks and control the current. The supply of electricity is sufficient to run the cart for five hours at a speed of ten miles an hour. The weight of the vehicle when complete is about eleven hundredweight. The motor is of one horse-power.

The Duration of Lightning.

It has become important, in connection with the newer ideas on the lightning discharge, to determine whether the flash has a sensible duration or is instantaneous. Accordingly, M. Janssen, the well-known French physicist, has devised a camera for measuring the time occupied by a flash. It is made double ; one half containing a disc of sensitised paper, which is fixed, the other half a similar disc which is rotated round an axis through its centre, and perpendicular to its plane. The velocity of its rotation is known. It follows that when a lightning flash is photographed by this double camera, the two images will not be exactly alike, and capable of being superposed, because one plate is in motion while the other is fixed. But as a matter of fact M. Janssen finds that the images he has taken are capable of superposition, and therefore he infers the duration of the flash to be very small.

From the Conquest to Chaucer.

Professor Henry Morley calls his "English Writers" (Cassell) "An Attempt towards a History of English Literature." We doubt whether the Professor will take us through another period more interesting in many respects than is this, which forms the third volume of his great work. With Chaucer we begin a totally new period and stage in the history of our language. In the old chroniclers, whose work is principally dealt with in this volume, we see the last of an old order that really died with them. But their work left its mark on our language, and what Professor Morley tells us of the influences which acted upon them is therefore of the highest value.

A Novel Diary.

A new diary has recently been introduced by a Glasgow firm, which combines the advantages of the old tablet diary in always presenting the current week's entries on the surface, and yet permits of ready reference to former weeks' entries. Above the top of the tablet is a long slot in the stand, through which each leaf is folded, instead of being torn off and thrown away when filled, and so it may be referred to without the least trouble.

"How to Avoid Law."

This is the apt title of a very practical little work by Mr. A. J. Williams, M.P., published by Messrs. Cassell, in which the writer gives most admirable advice as to the best method of keeping out of the meshes of litigation. Nothing could be sounder than his advice, or more intelligible than the directions he gives, which, however, he says in his preface, "it may be as well to add will be found of service only to honest men."

Four Books for Little Folk.

Little people are always on the look-out for new stories, or, at any rate, their friends are always on the look-out for suitable ones for them. We can recommend two works by Miss Clara L. Matéaux thoroughly. They are "Wee Willie Winkie" and "Ups and Downs of a Donkey's Life," both well told and fully illustrated. Two other stories which, like Miss Matéaux's, are published by Messrs. Cassell, are "The Mystery at Shoncliff School," by the author of "Mr. Burke's Nieces," and "Claimed at Last," by Emilie Searchfield, with which is bound up "Roy's Reward," by Sibella B. Edgcome. These stories are all tastefully got up, and would form acceptable additions to any juvenile library.

An Historical Suburb.

"Kensington, Picturesque and Historical," is the title which Mr. W. J. Loftie gives to his work recently published by Messrs. Field and Tuer. It is a very complete and very interesting history of the old Court suburb, charmingly illustrated by Mr. William Luker, Jun., though we feel bound to complain, in passing, of the somewhat irregular arrangement of the illustrations in the work. The chapter on Kensington Palace and Gardens is perhaps the most interesting in the whole work, though where all are so good it is difficult to single out any particular one. Despite the advance of the building army, much of old Kensington is still left with its quaint work and old-time air, and the new work in the district is evidently of a character which will not destroy the reputation of this interesting district in days to come.

Two Eventful Centuries.

Between the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses and the beginning of the terrible Civil War under Charles I. come some of the most important passages in the history of England. This is the period covered by the second volume of the Jubilee Edition of "Cassell's History of England," which is now before us. The numerous illustrations deserve more than a passing word of mention. The landscapes and architectural drawings, as in the previous volume, call for special praise. Mr. Railton's drawings of the Tower of London are among the finest views of their kind we have ever seen. Special care has been devoted to the reproduction of the portraits, and altogether the work is as complete a history of two troubled but glorious centuries as could be expected in a single volume.

MR. TRENCH OF BRASENOSE.

THE ROMANCE OF A LONG VACATION.

By MARY L. ARMITT.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

AFTER Jean Langton's adventure on the mountain, she was kept to her room for some days. It was a latent wonder in the minds of one or two occupants of Plas Tan-y-craig why, since her sprain was going on satisfactorily, she was not allowed, with crutches or with help, to hobble into the adjoining sitting-room. A dead quietness seemed to fall upon the party during her retreat. Many messages of inquiry came from downstairs—many tokens in the form of flowers or books for the much-pitied invalid, who had to stay in the house these fine July days; but the two parlours kept their own occupants in the evening, and there was no longer the continual intercourse, the frequent meetings by accident or arrangement, that had come to give the lodging-house of Tyn-y-bran the character of one large household. It was about a week after her accident that Jean was permitted to take possession of the sitting-room couch. Her sisters were glad of it; they would have now less trouble in waiting upon her; and they had besides very sensibly felt her absence. But the whole family welcomed her oddly enough by desertion. Mrs. Langton, who had been a great deal in her room, accepted her reappearance as a sort of release, and after early dinner and a little nap, went out for a walk with Mrs. Rogers.

It was shortly after this that Maria said, "Jean, I think Lillie and I had better finish the sketches that we began the day before yesterday. The lights seem about right this afternoon."

"Do you mind?" Lillie asked Jean gently. "I will stay if you do."

"Oh, no; go by all means," she answered. Yet when they had gone, and the house seemed quiet and empty, she felt lonely. She was tired of the thoughts that had intruded themselves during her seclusion. She had had more than enough of them. Hers was not a reflective nature. She loved action, and when action was denied to her, she seemed sadly forced back upon herself. Now, to divert her thoughts from a channel she wished to avoid, she tried to follow the probable movements of those who were happy enough to walk forth into the sunshine; she wondered where they would all be.

But presently she heard a pretty sharp tap at the closed door, and in answer to her "Come in," it was opened, and Mr. Trench appeared in the doorway. Jean went a sudden, flaming red, of which she was perfectly conscious; and she at once determined to make up for it in some way or other before long, especially as the tutor's face expressed some satisfaction, and his eyes shone with a smile.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she hastened to say, "but all the others are out."

"I know that. Then mayn't I come in?"

"Oh, if you care to," she was obliged to finish, with seemingly reluctant accent.

"I thought you might be dull," he explained, "and I have brought you a new book that came from the publisher this morning. I will read to you if you like."

"Thank you."

"And how is your foot?" he proceeded to ask, as he came near and fixed a chair by her couch.

"It is as well as a sprain can be by this time, I suppose. Your bandages were not touched; they were so cleverly done. I can't think why that stupid doctor has kept on coming."

Mr. Trench smiled. "Perhaps to satisfy your mother."

Jean gave him a quick look.

"At any rate," he went on, "you are looking more like yourself than when last I saw you."

"I should hope so," Jean replied, conscious of returning red.

"What do you think was the strangest thing about you that night?"

"Mrs. Richard's wincey gown, of course," she laughed lightly, though she wished Mr. Trench would not look at her as if he were noting all the differences.

"Not at all. The wincey gown was not striking. It was the smoothness of your wet hair."

"How nice it must have looked! I wish it had stayed so, then it would not be so much trouble to brush," she remarked perversely. Then, as she was aware of a possible disapproval in Mr. Trench's silence, she went on, "I must go to see good Mrs. Richards, and take her back her gown."

"I have been to the farm-house once."

"Have you?"

"Yes, to thank her, and to tell her how you were getting on. She was much interested, I can assure you. I had to promise you should go yourself when you were fit. I hope you will."

"Of course," Jean replied stiffly. Then she asked more gently, "Where are the others this afternoon?"

"The others! Do you mean George and Arthur?"

"Yes."

"I don't exactly know. Down by the river probably. If you will tell me where your sisters are, I shall be able to tell you where Arthur is."

Jean flushed again, and looked astonished at his openness; then she broke into frank and rippling laughter, such as he had never heard from her before.

"Why don't you remonstrate with Arthur?" she boldly remarked. "I have remonstrated with Lillie, but that is no use. She says it is not her fault, and I don't think it is."

"You have remonstrated with Miss Lillie!" he repeated, with a most amazed and telling look, "and pray how did she reply to her staid mentor?" But as Jean ignored this question, he went on, "I wonder you don't ask me why I don't remonstrate with George."

"If you have not done it already."

The shot told. A faint tinge of red mounted below Mr. Trench's clear skin. But he parried the suggestion.

"Do you suppose remonstrance would have any effect in that quarter, or in another I know of, much closer at hand?"

"None whatever, I should say," Jean replied haughtily.

"I knew it. And poor George has to be borne on to disappointment and disillusion at the mercy of a whim!"

"I don't know what you mean!" Jean hotly exclaimed.

"Ah! now we are going to quarrel badly, I see. Pray let me read, and simulate a peace that does not exist between us."

"I think it would be as well," she answered, with a fine air of indifference. She had a sense that tears of vexation were dangerously near her eyelids, and she was glad to turn away her head and listen to the monotonous flow of her companion's mellow voice. But presently it ceased, and she had to look round to account for the silence. Mr. Trench had laid down his book.

"Why do you love to provoke, Miss Jean?" he asked irrelevantly.

"I?" with marked emphasis, and throwing up her eyebrows.

"Yes, you. You know you do it, and then you punish others who provoke you back again."

"I only wish I could," she admitted, with a smile and gleaming eyes.

"What an awful, vengeful character you have. Ah! here are your mother and Mrs. Rogers coming through the garden gate. What shall I do—go or stay?"

"Oh, stay, now you are here. You had better not have come." Then instantly she wished she had not admitted it, and thought she would mend the matter by a half-confidence. "Do you know," she said, looking at him frankly, "I think mother never was so vexed with me before, as she is about this accident."

"Why? That is surely a little hard on you."

"I suppose she can't help it, but I am sure she is secretly very much annoyed. She seems to have lost all confidence in me. And Maria!—there is no limit to the depth of pity with which Maria regards my humiliation—my miserable helplessness in having to be picked up from the side of a mountain and brought home lame. My credit is quite gone in my own family, I can assure you." There was something comic in the shake of her head, but there was real feeling in it too.

Mr. Trench laughed and came closer. "What does it matter what they think?" he asked consolingly. "And I may come up to-night with the boys? For of course they are going to do honour to the tremendous occasion of your reappearance. I have only stolen a march upon them."

Jean was almost glad that the two elderly ladies were by this time within the door, and that the tutor had to turn and civilly express his delight at Miss Jean's recovery, and to explain that he had brought up a new book for her.

In the evening the expected visitation from the downstairs parlour took place, and the young men managed to impart an amount of feeling to it that, metaphorically speaking, carried the ladies off their feet. To be sure, Mr. Trench—tall and distinguished as he was, with the quiet power of countenance that hardly comes to a man before he has fought through thirty years of life—did not make a manifest sensation by his appearance. It was very well known to all the ladies that he had committed the astonishing kindness of sitting with Jean in the afternoon, so his greeting to her was naturally quiet and subdued. But Arthur, who followed him, walked up to Jean and pressed her hand with a boyish and brotherly effusiveness.

"I'm awfully glad to see you again, Miss Jean," he said. "We have been so dull without you."

Jean looked at him with answering pleasure, and said it was very good of him to think so; yet, when Mr. Trench and Arthur fell to one side to make way for George, who walked straight up to her with a bunch of roses in his hand, there was no doubt at all about it that this one was her favourite. The smile of happy comradeship she gave him, the glance of half-motherly fondness, were calculated to deceive some of those who were watching; and certainly George, with his manly, chivalrous ways, was a lad to whom any woman might easily get attached. He seemed to acknowledge, as a thing of course, that Jean and he were the natural centres to the scene, and he made no attempt to disguise the warmth of his greeting.

"So here you are at last! How long is it since you fell ill, Miss Jean, a year or a week?" he asked tragically, as he took her hand, and gave her the roses.

Every one laughed a little at this, Jean into the bargain, though she seemed just a trifle confused. She lifted the roses to smell—splendid blossoms of cream and red; and her face behind them looked nearly as blooming as they.

"What lovely roses!" she cried. "Where did they grow? Not in this valley?"

"No," George answered; "they came from Brendon."

"From Brendon?"

"Yes, Miss Jean," Arthur remarked, with roguish pleasure, "George spent this long, hot afternoon in

riding to Brendon. What he wanted besides the roses I don't know. You had better ask him. Any way he has taken the shine out of all our welcome to you."

"So that is what you were doing," Mr. Trench remarked, in what was meant to be a tone of quiet raillery, but in which there was a touch of something below that was sensibly felt. George looked across at him with irate eye; his glance had just fallen on a book in white parchment cover that lay on Jean's table, which he knew had arrived by the morning post for Mr. Trench.

"Yes, that is what I was doing," he repeated—"and you?"

"I was here," Mr. Trench responded, with marked decision.

There was a pause as the two men faced each other. A sort of paralysis of conversation had fallen on the rest of the room, and it seemed as if every one must watch the little scene that was being enacted about Jean's couch. But Mrs. Langton here broke in.

"Yes, indeed; Mr. Trench was so good as to sacrifice his afternoon in reading aloud, just to while away Jean's hours." She did not mention that it had been in her own absence. "But you are all so kind," she went on; "I am afraid she will get thoroughly spoilt. Lillie, go for a tumbler of water for these superb roses. They are a sight for us all to enjoy. You must tell us what you saw in Brendon, Mr. Tindall; after our weeks in this quiet place it seems quite a centre of civilisation."

Mr. Trench turned away with a feeling both of mortification and amusement. The mother had effectually changed the situation; and she now took up her seat by her daughter's couch—which George remained persistently near—to gain the required information; and she appeared to be installed there for the evening. Arthur, meanwhile, protesting against Lillie being put to so vile a use as the carrying of a tumbler, followed her on to the landing, the result being the transfer of the glass from one to the other, and a subsequent joint arrangement of the roses under Jean's superintendence.

The tutor actually turned in his disappointment to his old bugbear, Mrs. Rogers, who was to him the representative of fussy and foolish middle age, and talked to her for the first time with something like tolerance. With all her faults, he could imagine her sympathetic. She probably would not have thought it right to act as the prudent mother had done; she would not have refused to Jean the manifest homage of men. He had not, however, much to say to her, and was easily prevailed upon by Maria, who was sitting near, to sing. This made a change, probably to the relief of all. Under cover of the silence that almost immediately fell upon the company, Mrs. Langton left her self-assumed post and hurried from the room for the indispensable piece of work that she happened to-night to be without. George at once took the opportunity to growl in an undertone that he hated drawing-room talk. Jean smiled upon him, and told him to be quiet.

"That is just it," he went on to protest, as soon as a break in the song gave him an excuse; "you never will let me speak when he sings. Confound the fellow!"

Jean glanced at him with a shocked and startled look.

"Well, Miss Jean," he justified himself in a whisper, quite regardless now of the music, "I am getting to hate him. I don't understand his ways. He has changed his tactics, but not his mind, I am very sure. He is playing a double game. And you!—you are beginning to give way to him utterly."

"I!" answered Jean, looking quite white and angry at his speech; "how can you say so? He was very—very kind, of course, when I so stupidly sprained my ankle on the mountain; but what could I do?"

"It was most unlucky he found you; but you might have shaken him off when I came."

"Nice and grateful that would have been!"

"And he was up here this afternoon!"

But the song had ceased, and the few bars of the close died softly away. As he played them, Mr. Trench heard the quick tones of the colloquy behind him. He turned round before he recommenced—as he determined he would do—for one swift glance; he saw George's eager attitude, with his dark head bent close to the recumbent girl; saw, too, the disturbed, roused look on her face. Then, on the instant of his glance, she raised her eyes and fastened them upon him, with a certain difficult determination. He rose.

"Mr. Trench," she said, in a clear voice, "perhaps you will persuade Mr. George Tindall to sing now. It is his turn. I will undertake to let you talk to me the whole of the time; and you may, if you like, use the opportunity to be disagreeable."

A smile began to gather about the corners of the tutor's mouth as he drew near. George first looked wrathful; then he broke into a good-natured laugh.

"How you do give it to a fellow, Miss Jean, for vexing you! I am sorry, Mr. Trench, if I was rude."

"Don't apologise, George, for surface rudeness. Aren't you going to sing, as Miss Jean suggests?"

"No, I'm not," he stoutly asserted, "since she cannot sing with me."

"How thrilling you are to-night!" Jean sarcastically observed.

"That is because you are so cool."

"Cool!" cried Jean, throwing back her head with a laugh, and glancing involuntarily at Mr. Trench. "That is the first time I was ever called cool. I *do* like it!"

"Then you like to be called what you are not?" the elder man asked.

"Decidedly; it flatters me. But, at any rate, I am not cool towards such roses as these," and she stretched out her hand to the glass that was placed near her, and drew out a scarcely opened flower.

"Is that to be George's reward for saying what pleases you?" he asked, in a sharp voice. He thought he saw in the action a trace of coquetry that displeased him; while she had only been pressed for something to say.

"Probably, since you say so," she remarked, with elevated eyebrows.

"Then give me the rose as a keepsake," demanded George, who was disposed to make hay while the sun shone.

"What! and I have just chosen it for myself."

But he was not to be thwarted. With a man's masterfulness, and a boy's love of a squabble, he put forth his hand to take it with gentle force. Jean was secretly alarmed, but quite resolved, in the face of such a witness, not to yield. She hastily held the rose away, and shielded it from a snatch with the other hand. But he had already seized her small hand with his strong one, and was, without compunction and in spite of her resistance, opening the slim fingers, when Mr. Trench interposed.

"George," he said, in a voice that cut like a knife, "touch the rose at your peril! Miss Jean gives it to you if she likes, but you do not take it by force."

George drew back at once. "Ah! well," he contented himself by saying, "I will have it one day, for all that. And then it will have been worn."

"That may be," Mr. Trench observed.

"As if you would like it, faded and spoilt," Jean said, trying to joke, in spite of her ruffled feelings.

"I should like it better, and you know that," George insisted.

But Mr. Trench would hear no more. He walked away with a face that expressed more than disapproval; and Jean hailed her mother's appearance with relief, as it put an end to a conversation that was beginning to distress her.

Still, George found an opportunity, when universal "good-nights" were being said, to add one word more.

"You would not give me that rose because he was standing by; I know it. And yet you pretend you have not changed."

"Have I changed?" Jean asked, with flashing eyes. "Perhaps I have. Perhaps once I would have given you the rose because he *was* standing by."

The rose was safe at her throat, and stayed there. Mr. Trench seemed to see neither it nor her; he was gone without a word of leave-taking.

"Dear, dear," exclaimed excitable Mrs. Rogers, when the ladies were left, with the dull sense of the dispersal of an electrical atmosphere, "what attention you *do* get, Miss Jean, from the gentlemen!"

Jean did not take the compliment kindly. She simply announced that she was going to bed, and limped off with her arm round her younger sister's shoulder. Lillie herself, as she flitted about her helpfully, and put her rose carefully into water, remarked, with gentle admiration, "You looked awfully pretty to-night, Jean."

Jean astonished her by bursting into tears on her shoulder. But the tears were soon dry, and she laughed a little.

"Don't mind me," she said. "I am out of sorts with this stupid sprained ankle, and with being kept in the house so long. It is the oddest sensation, to feel happy and miserable by turns."

Lillie seemed to have no clue ready for the unravelling of these mysterious feelings, and she merely kissed Jean sympathetically.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

SOME days later Jean and Lillie were alone in the parlour of Plas Tan-y-craig.

"Lillie," Jean remarked, "I shall go downstairs this afternoon."

"Oh, Jean!"

"Only into the garden. I am tired of being indoors."

"What will mother say?"

"Well, I am prepared to meet mother's objections when I have done what I want. I have been cooped up long enough. And, really, she cannot mind; the Tindalls and—and everybody are out of the way, aren't they?"

"Yes; they went out with their rods a while ago."

"I thought I heard them; they made such a fuss going through the garden. Now, Lillie, my hat—the sailor one with the white ribbon—and my white wrap; quick, quick!"

These were soon donned, and Jean was hopping heavily down the stairs on Lillie's shoulder.

"What a noise I make!" she said, in a whisper; "I hope no one will hear."

"There is no one to hear," Lillie philosophically assured her, "except Mrs. Jones in the kitchen, and I suppose she doesn't matter."

"No; *she* will not guess we are stealing out without permission, like naughty children." She laughed gleefully. "But see, Lillie; the parlour door is ajar, and a smell of smoke is coming out."

"That is nothing. A smell of smoke is always coming out. The amount of tobacco and cigars those men must consume is appalling to think of. I wonder what would be said of girls if they spent half the money on a personal indulgence?"

"What a moralist you sound, Lillie! You must have heard Maria say that."

"Arthur Tindall does not smoke nearly as much as George."

"Oh, does he not? So you have observed a difference?"

"Yes; why shouldn't I?"

"No reason at all. Now, let us go round to the side garden. There is a nice shady place there, and a bench under an old apple-tree. If you will fetch a footstool for my lame foot, I can be very comfortable. And no one will find us out."

And there she settled, while Lillie took a camp stool and sought the shade of the nearest tree. They were still close enough to talk.

"Jean," her prudent sister inquired, "what made you put on your clean muslin this afternoon?"

"Who can say?" Jean enigmatically answered her. "I think it must be because I was determined to be thoroughly bad to-day, to do what I wanted without regard to consequences—a soiled dress or mother's wrath."

"'I CAN'T THINK YOU ARE AFRAID OF ME.'"

Jean said this in a dreamy, happy voice. The world in its freshness seemed very pleasant to her. Her eyes strayed from the garden and the grass—where veronicas opened their porcelain-blue buds, and shadows shifted with the wind—up to the bits of blue sky that showed between the breaks in the apple-tree foliage. Then, all at once, at a slight sound, they dropped; and with a changed expression she looked to where Mr. Trench was making his way across the grass.

"Well, retribution has not fallen on you so far," he said, in answer to the speech he had overheard, "whether it comes later on or not; the dress is at present immaculate, and your mother is not here. Unless, indeed, it has come in me." There was a slight pause, in which Jean made no attempt to speak, and he went on: "I think myself fortunate beyond hope to out-manœuvre such watchful guards as yourself and George and Mrs. Langton, and to find you once more as good as alone." He had come close to her, and had his back to Lillie.

"I can't think you are afraid of *me*," Jean remarked, with what she tried to make an unembarrassed air, and a little touch of resentment, "or you would not make such speeches."

"I am immensely afraid. But, like you, I have plenty of determination in doing the things that I want to do. But how are you running the gauntlet of your mother's wrath this afternoon?"

Jean looked at him, relieved and smiling. "Oh, it is only in coming downstairs. She is out, and she does not know."

"Is that all? I can help you up again before she is back."

"What, and connive at insubordination? No, indeed; she will have to know, of course; and besides I don't want my time of enjoyment cut short. I think, possibly," looking at him saucily, "if you want to save me from getting into trouble, your best plan will be to go back to your cigar."

"Ah! you knew I was in."

"I did not," she protested; "but I guessed whose cigar it was I smelt as I came downstairs."

"I am not going back, however disturbed your mother may be at sight of me, as you seem to imply: except, by-the-way, for cushions; for whoever fixed you here did it very uncomfortably."

Jean's hurt leg did indeed begin to feel stiff; and she was glad when the tutor came back, a few minutes later, with cushions and a rug, to change her posture.

"Put your back against the tree-trunk at the end of the bench," he advised. "With a pillow behind you it will make a capital support. Then there will be room for your foot to be stretched on the seat; let me lift it."

He did it gently and carefully, and wrapped it and the other neat and slim ankle in the shawl.

"Oh! that is ever so much easier. I cannot think," Jean continued, "how you come to be so handy, when you have had little to do with womankind."

"Perhaps that is the reason why I am so handy. I have had to look after myself."

"You seem to be able to look after other people, too."

"You think so? That does not agree with what you said about me in the cottage."

Jean blushed. "Oh! I did not mean that you could not help others if you cared enough, only that you didn't care."

"And you think there is no case in which I might happen to care?"

At this question she wished to avoid his eyes, which had a singular and alarming expression in them; but she was inconveniently placed for the purpose. He had taken a seat on the end of the bench along which she faced, and, with his elbows on his knees, was leaning slightly forward. She accordingly answered with some tartness, "I have no conjecture to offer on the subject."

He laughed, though a frown settled almost instantly on his face.

"By-the-way," he said, looking at her fixedly, "has George happened to get the rose he boasted about so arrantly the other night?"

"Certainly not! But I don't know why you ask, or why you talk so constantly of Mr. George Tindall."

"Is it more reprehensible for one person to speak of him than for another to think of him?"

A flash came from Jean's eyes. "How I wish," she contented herself with saying, "that I were able to get up and walk away!"

"Ah! thank you for the hint. But unless it is repeated, with even a less degree of vagueness, I shall not take it. And don't you deserve all the punishment, Miss Jean, that I can give you?"

"So you are pleased to say. And I, as a woman, can make no reply to teasing insinuations. Do you think it is nice or kind to make them, when no answer is possible? or considerate to broach a subject that *I* cannot touch, where the man has all the advantage?"

"Nay, are you guiltless?" he justified himself. "Who had the advantage to start with, in action if not in speech, and used it too, mercilessly and cruelly?"

"I think, once for all, we had best have the matter out," Jean cried, "and you can plainly tell me what you mean." She was roused. Stifling all self-blame, she was prepared to defend, or deny, or acknowledge, as she thought fit; but to quarrel certainly to the bitter end. And Mr. Trench's looks were dark and moody, rather than angry; yet not yielding or compromising.

"Now say, if you please," she repeated defiantly, "what it is you accuse me of."

Then suddenly, as their looks were bent on one another, there was a movement from the bench, and a thin volume with parchment back slid down into the grass.

"Ah! it is the book you lent me," Jean remarked, as they both glanced down. "As I have finished with it, you had better take it back."

He mechanically raised it, and the leaves opened at a place where a crushed flower lay within. A rapid change came over the expression of his face; he closed the book, slipped it into the pocket of his coat, and said, without looking at her—

"We must end this matter another time, for here comes George Tindall himself. Perhaps you will tell me then, what I very much wish to know—what rights he has that entitle him to the place by your side he continually claims."

And sure enough, George was striding across the garden towards them, with a dark look on his young face. Lillie, however, caught him up as he passed her, and strolled on with him.

"Good sport, as usual," she said, as she peeped into his fishing-basket. "How we shall miss the trout for breakfast when we get home!"

"Ah, well, but it's no use talking about that yet."

"Oh, yes, it is; we are going on Saturday. Hasn't Jean told you, Mr. Trench? Mother has decided quite suddenly; and we are all so disappointed."

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

THE last day of the Langtons' stay at Tyn-y-bran had come. The afternoon was drawing to a close when Jean escaped from the packing that was occupying the other ladies, and with her travelling-hat on her head, prepared for a quick run down to the lake. She said to Lillie, who was on her knees before their joint trunk, carefully placing her folded dresses therein, that she should go to see if she had left her boating-gloves in the boat, as they were nowhere to be found in the drawers.

"And come after me, Lillie, do; I know your patient soul is weary, and it is really too dreadful to be penned up this last day. We can finish to-night."

When she had searched the boat, that lay moored to the landing-stage, and peeped under its benches without finding the bundle of rough leather, she did not turn again to the pathway that led to the house, but wandered with slower step to a little grove of stunted oaks, that grew on the margin of the lake. There was shade there, and shelter, too, from observant eyes; she seated herself on a rickety and worm-eaten bench, and listened to the lapping of the water on the stony shore. Jean was as near sadness as she had ever been in her life. Her pleasant summer holiday was over, and she seemed less willing than on any previous occasion to face the blank of the return. Instead, her thoughts turned instinctively back to the last few days. She wondered why they had been so unsatisfactory. Her foot had mended, and she had been out for drives with her mother, and for short walks with her sisters. But it had seemed very flat, stale, and unprofitable; a certain sense of expectancy she had entertained unawares had never been fulfilled. She had a baffled feeling that her party had more often just missed an encounter with their fellow-lodgers than actually met them; and when a meeting had taken place, it had invariably been short and casual, and she had seemed no longer able to exercise her self-willed control of the group of which it consisted. Was this to be the end of it all—the stupid, meaningless end, and were the sport and pleasure to vanish into the past without the flourish of a final farewell? She had heard her mother, in a casual encounter that morning, convey to the gentlemen, in politest phrase, the assurance of her party's complete absorption in the business of packing; she had also heard that she insisted on saying good-bye to them, then, lest there should be no further opportunity. The men had taken her adieux very quietly; not even George had raised a protest; and Mr. Trench had merely remarked that if he could be of use in any way, in ordering a carriage or looking out trains, she must let him know.

Did they really mean to take that as their dismissal, or would they come up to-night, after all? It would be too ridiculous not to say good-bye, after all the friendly intercourse there had been between them. And her thoughts began to stray past the vexations of the last few days to the full and pleasant details of that intercourse.

But there had been hardly time to touch upon them before she heard a step, and saw George Tindall coming towards her. She was unfeignedly glad to see him. She smiled a very pleasant greeting, without knowing how bright and soft her smile was made by the pensiveness of her present mood. But Jean was not inclined to the sentimental in conversation, whatever her thoughts might be.

"Have you seen my gloves?" was just the sort of query she was glad to have at her disposal. "I was sure I left them in the boat, but I can't find them now."

"Aha, Miss Jean! So what made you steal a march upon us, and go off in the boat yesterday, when we were out of the way?"

He looked buoyant and happy as he stood before her, being very much pleased that he had followed her up so easily and successfully. She smiled up at him in a moment's silence. She was not going to tell him that nothing but a certainty of the gentlemen having gone on a long expedition would have induced Mrs. Langton to let them use the boat.

"Then you have got them," she presently said, thinking that looks were becoming too communicative.

"What if I have? I have a right to a forfeit, I'm certain."

"Give them to me, please."

"What will you give me for them?"

"What would you like best?" Jean asked, rallying her spirits. "A new artificial fly, warranted to deceive all manner of fish; or an ugly, curious puppy; or a special kind of 'crib,' to get you through your next exam. with the smallest possible amount of reading? I haven't any of these things at my disposal, unfortunately, so you will have to let me off."

"But there is something you have that I should like better than these."

"And what is that, pray?" arching her eyebrows.

"Well, that rose you wore the other night, which you refused because Mr. Trench was there."

Jean's cheeks became suffused with red, and she turned her head away. George, perhaps, mistook the action.

"I never promised it," she answered evasively.

"No, I know you didn't. But I want it all the same, especially as that insufferable prig robbed me of it at the time."

"He did not!" she retorted hotly; and George fancied from her tone, though she still did not look at him, that she was angry. He seated himself by her, and spoke persuasively.

"Come, Jean, don't let us quarrel the last evening."

She turned to him with a relieved and smiling face, and caught up the new topic.

"No, it would be a pity: perhaps the last time we shall meet; and it has been so pleasant."

The regret in her tones was unmistakable.

"Yes, it's been awfully nice. But it won't be the last time, of course."

"No? Why not?"

"I shall come to Middleborough."

"Oh, nonsense! You will go back to Oxford, to all the pleasures and pastimes there (you see I don't mention the study: it is so insignificant an item); and I shall go back to my home and my work. Perhaps we may each have a little corner cupboard in our minds, where the memory of the sport we had one summer time at Tyn-y-bran will be locked. And sometimes I shall unlock mine, for the thought of our pleasant comradeship, and all the fun we have had together, will be worth turning over sometimes. But not often; mostly, of course, we shall be too much occupied to turn the key."

"Is that all? Do you think that will satisfy me? And won't you want to see me, just as I shall want to see you?"

The tender confidence of his tone was no longer to be ignored. Jean's neck stiffened in its line, and she looked at him fully. "I don't understand you," she remarked.

"Don't say that," he persisted. "You know very well how much I care for you; and you like me, too; don't you, Jean?"

Jean suddenly started up. "Like you?" she repeated in clear tones. "I like you very much indeed. But comrades—friend and friend, or brother and sister—do not ask if they like one another. It is foolish."

"No, but men and girls do, when they love each other." George's looks were beginning to glow—though he had risen, too, and there was some assertion in his tone.

"I know nothing about that," Jean remarked, grandly, throwing up her head. "Let us keep to the point, if you please, or there may be danger of our not parting the friends we have always been. And I should be sorry for that."

"You don't mean to pretend," George said, with growing irritation, "that our intercourse has never gone beyond friendship?"

If Jean flinched she did not show it. "On my part, never," she answered; "and not on yours,

"'WHAT WILL YOU GIVE ME FOR THEM?'" (*p.* 199).

either, I think. I thought you understood. We were friends, there was no harm in it; and I didn't see why we should repress our friendship because—because some one happened to disapprove of it. You knew all this."

"But later there was a change."

Jean wavered for an instant; then she said, "You have deceived yourself."

"You do not love me?"

"No!" cried Jean, with blazing eyes.

"Then I have been very greatly deceived," George retorted, his wrath breaking loose. "Pray, if your friendship for me has been on so brotherly a footing, how has your enmity to Mr. Trench stood?"

The blood rushed into Jean's face; but she managed to keep her eyes steady.

"Now, I shall not answer you," she said, in a guarded voice. "It is surely enough that I have so carefully to explain that I am not in love with you, without your going farther in the way of disagreeable suggestion. I wonder if all men are so? You make me almost regret our friendship, which I thought was so true, and frank, and genuine. Oh! go; lest it should be broken for ever, and the memory of it spoilt."

And George, defeated and discomfited, with a cold, bitter feeling of disillusion in his heart, turned, and without another word, stalked away.

Poor Jean! she sat down on the bench humiliated and ashamed. She, who had been so proud of her maidenly freedom, of being fancy-free in thought, she had had to insist to a young man that she did not love him. Had any one else made the same mistake as he? This catastrophe—for it was no less than a catastrophe—seemed to justify her mother's care and the tutor's fears. Had her escapade, after all, been a mad one? She had played with the fire of flirtation, following the dictates of a defiant spirit, and it had burnt her and another. Her liking for George had been genuine; her friendliness towards him perfectly frank. Yes! yes! that had been right enough; but what had driven her on to displaying it with marked emphasis—to parading it before the eyes of others, as if to say, "See this comradeship between youth and girl, this sympathetic attraction, and think of it what you like"?

Regardless of consequences, she had started on the self-willed road that had become so difficult to turn back upon, and now had brought her to an unlooked-for point. She hated to think of it all: hated to think of that first start, and why she had made it; of the undercurrent of feeling that had carried her on, that had deceived George, and possibly herself; that had produced this humiliating mistake, and closed the matter by a finale of a rejected and angry lover.

She leaned her head against the gnarled bole of an oak-tree, and sobbed in a sort of regretful rage. It was a relief, and it checked her unpleasant thoughts; but it was an unwise indulgence in her present position. For once more her solitude was broken in upon; and this time she did not hear the approaching steps until they were close upon her. Then she looked up, to find the tutor standing before her. Instantly she rose, and her tears vanished as if a fire had dried them, while she braced herself for the coming contest. But for a second she could not command her voice to speak.

Mr. Trench was regarding her with a decided scowl on his face. "So, you have been crying?" he commenced, without greeting of any sort. "May I ask why?"

"You may ask," Jean answered, who now looked tolerably calm, though very pale; "but I need not answer."

"Oh, you mean to take it that way. I will find out, however, for all that. George is the cause of these tears, I am certain; I met him coming away."

"Since you know, I wonder you trouble to ask."

"Why do you cry?" he persisted. "It is not usual, I suppose, for young women to weep when young men confess their devotion to them and tell the story of their love—especially when it is very generally known that the interesting recital is certain to take place, and when, indeed, it has been arranged for from the beginning. You have, perhaps, put off the happy moment by mistake, and now regret it."

Jean was perfectly white now, and her eyes were blazing. "I did not think," she said, as she confronted him, "that it was in the power of any one to hurt me as you have done. The first time I ever saw you, your look was like an insult; and your speeches have cut me ever since. I should like you to know, as this is the last time we shall meet, that I am not exactly what you thought. It is hardly possible for you, with your subtle, clever mind, to believe or comprehend a woman who does not lie or scheme. But I will tell you, for my own satisfaction, and for the benefit of the next woman you may meet, that I did not intend to marry Mr. George Tindall from the beginning, as you have kindly insinuated; that I did not even mean him to propose to me, nor ever dreamt of accepting him."

"You certainly meant me to think you did."

"Ah! was not that your own fault? It seems a pity to disappoint expectations, even the worst that may be formed of one's conduct. I wish I could have married him, for that is the thing you most dreaded and liked the least, and which you were at such manifest pains to try to save him from. But not even to bestow a well-merited revenge could I do it. A woman may be, though you do not know it, simply sincere in her friendships, and yet proud in her affections; she may be reserved in her thoughts, even while she is frank in her expression of them. She may not aspire, though you cannot think it, to marry any man she meets, or be continually scheming to better her worldly prospects."

Jean stood, as she delivered this tirade, with her well-poised head thrown back in scorn, her whole light figure, in the tension of its attitude, breathing protest and indignation.

"And now we are at an end, I hope," she concluded. "I am glad, once for all, to have had my say. It is a relief to have answered all your covert taunts, to tell you what I think of them and—you!"

"No, we have not done," he said, in a low, decided voice, as he came nearer. "I have something to say. You have been pleased to judge me very harshly, to

perversely dwell upon and magnify all the little points of judgment upon which we have disagreed in these last few weeks of our intercourse. And I am not going to ask you to forgive me those unworthy suspicions I formed when I first saw you, for you have known long since that my opinion was changed, and that if they re-appeared now and then, it was in a greatly altered form. You have revived an old grievance because I indulged in a little speech. You have delighted, indeed, to give prominence to a semblance of suspicion in me that would bear another interpretation. We will not discuss only one half of the question, if you please ; we will go to the bottom of the matter. You have taken no account of other feelings that have been at work amongst us ; you have ignored—so completely as to be suggestive—something you must have begun to suspect. The situation is not simply made up of your friendship for George ; your enmity to me, which has incited you on to the display of it ; and his boyish love of you. There is another element to be taken into account—there is my love for you ! "

He paused, while Jean tried to hold her glance to his ; then, wavering, let it fall.

" It is true, and necessary to be told, though you must have known it before, and might have understood too why my speech was sometimes bitter when I would have had it gentle. Yes, I—who am experienced, and cold, and cynical, as you have given me to understand—I am mastered by my feelings for a girl who has delighted to defy me. It is a humiliation, indeed, to have to confess it to her. But then," he went on rather hurriedly, with a softer tone in his voice, " she is so beautiful, so bright and frank, that I would not willingly part from her, even to keep my pride intact. I am hopelessly gone. I please myself with thinking that her nature is the only one to suit me ; that she will always be candid and true, that she will always love her friends and hate her enemies (I wonder if there is ever a mixing of the two ?). I want her ; do you hear, Jean ? I want her altogether. I am oppressed by a continual want of her."

Jean's head was not erect now, and she tried to disguise the softened look on her face.

" But you said something very different just now," she objected.

" You know the reason why. I was unreasonably jealous to find you crying when George had left you. And before you send me off, angry and humiliated like him, just tell me why you cried ? It was not because he had gone ? "

" No, indeed. He—he thought I loved him, and he told me so."

" The young pagan ! And you did not ? "

Jean shot him a glance of indignant reproof.

" Is there any one you could love, do you think ? " he inquired insinuatingly. " Could you ever barter your proud maidenly freedom for a great love, for a man's love ? "

A smile crept about Jean's mouth. " Well," she admitted ambiguously, " if I got to know him very well, and if he never made disagreeable insinuations, and never was suspicious, I might perhaps, in time, care a little bit."

But Jean's ground, that she was anxious not to lightly yield, was at once cut from under her feet. She felt an arm about her suddenly, and a face, so strange and yet so known, was close to hers, and quick kisses were pressed on her lips. She fell back when they were given, shame-faced and dismayed. " Mr. Trench ! " she cried, in remonstrance.

But he was not at all ashamed. " Oh, Jean," he exclaimed, " have done with your ' Mr. Trenches ' and your ' in a little whiles.' Say at once, ' Arnold, if I don't love you now, I will do very soon."

But Jean was coy. " Will you, if I say it, not look at me ? "

" Oh, nonsense ; you are not shy."

" I am, truly," and she laughed a little as she tried to recover her self-possession.

" This is strange : Jean lost her courage ! Then give me your hand."

" Well. Now, turn your eyes away." She crept closer and spoke low. " Arnold, I will not love you very soon "—she dwelt on this ; then hurried on—" because I love you so much now that I think my heart is full."

This concluded the whole matter. The victory was his. " Ah ! Jean," he cried, " you are sweet as well as proud. Never again shall you give me flippant words and scornful looks. You are mine ; you have confessed it."

But Jean had still a word to say to this ; and it was a good while later that the two sauntered back towards the house. As they skirted the garden, the sound of voices behind the bushes caught their ears.

" Good gracious ! " the tutor exclaimed, in tones of unconscious dismay ; " it is Arthur, making love to your sister ! "

" Never mind," Jean consoled him roguishly—" whatever your own fate may be, your boys are safe. Lillie will refuse him, I know."

And even then they heard Arthur's voice raised in wounded dignity. " Then, if I am a boy," he proudly said, " I shall come back and get my answer when I am a man."

" So he will," Mr. Trench remarked in a low key to his fellow-listener. " And I am much mistaken if he does not get one he likes. His is a true and steadfast nature, and improves with knowing. But, poor lad, he has to wait for a happiness that is already mine."

This reflection caused him to look at Jean expressively. He still held her hand, and she looked back at him ; and it was at this absorbed moment that they were surprised on one hand by Mrs. Langton and George, who had come out to seek Jean, and directly after on the other by Arthur and Lillie, who emerged from the bushes, distraught and ill at ease. Thus surrounded, the pair looked guilty ; Jean blushed a fiery red, and turned to flee. Mr. Trench was chiefly conscious that the eyes of his pupils were upon him, but he valiantly kept Jean's hand and went up to her mother.

" You might as well know at once, Mrs. Langton,"

he said, "that Jean has promised to marry me, and I hope you don't disapprove."

The amazed looks of all but George were evident. Lillie started and gazed at Jean with the red coming into her own cheeks. Then she turned to look at Arthur, who was fixedly watching her. In the surprised face of the mother a certain relief began to dawn.

"This is very premature of you, Mr. Trench," she remonstrated. "You ought not to have spoken to Jean yet."

"No more premature than the fixing of your departure from Tyn-y-bran," he remarked, smiling, "which brought it about. Meanwhile, it is done, and we can hardly change it now."

Jean, humble and shame-faced still, had escaped to George, who stood apart with a sombre countenance.

"Forgive me," she said, with a strange gentleness, "for all I said unkind this afternoon. It was my fault, no doubt. I was so deceived myself that I don't wonder I deceived you."

George held the proffered hand in a crushing grasp. "I don't find it easy to forgive," he said. "But I will come and tell you when I do; for after all your friendship is too dear to me to lose it without regret. I will try some day to regain it. But never again, for summer sport, make fast friends with a senseless idiot of a man. It is too trying: it turns his head."

Mr. Trench had come up and heard his words. "She never shall, I promise you, George. But I warned you against it, if you remember, to begin with."

"Ah! yes, sir," Arthur interposed, "but you gave another reason, don't you know? If you had said, now, that we had better look out, as you meant to cut in and win yourself——"

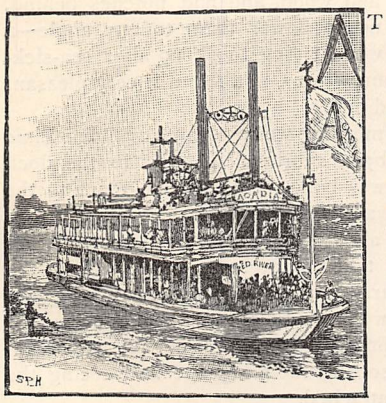
There was a little laugh, in which Mr. Trench was forced to join, but Arthur found that the tutor's eyes met his in a sympathetic glance.

"The first mistake perhaps was mine," the elder said; "but mistakes may help to make lives; and they never need to mar them, as George will find."

THE END.

*** *Next month will be commenced a New Serial Story by the author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers."*

A LADY'S EXPERIENCE IN THE "INTERMEDIATE."



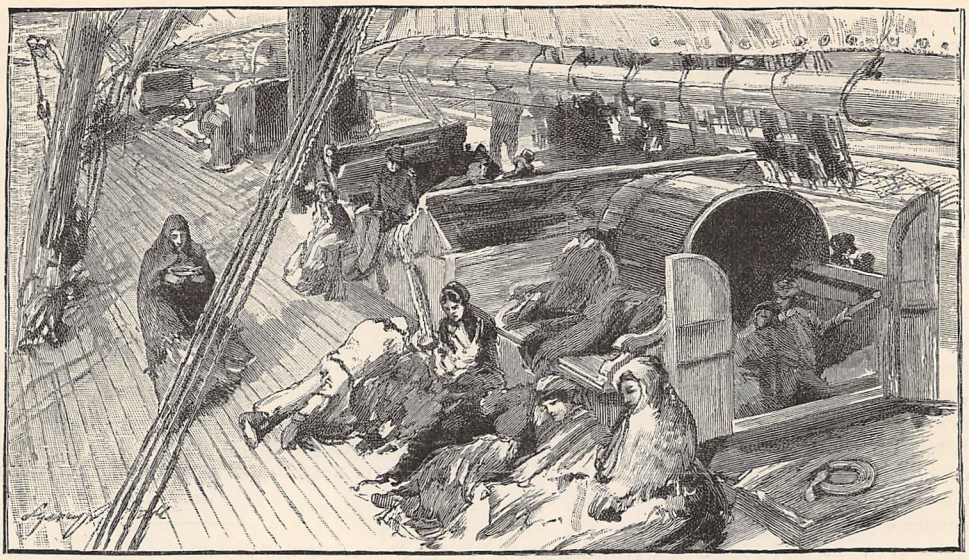
AT the present time, when the thoughts of so many are turning towards Canada as a home; and when the very fact of their contemplating emigration presupposes a necessity for careful calculation of expenses, particularly on the journey, so as to leave as much available capital as possible for the building of the new home; it may be interesting to ladies considering such a step to know that it is not only not impossible, but really very possible, for them to travel "intermediate."

I am encouraged to write this paper, remembering the horror expressed by some, and the doubts of all, when, having made up my mind with my two daughters to join my son in Canada, I announced my intention not to go in the saloon. I may mention that the money saved by this went far to pay for the carriage of the furniture, &c., we took with us. We were going to make a home in that distant land, so carried our household gods.

We started the first week in May, leaving Clifton on the Wednesday; supposing, from the announcement on the tickets we had received when we paid the deposit on our passage-money some weeks before, that it was imperatively necessary that we should present ourselves at the Allan Line office in Liverpool the evening before the day of sailing. This we found, from more than one fellow-passenger, was not the case. They had sent the balance of their passage-money to the agent a few days before, and then travelled by night, reaching Liverpool early in the morning, thus avoiding what, to ourselves, was the most disagreeable part of the whole journey, and, considering the accommodation offered, the most expensive—a night in Liverpool.

Leaving my two daughters in the hotel, my sister and I found our way to the shipping office. Here all was easily arranged. Having paid the remainder of our passage-money, we received our tickets, and a bundle of flaming red labels marked C. P. R., to insure our luggage being transferred at Quebec to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

We had brought with us a flat basket, three-quarters of a yard long and thirteen inches high, packed with provisions to supplement the ship fare, and also for the long inland journey in Canada. It contained tea, coffee, biscuits, marmalade, sugar, beef essence, condensed milk, sardines, anchovy paste, tinned meat, enamel cups, saucers, and plates, teapot, saucepan, kettle, and spirit-lamp. I would recommend all intending emigrants to provide themselves with such a basket. Ours was constructed like a common hamper, and was made at the Blind Asylum in Clifton. It was



"EVERY ONE BEGAN TO SYMPATHISE WITH EVERY ONE ELSE" (*p.* 205).

lined throughout with American cloth, and had a strip of this fastened along the middle of the lid inside, with divisions for spoons, knives, forks, corkscrew, &c. We had also a tin jug for water. The basket was the greatest comfort, and, being so low and the top flat, it made a most convenient table for me as I lay in my berth.

We had also each a small cushion half a yard square, having a loose cover of Turkey twill, and a long loop of red braid to hang over the arm. These were most comfortable when sitting on deck. A case made in the shape of a bolster, three-quarters of a yard long and one-quarter of a yard in diameter, made of ticking, opening in the middle, and closed by an American rug-holder, held our sleeping garments, brush and comb, &c., pocket-handkerchief, an eiderdown quilt, and towels. It was wonderful how much we managed to squeeze into these little receptacles, which, when full, made most comfortable pillows. We were also provided with cabin-pockets, the work of kind and thoughtful friends anxious to smooth the difficulties of the journey as much as possible for us. These cabin pockets were made of strong striped red ticking. The width of the ticking made two. They were half a yard long, after a deep piece of the stuff had been turned up at the bottom, and divided by rows of stitching into pockets. The four strong curtain-rings at the top, from which they hung, were covered with red button-holing, and a small needle-case of flannel and pincushion of Turkey twill were fastened in front of the pockets. We had a store of drugget-pins, like exaggerated drawing-pins, by which we fastened up these pockets, and a large bag of waterproof, covered with Indian cretonne, on our cabin wall. This latter held sponges, soap, &c. Our umbrellas were in a case made of the same ticking as the cabin pockets. We rolled it up with our wraps, which consisted of waterproof cloaks and warm red blankets, the whole fastened into a pack all impervious to rain. This list seems a long one, but we did not find we had one unnecessary article. Our deck chairs were, as usual, very long in the back. They were of plain canvas and wood, and had notches behind, which allowed us to lower them to any angle—a comfort indeed when trying to sit up after sea-sickness. We had four with us, and found it very pleasant to be able to lend one.

On Thursday morning we rose early, and left Lime Street Station by a short rail leading to the dock where the ship was lying. She was so close to the shore that we walked with our smaller packages to the shed where all luggage was placed. Our larger boxes had been taken by an agent straight from the station on our arrival in Liverpool. A regular gale was blowing as we battled along to the large covered shed, where we first caught sight of our fellow-passengers, who were sorting their luggage and seeing the C. P. R. labels attached.

Our luggage consisted of tin boxes, portmanteaus, and one bale. From experience, I would now recommend intending emigrants to take tin boxes, but to be sure that they are strapped as well as locked. The locks are very apt to get broken in the rough usage they meet with—though none of ours had this fate. All soft things which cannot be injured by pressure should be packed in American cloth and then sewn up in canvas. Such a package weighs only its contents, and the wrapper is most useful on reaching one's destination; and the tin boxes are invaluable for stores, being proof against damp and mice. Be sure to have painted on each package a distinguishing mark, such as a cross, star, or circle, in vivid red or blue. Among so many hundred packages, all more or less alike, one gets bewildered

in choosing one's own, and, heaped up as they are, it is often most difficult to see the address. I had in my pocket a piece of red chalk, bought months before at one of the stations on the Underground Railway, and several people borrowed it to make a distinguishing mark on their packages.

The waiting in this place was very tedious; but at last we identified our luggage, pointed out what we should want on board, and passed over the gangway, wondering how and under what circumstances we should cross it the next time into a new land. We made our way at once to the intermediate saloon, into which all the cabins opened. In this ship—the *Parisian*—they are exceptionally well-placed, being on the same level as the saloon cabins. Having been shown our own cabin, corresponding to the number on our tickets, we rejoiced to find it held only four berths, the remaining one being occupied by a very quiet and pleasant fellow-traveller. Having hung up and otherwise arranged our different properties, we returned on deck and sat for several hours.

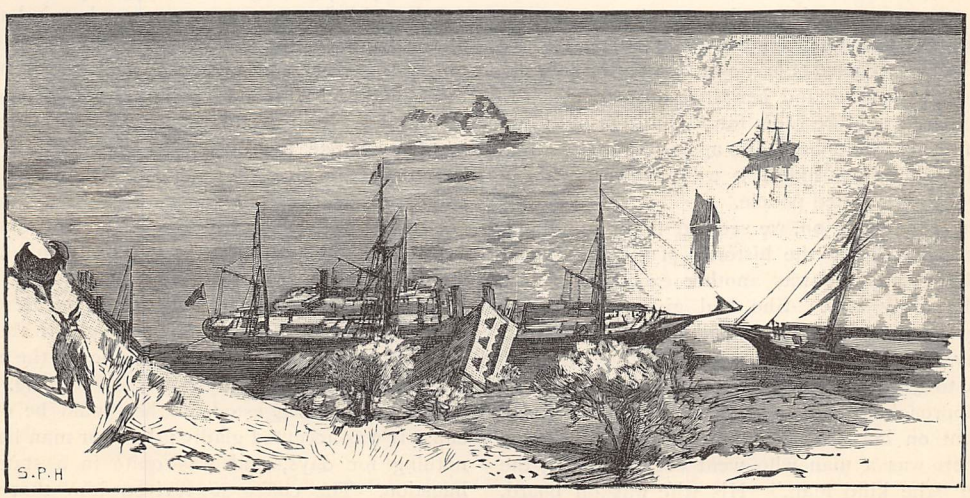
The boat left Liverpool at half-past three, and, as it was still very windy, we retired to our berths, which were very clean, and quite as comfortable as I have found any first-class berths in other boats. We can never say enough of the kindness and attention of the stewardess, who, with nearly fifty to wait upon, seemed always to have time and a pleasant word for every one. It may seem a small thing; but it was most refreshing to see her always looking so fresh and neat, with the most beautiful head of hair I ever saw on a person of her age—always smooth, when every one else was looking more or less wan, washed-out, and dishevelled. It did me good to look at her.

At dinner-time the stewardess brought beef-tea to all who were unable to eat dinner. Most excellent beef-tea it was; and when tea-time came, and we could not even consider tea and bread-and-butter, she produced some of the same beef-tea cold, which she had reserved. At eight o'clock we had some very good gruel, and this beef-tea and gruel continued till we were convalescent.

Two mothers, each with two young children, had a cabin next to ours, and early in the morning I used to hear the stewardess carrying in cups of sop for the little ones, long before the regular breakfast was ready. On Sunday, a clergyman on board held a service in the saloon; we were too ill to go, but our cabin companion managed to struggle up, and came back to tell us how much she had enjoyed it. The sermon was most appropriate, being on the text, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths," and was specially addressed to the emigrants, encouraging them in their enterprise. This Sunday was poor Catherine's birthday, passed in her berth, a strange contrast to the sweet, quiet country home where on a sunny day in May she first saw the light. When the children, recalling that she was born on a Thursday, used to quote the old rhyme, "Thursday's child has far to go," we little thought how true the words would prove in her case.

But, though we were all so miserable bodily, we never lost heart, nor had a doubt as to our having entered on the right path.

On Monday morning, Dolly and I made a desperate effort and reached the deck, poor Catherine remaining in her berth, all her usual roses gone. It was a lovely morning—blue sky and sunshine—though still windy and cold. It was then we found the advantage of the little comforts we had brought—as the pork chops, &c., of the bill of fare made us shudder, and to venture below again was not to be thought of by myself. Dolly made occasional journeys to see after her sister, and kind hands were always ready to guide her along the slippery deck. Now every one began to sympathise with every one else. Those who were not sea-sick themselves moved about cheering the pale, limp, reclining figures. One such good Samaritan brought us some delicious home-made bread-and-butter—the first thing we could eat. From what I



SUNRISE ON THE ST. LAWRENCE: A VIEW FROM THE CITADEL, QUEBEC.

saw then, I felt what an advantage it would be to every party of emigrants if one member could be chosen who was a good sailor, and so could help the others.

We had been told that it would be too disagreeable for us to be in such close contact with the steerage passengers; but let no such false idea deter any one from taking an intermediate passage. All our intercourse with them, and all we saw and heard, made us feel that the world was a better place than many think it; or can it be true that dear old England is driving out from her midst her best children to find in a distant land the food and room she cannot give them? There were sisters going out with, or to, brothers; aged mothers leaving behind them a lifetime of custom and association to make a home for the children; even uncles and aunts going to make a home for orphan nieces. One began to feel that family affection, which had seemed to us somehow to have begun to die out in England, still lingered strong and fresh in the hearts of these poor people. A family home!—the dream of our lifetime—it was their dream, too—a haven to which the children could always return, sure of a welcome. The son who might be sick, or fail in life's battle; the daughter whose happy married life death had prematurely shortened, leaving her and her little ones to face the world; there would be room for all, and the old place by the fireside would be theirs again. The dream of one's life; and one found it was shared by these simple, unsophisticated people.

"IT WAS ACCEPTED GLADLY."

As the time went on, we seemed to know almost every one, and heard the histories of many of them. Our cabin-companion was another example of this unselfish family love. She had given up a most excellent confidential situation, which she had filled for many years in the family of one of the late Lord Mayors, to go to a married sister, who longed for her in her approaching hour of trial. An orphan herself, dependent on her own exertions, she was sacrificing all. There was a man who went everywhere by the name of "the kind man." His wife was on board, with several children, the youngest a tiny infant. This good man took entire care of what I may call "the old baby," a little creature who could scarcely walk. It slept in his berth, and he was always seen, with a smiling face, carrying it about. There were several mothers on board with tiny children, going to join their husbands, and I noticed the kind way in which every one helped them. We had observed that one of these mothers, who had a baby in arms and a little girl of three, was always accompanied by a friend, who led the eldest child by the hand, and devoted herself to the children generally. Great was our astonishment to find that they had never seen one another till they met on the ship. "Oh," said Miss James, in answer to our expression of surprise, "when I came on board and found Mrs. Harris was quite alone, I felt it was something for me to do." Any mother will appreciate to its full value such unselfish kindness. We travelled afterwards with them on the railway; and one night, when the baby was very restless, Miss James sat up the whole night with it in her arms, that the tired mother might rest. Every time I woke, I saw her sitting upright, with the poor, fretting little thing clasped to her.

I despair of conveying to any one's mind the idea of the fellow-feeling which seemed to me to join all during this voyage. Each produced his or her little hoard and shared; and I would beg any one of my own rank travelling "intermediate" to provide herself with more than her own party require, and particularly to get the best tea and coffee that can be procured. A steerage passenger will always contrive to get boiling water, and it is so pleasant to hand round cups of these fragrant drinks to those who, after their terrible sea-sickness, turn from the ship fare.

One day, when most people were convalescent, we were drinking our coffee and sharing with those near us; Catherine pointed out to me one of the steerage passengers, a most respectable, sad-looking, middle-aged man, and suggested that he should be offered a cup. It was accepted gladly; the poor man had eaten nothing for days, and was quite in a state of exhaustion. The coffee so revived him that he was able to eat a piece of roll-and-marmalade, and then

he told us his little story. He was a mason from Cornwall, where he had a nice little home, cows, &c. He had come out to take up land, and then send for wife and children. He evidently suffered from home-sickness as well as sea-sickness, poor man. I shall never forget his gratitude, which seemed so entirely out of proportion to the little we had done for him. It quite startled me to hear his feeble voice earnestly praying that "it might be returned to us a thousand-fold both in this world and the next." I think, whenever things seem not quite prosperous in our new home, we shall remember the prayer of that poor man, and feel that it will bring us a blessing.

A dear old woman of over seventy was among the steerage passengers. She was travelling with three daughters, the husband and two children of one, and a young man friend. The old lady had kept a green-grocer's shop in London, she told me; but she had two sons in Canada, and she wanted to make a home for them. This was a most affectionate family party. The daughters hovered incessantly round their mother with cushions, shawls, and offers of food. They had brought a feather-bed with them, sewn to the size of the berth, that the bed might be soft for her aged bones. We often sat by her on deck, and wondered at her courage, for often when she came up in the morning she looked so pale and fragile; but she survived the journey, and we saw the whole party for the 'ast time on the platform at Quebec, all dressed in their best, and evidently starting on their long railway journey in the best of spirits.

One afternoon a good, earnest steerage passenger held a sort of little service on deck. The next day an attempt was made to have a concert and recitations. The captain, doctor, and saloon passengers were among the audience; but the high wind made it impossible to hear the performers, and it was adjourned to the next evening, when it was held in the steerage. On Friday the saloon passengers gave a concert, to which the intermediate passengers were invited. A collection was made for the Sailors' Orphan Home in Liverpool. The music and recitations were excellent, and one of our number made a capital Punch-and-Judy showman.

Before the end of the voyage every one was required to show their vaccination-marks to the doctor, or submit to be vaccinated. This, it seems, is a stringent and very wise Canadian law. One passenger refused absolutely, and on our arrival at Rimouski—the first port—a Canadian medical officer came off in a boat, and there was a long delay, ending fortunately in the stubborn passenger giving way, thus saving us, we were told, five days' quarantine.

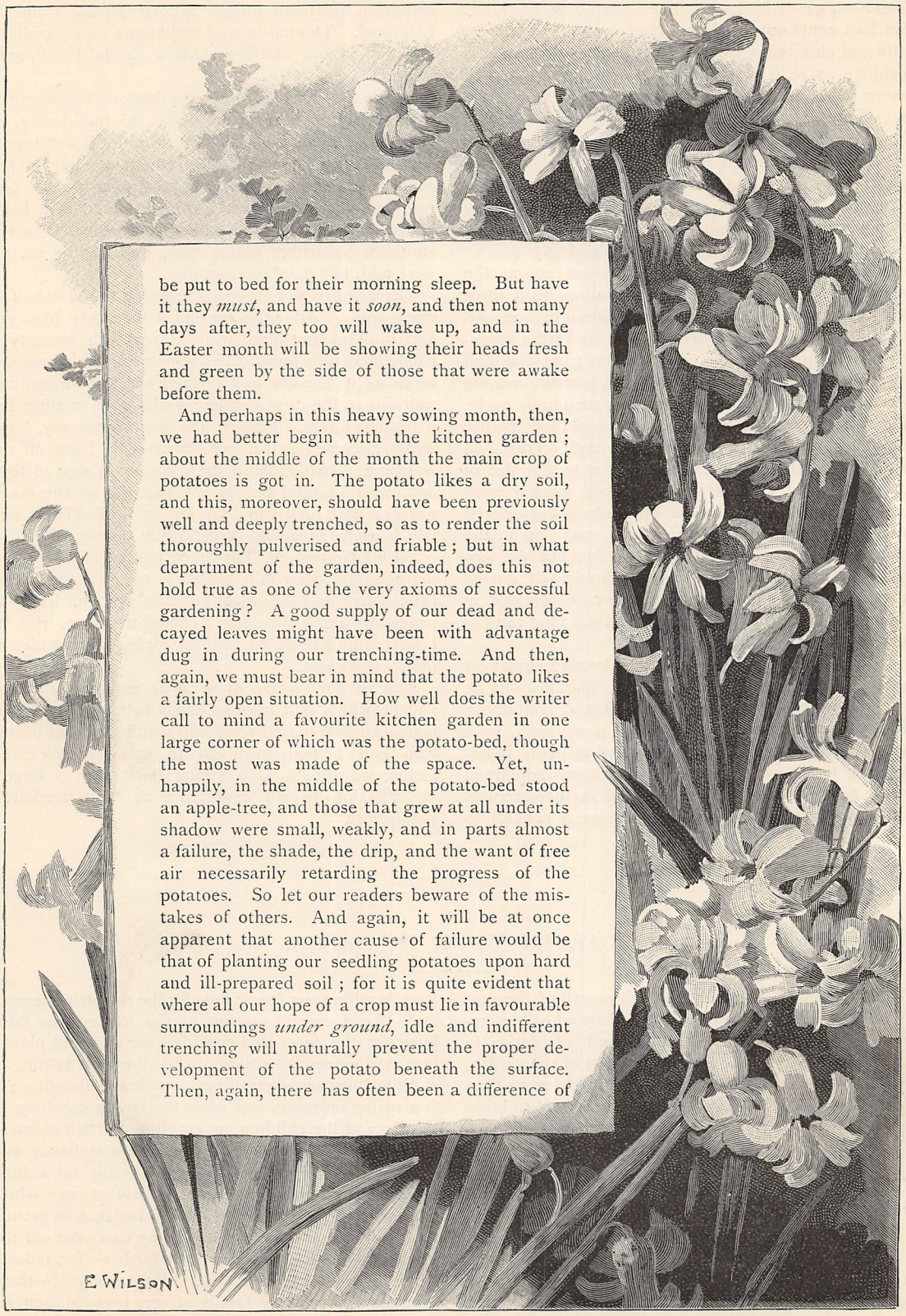
The weather was very windy during the first half of our journey. After this we had a cloudless blue sky and brilliant sunshine, while a sea with scarcely a ripple floated us onward to our new home. It seemed to us as if Canada had opened her arms in smiling welcome to the poor wanderers who were trusting her with their future. I heard the stewardess say, "the weather seemed as if it were bespoke." Even off the Banks of Newfoundland there was not a sign of fog; and, with grateful hearts, we thought of the many prayers that had gone up for us in England, and which were being so wonderfully answered. The beautiful Gulf of St. Lawrence reached, we felt our journey was over practically, as we saw the pretty little villages, each with its tiny church, lying so peacefully along the shore; each little farm, with its land running down to the sea, giving one the idea of plenty and room.

And so our voyage drew to an end—the dreaded voyage which had been so much better than all our fears—and we parted reluctantly with the kind people who had helped so much to make it pleasant, feeling we should always look back with a lingering affection to our experience as "intermediate" passengers.

GARDEN WORK IN MARCH.

THOUGH each month of the year necessarily brings with it a certain little round of duties in every department of the garden, the month of March, more than all the rest, may be said to bring with it a complete and formidable round of work that is paramount. For what have we been doing all over the garden during these last two months of January and February? We have been merely, more or less, getting things into training; perhaps the chief, and certainly a very important, operation has been a thorough trenching, while most other matters have been precautionary, protective, preparatory: guarding against frost, washing our flower-pots for the re-potting season, and, like a careful matron in the nursery, we have been for the most part watching our dormant plants, just as she does the children while they are asleep.

Now, however, everything is suddenly changing; it is a spring morning, and while the lark is carolling in the sky and the children are carolling in their cribs, so also are numberless green points in our flower and kitchen gardens crying out unmistakably for a little attention to be paid to them. In fact, our whole garden, that some time ago went to bed, is now getting up. And not only so; but if we may carry out our not inapt simile of the nursery a little further—for, indeed, is not a garden frequently called "a nursery"?—there is another very large family of very tiny children indeed, in the shape of seeds, that are all impatient to



be put to bed for their morning sleep. But have it they *must*, and have it *soon*, and then not many days after, they too will wake up, and in the Easter month will be showing their heads fresh and green by the side of those that were awake before them.

And perhaps in this heavy sowing month, then, we had better begin with the kitchen garden; about the middle of the month the main crop of potatoes is got in. The potato likes a dry soil, and this, moreover, should have been previously well and deeply trenched, so as to render the soil thoroughly pulverised and friable; but in what department of the garden, indeed, does this not hold true as one of the very axioms of successful gardening? A good supply of our dead and decayed leaves might have been with advantage dug in during our trenching-time. And then, again, we must bear in mind that the potato likes a fairly open situation. How well does the writer call to mind a favourite kitchen garden in one large corner of which was the potato-bed, though the most was made of the space. Yet, unhappily, in the middle of the potato-bed stood an apple-tree, and those that grew at all under its shadow were small, weakly, and in parts almost a failure, the shade, the drip, and the want of free air necessarily retarding the progress of the potatoes. So let our readers beware of the mistakes of others. And again, it will be at once apparent that another cause of failure would be that of planting our seedling potatoes upon hard and ill-prepared soil; for it is quite evident that where all our hope of a crop must lie in favourable surroundings *under ground*, idle and indifferent trenching will naturally prevent the proper development of the potato beneath the surface. Then, again, there has often been a difference of

opinion as to the size and quality of our seedlings, or "sets," as we otherwise call them. Some advocate planting whole and entire quite large potatoes; others cut them into pieces or slices, always, of course, providing that each piece has two or three eyes; perhaps, however, the generality of us are accustomed to plant whole the small-sized potato. So that when the harvesting and storing period comes round in October, you will generally find a gardener, as he is digging them up, have two, and sometimes three, little heaps or classes of potatoes by him—one for the kitchen, another of small-sized ones for sowing, and the third —alas! sometimes necessary—a heap of failures and bad ones for the pigs. Let your main crop be in rows some foot and a half from each other, and plant, using the dibble, not less than five or more than six inches deep; afterwards have the soil raked thoroughly and well over them, but not stamped or pressed tightly upon your crop. Too shallow planting might disastrously expose the tubers to frost; for we must not forget that though the winter proper is supposed to have gone, the winter improper not infrequently returns. Who of us, indeed, can forget that last year in some parts of the country we literally realised the fact that "snow in harvest" was by no means the anachronism that some of us imagined, when we saw the golden grain, after being long sore puzzled as to how to ripen, waving about finally over the whitened and wintry carpet? We have thought it well in this month of March to say a good deal about the potato, seeing that it is one of the staple supplies of every household—only, indeed, next in importance to bread itself. Continuing our sowing process in the kitchen garden, we might briefly notice a few other operations of the kind.

Carrots.—These should be sown on well-pulverised soil. The seeds being, from their nature, rather disposed to cling together, separate them by first of all rubbing them together with a little dry sand, so as to avoid sowing in clots, as it were. This plan will afterwards save you the trouble of much thinning out.

Celery.—This must be sown in a warm situation if in the open garden, but a better plan is to sow at first under a hand-glass or in a frame, pricking your young plants out later on.

Spinach.—This can be sown in drills or broadcast, but in drills is the better plan. Have your drills a foot apart, and see that you sow quite thinly, as you must recollect that you have by-and-by to thin out to some six inches apart. And why also need this thinning-out process involve some waste? for if you have been thoroughly cautious in sowing thinly, there will be not only less seed used, but less thinning-out afterwards to do; if, on the other hand, you have sown too thickly, the crop will grow so thickly that a very early thinning will be necessary, when the plants will be too small for kitchen use; whereas spinach thinned when the plants have gained a fairly respectable size can all be used in the kitchen and sent to table.

But our sowing just now is certainly not confined to the kitchen garden. All the round of hardy annuals may be sown this month in the open flower garden. We adverted just now to the peculiarities of the summer of 1888; many of us must have also noticed the effect of that strange season on even our hardy annuals—such, for example, as our sweet peas. In a hot and dry summer these lovely and favourite flowers have generally but a short life of it, as once in bloom, and if exposed to a long and hot day's sun, the petals soon become bleached and withered. In July, 1888, owing to the absence of all sun and plenty of rain, the writer noticed very few blooms on one favourite row; but in the genial warmth of the following October the whole bed was in the perfection of flower: in fact, between three and four months later than the usual blooming time. Such is our English climate. To be fore-warned, however, is to be fore-armed; and now, as we are just entering on a period that often oscillates between winter and summer in the same fortnight, we shall do well to prepare, as far as we can, for all emergencies.

THE CHOICE MATRIMONIAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED."

TO choose a life-partner well is one of the most difficult and most important things in life. "O me! the word 'choose'!" for many young people cannot choose whom they would or refuse whom they dislike, or do not much care about, unless they are content to remain all their lives in the unnatural condition of celibacy. "Mrs. Grundy" is a very exclusive old lady, and our social conditions are of such a cast-iron condition that it is impossible to marry out of the set or clique in which we live. The consequence is that each young man and young woman has practically only two or three to choose from. This, of course, hinders the operation of the natural law of the marriage of the fittest.

But suppose young people have the opportunity of choosing, on what principle should they make their choice? The idea of the great electrician Edison's marrying was first suggested by an intimate friend, who made the point that he needed a mistress to preside over his large house, which was being managed by a housekeeper and several servants. Although a very shy man, he seemed pleased with the proposition, and timidly inquired whom he should marry. The friend somewhat testily replied, "Any one," thinking

that a man who had so little sentiment in his soul as to ask such a question ought to be satisfied with anything that wore a petticoat and was decent. Woe to the man or woman who follows such careless advice as this, and marries "any one," for what was said by the fox to the sick lion might be said with equal truth to Hymen—

"I notice that there are many prints of feet entering your cave, but I see no trace of any returning."

But though there is need of caution, I do not think that one is wise in choosing a life-partner from prudential considerations only. I must say that I believe in falling in love, and think that marriages with a little romance in them are more likely to turn out happily.

"Tell me where is fancy bred, or in the heart or in the head?" The word "fancy" in this little song of Shakespeare's means love, and I think that we shall be giving the right reply to the question if we say that this fancy or love should spring from the heart rather than from the head. That, at least, is what nature says. A young man is drawn by a mysterious and irresistible attraction to a young woman. The first time he sees her he says, "If ever I am married, it will be to her." And when he is known to have fallen in love, his friends say, "Well, I never could see what Mr. So-and-so saw to like in Miss So-and-so." The very inexplicability of this feeling shows that it is nature's prompting, telling him that the young woman is the complement of himself, and as such, most capable of making him happy. An old rustic once said—

"If every one had been of my mind, every one would have wanted to marry my old woman."

A friend replied—

"If every one had been of my mind, no one would have wanted to marry her."

So it is that each eye forms its own beauty, which is a capital provision of nature for some of us who otherwise would not have been able to get married at all. Mr. Ruskin says that a great many difficulties arise from falling in love with the wrong person. This, of course, is true, but though instinct is not infallible, it is, if it be a healthy one, that has not been spoiled, the best guide we have.

There is no saying that some moralists, especially ugly ones, are so fond of repeating as that "beauty is only skin-deep." I think this is a skin-deep saying. Beauty is often the outward and visible sign of good health, and therefore of good temper. A rounded figure, a clear complexion, bright laughing eyes, good teeth—these are not to be despised, for they show that the person who possesses them is healthy. Physical beauty in woman is, indeed, what primarily attracts men. In this they only follow the order of nature—the beautiful Divine provision to save the human race from degeneracy by causing the survival of the fittest. Then we must remember that the highest kind of beauty is that which reveals intellectual, moral, and spiritual capacity, and this leads us to speak of that most important factor of matrimonial felicity—character.

An Irish magistrate asked a prisoner before him if he were married.

"No, your honour."

"Oh, then, it is a good thing for your wife," was the reply.

It is a very good thing for herself when a woman has had enough good sense to refuse a man about whose character she knows little, and perhaps nothing that is good. A lady would not like to let a servant into her house if she had only what a servant-girl lately said that she had, a fortnight's character from her last place. With even less than this, some women will marry husbands, and vow to love and obey them! Some even say that they do not mind a man being a little wild. Those who marry men of this kind are like their mother Eve, who "knew not eating death." I do not believe in marrying a bad man, in a missionary spirit, intending to improve him. Such a man will improve his wife off the face of the earth before she improves him. A man need not hold exactly the same views as his wife, but if his heart and life are uninfluenced by the spirit of true religion, he is very unlikely to make home happy.

"Who can find a virtuous woman?" Alter the question, and put it in this way: "Who *seeks* for one?" Men about to marry seek for everything else in a woman except character, and then complain when they feel the inconvenience of this deficiency, because they have not got that for which they never sought. A Scotch minister's wife falling asleep in church, her husband thus addressed her :—

"Mrs. B., a' body kens that when I got ye for my wife, I got no beauty; yer frien's ken that I got nae siller; and, if I dinna get God's grace, I shall hae a puir bargain indeed."

Without the grace of God a husband or wife will not be able to control their passions and tempers, and without self-restraint it is impossible to imagine domestic happiness. Indeed, after drunkenness, gambling, and some other kinds of gross sins, there is nothing which destroys the peace of homes more than temper, in some of its many nanifestations. The butler of a certain Scotch laird, who had been in the family a number of years, at last resigned his situation, because his lordship's wife was always scolding him.

"Oh!" exclaimed his master, "if that be all, ye've very little to complain of."

"Perhaps so," replied the butler; "but I have decided in my own mind to put up with it no longer."

"Go, then," said his lordship; "and be thankful for the rest of your life that ye're not married to her."

It is, indeed, a matter for thankfulness not to be married to a woman with a temper of her own, of which she is unselfish enough to give to her husband the full benefit.

Sir David Baird and some other English officers, being captured by Tippoo Saib, were confined for some time in one of the dungeons of his palace at Bangalore. When Sir David's mother heard the news in Scotland, referring to the method in which prisoners were chained together, and to her son's well-known irascible temper, she exclaimed—

"How I pity the lad that's tied to our Davie!"

How much more to be pitied is he or she whom

matrimony has tied for life to a person with a bad temper!

It is, of course, very difficult to know about the temper and other characteristics of one with whom we have fallen in love. How easy to appear at one's best during a *lover's* visit! "Men were deceivers ever," and even women can do a little in that way. Indeed, the cheat is often managed on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened during the wedding ceremony, and that by a strange imposture, as in the case of Jacob, one has been courted and another married. A friend of Robert Hall, the famous preacher, once asked him regarding a lady of their acquaintance—

"Will she make a good wife for me?"

"Well," replied Hall, "I can hardly say—I never lived in the same house with her!"

It is one thing to see ladies on "dress" occasions, and when every effort is being made to please them; it is quite another thing to see them amidst the varied and often conflicting circumstances of married life. We have all heard the old conundrum: Why are ladies like bells?—Because you never know what metal they are made of until you *ring* them.

And yet a small straw shows what way the wind blows, and there are little indications which enable us to make a pretty good guess as to the kind of husbands and wives men and girls will become. Are they good sons and brothers? are they good daughters and sisters? In his "Advice to Young Men," Cobbett warns them against marrying lazy wives, for they will make their servants and children lazy. "But how," he asks, "is the purblind lover to ascertain whether she whose smiles have bereft him of his senses is industrious or lazy?"

In answer to this question several outward and visible signs are suggested, such as early rising, a lively, distinct utterance, a quick step, "the labours of the teeth; for these correspond with those of the other members of the body, and with the operations of the mind."

Then we are told of a young man who, courting one of three sisters, happened to be on a visit to her when all the three were present, and when one said to the other, "I *wonder* where *our* needle is?" Upon which he withdrew, as soon as consistent with politeness, resolved never to think more of a girl who possessed a needle only in partnership, and who, it appeared, was not well informed as to the place where even that share was deposited.

It is to be feared that there are some people who are incapable of affection. They will never become "thoroughly domesticated," for they are so hard that if you were to bore a hole in them sawdust would come out. Do not choose for a life partner one of this nature.

Above all things, do not marry a fool. A husband fool is bad enough, but a wife fool is worse, for the husband fool can be managed by his wife, but no one can manage a foolish wife. Archbishop Whately defined woman as "a creature who does not reason, and who pokes the fire from the top." The wife who does not and cannot make use of reason to overcome the daily difficulties of domestic life, and who can in no sense be called the companion of her husband, is a mate who hinders rather than helps.

At the same time, it is useless to seek for perfection. The man who will not marry till he finds a perfect wife, must necessarily remain always unmarried. He is a sour grape hanging by the twig of obstinacy on a wall of great expectations, and the one thing to be said in his favour is that he has missed the opportunity of making a woman miserable.

"My intended must have three things," said a man to his friend—"she must be handsome, rich, and stupid."

"Why these three?—explain yourself."

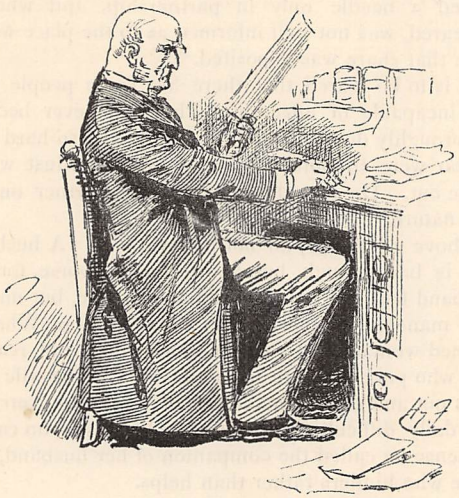
"Well, she must be handsome and rich, or else I will not have her; and she must be stupid, or else she will not have me."

GROWN-UP CHILDREN.

JUST as there are many children—mere babies in years—who have quaint grown-up ways, there are many grown-up people who are wonderfully like children. This child-like character is quite a different thing from the attempt to be juvenile. Nobody believes in the sincerity of the lady of forty who says that she is for all practical matters a child of fourteen, and who trades upon her helplessness till she bores her friends to the verge of distraction. All imitations are such failures that they are not even worth remark; but the genuine grown-up children are well worth observation.

First there is the professional man who has a secret liking for marbles. He always feels that he would play marbles if he dared. When he thrusts his hands into his pockets he expects to feel a rattling cluster of "commoneys"—which, alas! shall never be there again. One of the losses of growing up has been the loss of all his boyish "larks," and especially of marbles—and perhaps of leap-frog. But he never breathes these things to mortal ear, except in the most con-

fidential manner at the close of a long evening. He may be a lawyer, who works hard at his profession. He may be—as in the instance we have in mind—a doctor whose earnest care and kindness make him anxiously sought for by sufferers. But when this man escapes from the law, or when he has done all that



"BUSINESS FIRST."

"PLEASURE AFTERWARDS."

can be done for his patients, his face grows younger even unto boyishness. He is full of fun, and his eyes, which have been all day full of lawyer-like gravity, or helpful sympathy, all at once begin to twinkle with the vivacity of a schoolboy. He relaxes more and more according to the company he is in. If he loves his friends very much, he will become for them by turns a brass band rolled into one, or a yard of cocks and hens. But these freaks are unsuspected until you have got into the very core of his confidence. The man who likes marbles is, professionally, a man of grave aspect, and, what is more, a man of talent, which is, perhaps, only another name for hard work. A happy nature can afford to buckle down to work hard; perhaps that is the secret of the man's success :—

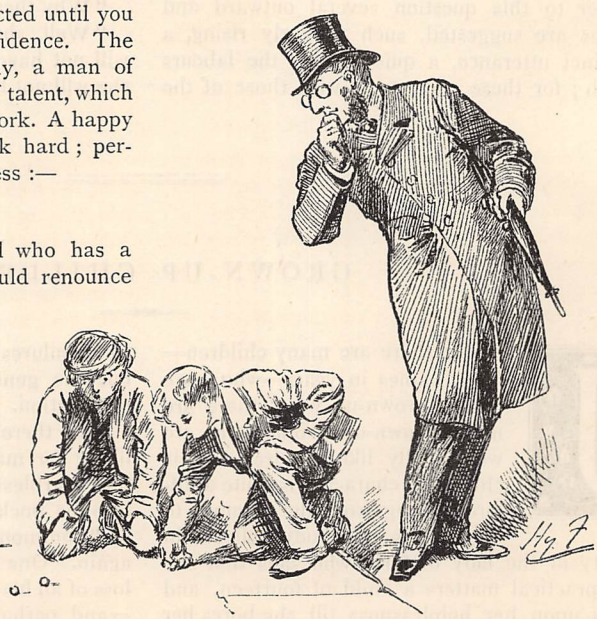
"A merry heart goes all the day,
A sad tires in a mile-a!"

Secondly, there is the grown-up girl who has a weakness for dolls. She wishes she could renounce them for ever; but she can't. The girl of this kind has always at least one old doll saved up, since the days of the nursery. She only keeps it in a drawer; but she won't part with it. One of them — in her first London season—was reminded by her mother that the old doll ought to be given away.

"Give away my Peggyolina!" she exclaimed; "you might as well ask me to give away a piece of myself."

So she kept Peggyolina triumphantly; and in her next season in town bought a dolls'-house of gigantic size, merely because she had seen it in a window, and having perceived that all the dolls' rooms had real doors that opened with real knobs, she found that she could not live without it.

These doll-loving girls are soft, gentle, and winning. They, mostly, have a fine amount of character of a tender, womanly sort. Of course nobody knows about the doll upstairs in the drawer, or the dolls'-house in the disused school-room; but one does know that a certain depth and a sweet spice of originality are in the girl one sees. She is not vain, or the thought that is spent on the relic of childhood would be spent on



"THERE IS THE PROFESSIONAL MAN WHO HAS A SECRET LIKING FOR MARBLES" (*p.* 211).

herself instead. She is true—true even to her old toys. Of course, there is a medium in all things, and there is an unfortunate extreme to this character. There was a bride elect, tall and nineteen, who found that she had to pack her trousseau and start for India with her new lord and master; and she had never been able to tell the lord and master that she had nine dolls. Strangely enough—in these days, when the children's hospitals are always ready to take in old toys—she never thought of giving her large family away; she resolved to destroy them. But how? To burn them seemed cruel. The kindest way seemed to be to drown them; so, as she was staying at the seaside, she took the nine down to the beach, and put them to float on the ebbing tide. But when she saw the dear creatures bobbing up and down, the girl waded in and fished them out again. After her humane efforts to restore them, wiser heads suggested that they should be given away.

"THE GROWN-UP GIRL WHO HAS A WEAKNESS FOR DOLLS" (*p.* 212).

There is at present living a learned professor at one of the universities who is noted for being of a childish temper. He has a string of letters after his name, and he has written more than one treatise that is held as a high authority in his special branch of science. He is easily amused, and easily vexed; and when he is vexed, he pouts.

Other learned men have something of the child about them in a very different way. To be childish is a folly, but to be child-like is a gift; and they, with all their height of intellect, are sometimes gifted with a child-like spirit. They have, in these cases, so strong a sense of truth that their ordinary talk is direct and simple to the last degree—or shall we say the brightest degree? With them there is no *arrière pensée;* you speak to them, and they speak with the straight honesty of children. They do not pretend to know all about everything, as men of smaller minds do; they tell you of what they are ignorant, and ask about it. Their perfect sense of truth allows no waste of words; they say willingly what they would like you to hear, and you may ask whatever you wish. Friendship with a noble mind of this type has one quality in common with friendships made with children; it ripens at once. You see the man once, and you remember him always.

There is another class of grown-up children—those who by loving children very much have become in some way like them—not those who care for their own children only, but those who are free citizens of child-world, and make a habit of fraternising with its inhabitants. Stooping to converse with little ones, and to answer their innocent thoughts, they themselves come back to our world with a sweet scent of childhood about them. Unconsciously their looks, and tones, and ways give traces of a likeness to the children that they love; just as after coming from a foreign land we bring a faint suspicion of its accent in our speech.

In conclusion, one may take it as a rule that there is something lovable in grown-up children. They are easily pleased, direct in speech, and ready, as the phrase goes, to "take to" the friends they meet. And surely these are qualities worth caring for. What is more, they are qualities within the reach of us all. We cannot imitate grown-up children; imitation becomes mimicry. But we can be really child-like—and we all remember Who told us to try.

"I MUST MAKE MY WILL!"

BY A BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

IN the diary of a late distinguished diplomatist appears the entry, repeated almost daily for many months, "I must make my will!" Sometimes the words vary. One note, for instance, is to the effect that he was on his way to his solicitor's, but turned back because it began to rain; another that he was prevented by some other like trifling *contretemps*. But all agree in forming a striking instance of that fatal habit of procrastination which so often affects those advanced in years. It is almost needless to add that the will was never made, and that a large fortune thus passed away from those who would have enjoyed it — and to whom it had been repeatedly promised—to strangers.

The story is one of every-day occurrence. In the matter of making their wills, it is a remarkable fact that often the most business-like men and women are terribly remiss. On one excuse or another the step is put off often until it is too late altogether, or the judgment is clouded and the mind weak, while the trembling fingers can hardly hold the pen. It is necessary, therefore, to say at once that, except under very special circumstances, it is a very serious act of omission to put off making a will. Every man or woman who has anything to leave behind them, whether it be little or much, and any one to whom they desire to leave it, ought not to delay a moment in performing so solemn a duty.

It is almost a crime to leave property to be distributed according to the rules which apply to intestates' estates. In one case, which came before the writer some years ago, a man who had invested the whole of his own and his wife's fortunes in freehold land died suddenly intestate, with the result that his widow and daughters, instead of being left well-to-do, found themselves absolutely dependent upon the heir, who would only consent to make them an allowance during pleasure. The intestate of course never contemplated such a contingency; but those who put off making their wills year after year are generally absolutely ignorant as to the rules which will govern the distribution of their property in the event of their death without a will. Yet, as commonly as not, owing to a silly superstition that if they make a will they will die soon afterwards, the act is put off again and again even by men who are rational in all the other duties of life. But it is needless to discuss the causes for that fatal procrastination which finds expression in the common phrase, "I must make my will!"

There is a general belief, which it is hopeless to attempt to eradicate, that the making of a will is a terrible piece of work. It is commonly thought that a will must be couched in legal phraseology, and be full of the pedantic redundancies with which legal instruments bristle. Nothing could be further removed from the truth. So long as certain very simple conditions are fulfilled, the more plainly and simply a will is expressed the better. It is only under very special circumstances, when the testator wishes to provide for certain contingencies, which may or may not happen, or when the property is very complicated in character, that any real difficulty in expressing his intentions commonly arises.

The difficulties and disputes arising out of home-made wills are generally not so much due to the fact that they have been drawn by the testator himself, instead of by his legal adviser, but to his having made use of some legal words or expressions without understanding their force and effect. One old lady, who wished to leave her money among her nephews and nieces, on her sisters' death, in equal shares, for example, made use of the fatal word "issue," with the result that after her death, and that of her sisters, at an advanced age, her property was divided into some hundreds of shares. But if she had used the word "children" as she meant to do, her will would have been perfectly good, and her evident intention carried out. Of course some people are incapable of expressing their intentions in plain language, often saying exactly the reverse of what they mean.

Others, again, do not even take the trouble to ascertain what they have to leave. Napoleon Bonaparte, for instance, bequeathed magnificent sums by will, and otherwise disposed of them by gift, to the great disappointment of his legatees. An old lady, again, who had been faithfully attended by a companion for many years, in her will only left her the "money at my banker's," greatly to the joy of the family, which was changed to chagrin when it was found that most of her securities had, either by accident or design, been sold out, and the money paid into the bank, so that the lady in question got the bulk of the fortune.

But the commonest mistake is to omit some portion of the property from the will altogether, and so to swell the residue out of all reason. Often, for instance, after-acquired property falls into the residue, although the testator would probably have otherwise devised or bequeathed it if he had re-made his will, or had added a codicil. It is, of course, always most important that there should be a residuary legatee, but the object which the testator should keep clearly in view is to see that the great bulk of the property is included in the will, unless it is intended to leave a large residue, or the chief beneficiaries are also residuary legatees.

But although there is no reason why many a will should not be written on half a sheet of note-paper in

simple language—and, so long as it is properly witnessed and executed, be a perfectly good will—there are probably but few people who will dispense with professional assistance in one of the most important transactions of life.

The future of all those who are near and dear is not a matter to be lightly passed over, and it is in nearly every case desirable, in order to avoid mistakes, that a will should be drawn under legal advice. We have already indicated some of the points which crop up in drawing wills, and these are themselves sufficient to deter most testators from drawing their wills themselves. We must, therefore, not be understood, in the remarks we have to make, to mean that laymen are to be recommended to try the experiment. Even the home-made wills of great lawyers, like Lord Westbury, have been successfully disputed, proving the truth of the adage that "the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client."

All that can be said is that, if for any good and sufficient reason no legal adviser is available, it is far better that a man should make his own will rather than none, and that he will avoid many dangers if he expresses it in the ordinary language of daily life, as simply and with as few ambiguities as regards both persons and property as possible. A will should be so drawn that it is perfectly intelligible to strangers.

Whether a man makes his own will or not, it is obviously necessary that he should ascertain what he has to leave, and make up his mind to whom he desires to leave it. The necessity for emphasising this simple precaution will be appreciated when we add that its omission is the cause of a very large number of the suits which come before the Courts.

Mr. Croker tells a story of the late Lord Hertford which illustrates the truth of these observations. Lord Hertford was so constantly changing his intentions as to the disposition of his large property, that he not only drew several wills, but made a pastime of adding to them codicil after codicil of his own composition. The will which was in existence at the time of the noble lord's death literally bristled with codicils, and such was the complication resulting that Mr. Croker, who had been promised a large legacy, only received £20,000, instead of about four times that amount. It is easy to understand that he would never forget the facts of such a story.

At the same time, it must be confessed that the adding of a codicil has sometimes been the means of preventing injustice and remedying wrong. It is often an easy matter to make any alterations which may be desirable in a will in this way, and it is far better to do this at once, as soon as occasion arises, without waiting to make a new will—a step which most men are always very unwilling to take. Of course when the codicils have accumulated so as to make an unintelligible jumble of the whole instrument, there is nothing for it but to consolidate them into a new will.

It may be stated as an axiom, that in cases in which there is any "tying up" to be done, skilled advice is absolutely indispensable. The technical phraseology which is necessary before anything of the kind can be satisfactorily accomplished, is, or ought to be, unknown to a layman. If he attempts to use it, it may be taken for granted that a considerable portion of his property will pass into the pockets of a bevy of lawyers engaged in the congenial task of "construing" his meaning. We are not now concerned with the settlement of real property, and the day is, it may be expected, not far distant when estates tail will be swept away altogether by Act of Parliament. But this said, it must be confessed that the creation of life estates is constantly the only available means of disposing of property fairly, and in some form or other—which it may be left with safety to the legal fraternity to devise—they will exist for ever.

So far as these and the like knotty points are concerned, it would, however, be idle to attempt to deal with them within the limits of this article; and for the purpose of disposing of any property in this way it will probably always be necessary to act under professional advice. And whether necessary or not, most people will be content to do this, since otherwise they cannot, under any conditions, be sure that their intentions will be carried out. Any testator who may have tried his 'prentice hand at "tying up" may rest assured that, unless he forthwith takes competent advice, he will die in ignorance of the effect of his own words.

But although it would be useless to discuss here such legal intricacies as these, we may mention some of the fundamentals of the law of wills. It is not, for instance, generally known that a will can be signed by any one at the direction, and in the presence, of the testator, or acknowledged by him in the presence of two witnesses. No attestation clause is strictly necessary, but since it saves expense in proving the will, it is invariably added. It usually runs:—"Signed by ——, the within-named testator, in the presence of us, who in his presence, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses." A witness, it should be added, can take nothing under a will—an elementary rule which cannot be too widely known, since many a fortune has changed hands through ignorance of it.

A will should be wholly written, and printed forms should, in any case, only be used as a guide. It is, too, of the utmost importance that it should contain no erasures whatever, and any corrections or interlineations should be signed by the testator, and "tested" by the witnesses. And here it may be remarked, that if it be possible to read the original words of the will they remain of full force and effect, notwithstanding any attempts which may have been made to blot them out. It is only when any words have been so effectually obliterated that they cannot be read, that any change made in this rough-and-ready way stands good.

This brings us naturally to revocation: a subject of curious interest, on account of the many questions which have arisen upon it. Practically there are only three ways of revoking a will:—

(1) Marriage;
(2) Destruction in whole or in part; and
(3) Revocation by express direction in another will.

The fact that marriage voids any will then in existence is, of course, known almost universally; but we make no apology for stating it here, since the rule is sometimes forgotten. A popular lady novelist, for instance, recently wrote a story, the plot of which turned upon the effect of a will made before a marriage, which is duly recorded.

With regard, too, to the destruction of a will, it is only safe to say here that it must be complete. Dozens of wills which have been partially destroyed have been admitted to probate. There is one well-known case, in which a testator tore a will, and cut it about, in the full belief that he had thereby revoked it. For years it was lying in his cellar amidst rubbish, but upon his death it was successfully set up and maintained. The revocation was held to have not been sufficiently complete.

Without going into the nice distinctions which have been drawn between what does, and what does not, constitute revocation, we may add that it seems to be enough if the signature of the testator and those of the witnesses be torn off, since the instrument thereupon ceases to be a will at all. Broadly speaking, however, much litigation would be avoided if all old wills were destroyed. A second will does not, as seems to be very widely believed, revoke a first, unless it expressly purports to do so. It is, as many people know to their cost, quite possible for two wills to stand together, and any part of the older will which can be construed together with the later will is good.

A great change was made on the 1st of January, 1883, in the powers of married women with regard to wills. Prior to that date a married woman could only make a will of what was known as her "separate estate," or of her property generally with her husband's consent. But now married women can, in most cases, bequeath property accruing to them after that date, although they will do well to do so only under proper advice. Women married within the last six years can, of course, dispose by will of all property belonging to them at the time or acquired afterwards, in all respects as if they were unmarried.

From all this it will be seen that there is a mass of technicalities surrounding the apparently simple matter of disposing of one's property after death, although we have only touched upon the fringe of that great monument of human ingenuity, the law of wills. We have said little which will probably tempt people to try so dangerous an experiment as to make their wills at home, unless their wishes are capable of simple expression; but we repeat that this alternative is far to be preferred to an intestacy. In any case, there is no good and sufficient excuse for the continued reiteration of that hackneyed confession of dilatoriness, "I must make my will!"

HIS OWN PROPERTY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A MAN OF THE NAME OF JOHN," ETC. ETC.

"'For green leaf, and blossom, and fine sunny weather,
And singing, and loving, all come back together!
For green leaf and blos——' *Oh!*"

THE "Oh!" was in quite a different key, and did not seem to harmonise with the rest of the song. Ellie Fairfax was equally surprised and disgusted to find that she had an unexpected auditor—a young man, who stood in the middle of the path, with an amused smile on his face that was quickly supplanted by a decorously grave expression as he saw that he had attracted her attention.

"I beg your pardon," he said, lifting his hat, "but I have completely lost myself in these woods. Can you tell me if there is any possible way of getting out of them? I begin to think that I have been bewitched."

He was rather a good-looking young man, dark and slight, with a spruce neat air that exasperated Ellie, who was instantly conscious of having come primrosing, with the boys, in her oldest clothes.

Nevertheless, she was a young person of dignity and decision, as behoves the only, and elder, sister of a large family of boys, so, despite her perilous position amid encumbering hazel-boughs, she drew herself up, and answered severely—

"I suppose you are aware that these woods are private property, and that you are trespassing?"

"Really I am extremely sorry if I have trespassed on your property," said the stranger.

His air of extreme regret somewhat mollified Ellie, who answered in a less forbidding manner—

"Oh, it is not ours, but we have leave to come here while the owner is abroad."

Therewith she emerged slowly from the clinging bushes, and arrived on the path a little dishevelled, being more intent on preserving her primroses than her raiment. In spite of her old winter gown and her general untidiness, she was a very pretty girl as she stood in the broad green ride, with the spring sunshine

falling on her through the leafless trees, and bringing out the gold tints in her abundant brown hair.

"I am afraid I can't direct you, for you would only lose your way," she said, looking up at the stranger with her frank grey eyes. "But we are just going home, and can take you as far as the gate, if you like."

with an amused smile, as the whole party set forth, laden with flowers and roots.

"Mr. Hayes has nothing to do with it," returned Bob promptly. "When he comes back I expect we shall be turned out, so we are making a new fernery and getting roots for the garden as fast as we can."

"'I AM AFRAID I CAN'T DIRECT YOU.'"

He accepted the offer with alacrity, and Ellie, turning from him, made the woods ring with shouts of "Boys! Boys!" that brought her brothers scurrying out of the underwood like rabbits in all directions.

"This gentleman has lost himself in the woods, and I undertook to show him the way out," she said confidentially to the eldest boy, Bob, as he came up exhibiting evident surprise at finding her with a companion.

"The owner must be very good-natured to let you plunder his woods like this," the stranger remarked,

The young man's amused laugh at the ingenuous explanation made Ellie feel a little guilty.

"I don't think we do any harm really," she said. "And this is our first spring in the country, so that we can't help going mad over the flowers and accumulating them wholesale."

The stranger assured her that he was certain that they were doing no harm, and entered warmly into the plans for the new fernery. The boys clustered round him, telling him their plans and adventures, won by his frank interest and amusement. Ellie

walked on in front, enjoying the beauty of the woods in their spring dress, and listening idly to eager voices behind her. She could not help liking any one who got on so well with the boys, and by the time they reached the gate she felt quite friendly towards the intruder.

"We part here, I suppose," she said, facing round as they entered the meadow beyond the woods. "That path to the left leads to the village. But I should recommend you not to trespass here again, or you may get hopelessly lost."

"I will take care in future; I am much obliged to you," said the young man gravely.

But he stood watching, with a look half amused, half admiring, as Ellie moved onwards, a tall lithe young figure amid her body-guard of boys.

"What a jolly chap! I wonder if he lives near here?" said Jim, as he slipped a grubby paw into his sister's arm.

"Yes, he does; so I asked him to come and help us with the fernery, and he said he would," said Bob.

"Oh, Bob! You didn't!" cried Ellie.

"Yes, I did. I expect he is one of the Taylors from High Cliff, and Mrs. Morrison said they meant to call," said Bob, unabashed.

Ellie was completely overcome. One of Lady Laura Taylor's sons, and she was absolutely not fit to be seen!

It was perhaps as a readjustment of the balance that she arrayed herself in her new covert-coat and most becoming hat to go down to the Vicarage that afternoon. As she walked into the drawing-room, with her head held very high, Mrs. Morrison thought once more what a very distinguished-looking girl Miss Fairfax was.

They were very busy over Sunday-school reports when the maid opened the door and announced, "Mr. Hayes." Ellie looked up. She was curious to see the absentee owner of Woodleigh Court, particularly as his arrival was so unexpected. What was her horror to see the stranger of the morning calmly advancing, with the self-same amused smile on his face! The memory of her stern rebuke of trespass flashed across her, and she wished herself under the floor.

"Bernard, my dear boy!" cried Mrs. Morrison, holding out both hands. "This is a pleasant surprise."

"I came earlier than I was expected, after my usual habit, you see," he said, returning her greeting with warmth.

"How delightful of you! Let me introduce you to Miss Fairfax."

Ellie bowed stiffly. Mr. Hayes was equal to the occasion. "I think we met this morning," he said, holding out his hand affably; but the twinkle in his eye was an insult to Ellie's feelings.

Ellie was all ice, but Mrs. Morrison's fluent tongue covered every deficiency, while her model teacher sat adding up the marks all wrong, unconscious that her scornful abstraction was rather attractive in the eyes of one of the company.

Mary, the maiden who had wrought such havoc, was the one to repair it.

"Susan Jones to see you, ma'am," was her next announcement.

"Oh! excuse me one moment, dears. I must go and speak to her," exclaimed Mrs. Morrison, and the active little old lady bustled out of the room.

Mr. Hayes came boldly up to Ellie.

"I am afraid you are vexed with me," he said deprecatingly.

"No, not at all," she said coldly. "But with myself," she might have added.

"I am afraid I behaved very badly this morning, but I was so charmed by your defence of my interests that I hadn't the heart to undeceive you," he went on penitently. "Besides, I really am a stranger here, and my own woods are a mystery to me. The Court has been let till within the last year or two, and I have spent so much of my life abroad, that Woodleigh has never been my home till now."

There was a tinge of sadness in the last words that reminded Ellie that his mother had been a great invalid, and had died at Cannes. She felt suddenly ashamed of visiting her own stupidity on him.

"I am afraid I behaved very badly; I am sure I must have been very rude," she said apologetically. "And there is nothing so irritating as to detect oneself in such a silly blunder," and she looked up laughing, though she could not restrain a faint blush at the memory of her unlucky speech.

"It was all my fault," he said eagerly. He was really quite handsome when those dark eyes lit up. "It was quite too foolish of me! I hope you will continue to wander and steal in the woods, to show that you bear no malice; and may I come and help Bob with his fernery?"

"Oh, certainly, if it won't bore you to death. I am sure my mother will be very happy to see you," said Ellie, smiling.

"Who is Miss Fairfax? It is quite a new name to me," he asked of the vicaress, when Ellie had taken her departure.

"Mrs. Fairfax is an officer's widow who has taken the Lawn. Ellie is a nice girl, but her brothers are rather overpowering. I advise you to beware of them," said wily old Mrs. Morrison.

Of course he did not take her advice; quite the contrary. He called at the Lawn next day, and toiled the greater part of the afternoon over rocks and fern-roots, to the great delight of the boys. After that he became indispensable to their amusement. He played cricket with them, fished and boated with them, and joined all their expeditions.

Ellie was deeply grateful to him, for the boys were always safe with him, and they were at times rather a care to her. Bob, in particular, had arrived at that age when boys think that nothing that a woman says can possibly be right if it differs from their own opinion, and it was a great comfort to her to find her own ideas upheld by Bernard Hayes's authority and influence.

As for him, sisterless himself, he was lost in admira-

tion of this sister, who was at the boys' beck and call all day long, and thought nothing a trouble that her brothers required. Money was not plentiful at the Lawn, and he was quick to see how Ellie denied herself in every possible way for the sake of her beloved boys.

Once he remonstrated with her, when he found she had given up a trip to town in order to give the boys some desired treat.

"When they have all made their fortunes, I am to have an old age of affluence!" answered Ellie, laughing, and went away to darn Jim's socks.

Bernard Hayes stood and smiled to himself, as he watched her go singing up the stairs. Perhaps he thought the affluence might come before the old age.

Great was the grief when the holidays drew to a close, and the boys were drafted off to school. Bernard comforted their souls with liberal tips and promises of rabbit-shooting in the summer, but even these joys could not console Ellie for the absence of all the dear brown faces and rough heads.

"Don't speak to me! Life is an aching void," she said melodramatically to Bernard, when she met him in the village after her last journey to the station.

"A void that nothing can fill?" he asked, with peculiar expression.

"No, nothing!" answered Ellie hastily, with a faint blush.

Still, to judge by her contented looks as the days went on, an aching void must be rather a pleasant thing. Her spirits did not flag, nor did her loneliness affect her looks.

Mrs. Morrison took a sudden mania for gardening, and asking her friends to tennis. On one pretext or the other, Ellie was always up at the Vicarage, and oddly enough, so was Bernard Hayes. Mrs. Morrison, who, like most women, was a born match-maker, used to smile and nod her head approvingly as the young couple wandered about the garden among the stiff yew hedges. It would not be long, she thought, before Woodleigh Court had a mistress again.

One fine June morning it occurred to Bernard that it would be an excellent thing if he were to give a large garden party, as a return for the hospitality lavished on him by the neighbourhood. Of course the plan must be discussed at the Vicarage, and so he took his hat and went off to see what would be said to it.

Half-way down the quaint village street he met Ellie strolling along in a slow quiet way, very unlike her usual brisk pace. She was not alone. By her side loitered a young man with a fair bushy beard, whose air and gait spoke unmistakably the sailor. She had a dejected look, and Bernard's practised glance noticed at once that she was dressed in a careless, negligent way, as though her appearance was beneath consideration.

She looked across the road, and smiled and nodded at him, and half hesitated, as though expecting him to come over and join her. But for once Bernard was blind to the unspoken invitation. Her smile struck him as forced, and there was a sudden look of curiosity on her companion's face that annoyed him. He merely bowed, and hurried on to the Vicarage.

Mrs. Morrison was tying up carnations in the garden, and he joined her there.

"Have you seen Miss Fairfax this morning?" he asked, after a casual good-morning, and a remark or two about the flowers.

"Yes, I saw her go by just now."

"Who is that with her?"

Mrs. Morrison was silent for a moment; then she said quietly, "The man she is engaged to."

"How do you know she is engaged?" cried Bernard fiercely.

"Strangely enough, I heard it in the train yesterday. It seems to be a secret, but I wish I had known it before."

Mrs. Morrison went on tying up her flowers.

"I couldn't have believed it of her," she said at last.

"I don't believe it. There is some mistake."

"I am afraid not. There were two ladies in my carriage yesterday who saw him get out here. One said, 'Why, there is George Langley!' and the other answered, 'Oh! that is Ellie Fairfax's *fiancé*. How very odd! When is that coming off?' and then I was obliged to get out myself, so I heard no more. But I am afraid it must be true."

There was no reply; she looked up anxiously, after a moment's pause, and the haggard face and gloomy eyes that met her gaze went to her heart.

"My dear boy!" she said, her affectionate tone full of sympathy.

"I wouldn't mind so much," said Bernard hoarsely—he could not dissemble with such a dear old friend—"if she did not look so miserable!"

Yes, that was where the sting lay. If she had seemed happy he could have blamed himself for his own folly in ever hoping to win her, and moreover, he would have congratulated her boldly to make sure of the truth. But she looked so wretched whenever he met her with her new companion, though she made evident efforts to conceal her feelings, that he could not trust himself to approach the subject.

If Mrs. Morrison were right, it must be a foolish youthful engagement now repented of, and if she were to own as much to him he did not know what he might be tempted to say or suggest. His only safety lay in avoiding her, while he yet cherished a faint hope that there might still be some mistake. So for two whole days he absented himself from the Lawn—a marked proceeding on his part, indeed.

Sunday was wet and stormy. In the evening the wind and rain were so unusual for the time of year, that he had half a mind to stay at home. But Ellie never missed evening service, and a jealous desire to know if she would give it up for her lover drove him to church again.

From his lonely seat of state in the chancel he could watch the young couple in their distant pew. There they sat, side by side, apparently content. He watched them all through the service, and when he saw the sailor deliberately shut his hymn-book in order to share hers, it was confirmation of his worst fears.

He did not blame Ellie: he was too loyal for that. Of course, knowing herself engaged, she had accepted his attentions unthinkingly, and now had wakened to a bitter truth too late.

Service over, he joined the stream of people that issued slowly from the church. Ellie lingered in the porch, being wrapped securely from the storm by her lover.

"That's all right, Nell," he said cheerily. "Now take my arm, and hang on tight; we shall do well enough together under one umbrella."

"Nell!" Then he had his own name for her. That destroyed the last vestige of hope, and Bernard Hayes fought his way slowly home, feeling a sort of relief in his strife with the raging wind.

To-morrow he would leave Woodleigh. He could not stay to see Ellie look like that any longer. Her white sad face seemed to haunt him; he would go away and forget it.

But it seemed destined to pursue him to the end. After he had reached the station next morning, Ellie and her lover arrived on the scene. The young sailor seemed nervous and agitated, strolling restlessly about, talking and laughing incessantly. Ellie's face looked hard and set, but it was easy to see that she was unhappy at the parting. There was something reproachful in her gaze as her eyes fell on Bernard. "Why do you not help me to bear this?" they seemed to say.

He could not stand the mute appeal, and dreading an introduction to his rival, he retreated into the booking-office, and began to talk to the station-master.

The train came puffing up; there was a moment's hurry and confusion on the platform, and Bernard, jealously watching, saw an embrace pass between the two. He threw himself into an empty carriage, and was whirled away to London, with a full intention of not returning to Woodleigh for many a long day.

He was welcomed back to town, where his old friends had been wondering why he was missing all the season, and he tried to throw himself into his accustomed pursuits and pleasures. But their old attraction was gone. No pictures could banish from his memory a fair face and two frank grey eyes, and no music compared with the happy voice that sang snatches of songs about the Lawn all day.

Crowds of people wearied him; solitude was insupportable. He became aware that he was wasting

"IT WAS CONFIRMATION OF HIS WORST FEARS" (*p.* 219).

his whole time in fruitless regret, and resolved bravely to strive to forget his trouble with the aid of fresh scenes and faces. He joined a party on the point of starting for a summer's fishing in Norway, and resolved not to return to England till he could do so in a very different frame of mind.

Before he left home he was obliged to run down to Woodleigh to see his agent, but by going late one day and returning early on the next, he hoped to avoid meeting any one else in the neighbourhood.

He found it, however, necessary to go over to one of his farms to argue with a refractory tenant, who insisted on seeing him himself, so he walked there directly after breakfast, trusting to return in time to catch the midday train.

His business satisfactorily accomplished, he strolled slowly back. He had plenty of time to spare, and the beauty of the day protested against hurry. His way led though the woods where Ellie had so sternly rebuked him, and which he had since learnt to know well, under her guidance. His thoughts were full of her as he loitered under the arching boughs, and as he turned the corner of a long green ride he came face to face with Ellie herself.

She looked worn and changed. Poor child! she had suffered much in the last few weeks. It had been a terrible blow to her to see Bernard depart in that sudden mysterious manner, and the effort to preserve an air of indifference had been almost too much for her. She knew herself to be the object of remark and pity, against which her pride revolted, and, worse than all, her kind old friend Mrs. Morrison had suddenly changed her manner, and treated her with a stiffness which alike puzzled and pained the girl, unconscious of any offence.

Walking wearily along in the July sunshine on an errand of duty, she felt that the brightness of the day around her did but mock her heavy heart. And then suddenly, without any warning, the day took an added glory, and the birds' song a new melody, for Bernard stood before her.

She could not help the glad surprise that shone swiftly in her eyes, nor the smile that lit up her whole face. Both were gone in an instant, but Bernard had seen them.

"I did not know you were here," she said, in excuse.

"I am only down for a few hours," he said. "I am starting for Norway in a day or two."

"Oh, indeed!" Her disappointment found expression in her voice, despite her care.

Bernard was desperate; he must know the truth at all costs. Man-like, he went clumsily, even cruelly, to work.

"I am glad to see you before I go; I wished to congratulate you," he said abruptly.

"To congratulate me! On what?"

"On your engagement to Mr. Langley."

It was out now, and he should know the worst.

Ellie turned on him imperiously; a sudden flash of instinct told her all.

"Who told you that I was engaged to George Langley?" she demanded.

"Mrs. Morrison;" and he detailed the remarks she had overheard.

"If she had listened to the end of that conversation she would have heard the answer, 'Never!'" cried Ellie indignantly. "I knew that there were two old Kensington friends of ours in that train, for George saw them and told me. One is an inveterate gossip and match-maker, the other knows us well, and would have contradicted such a foolish report at once."

"Then you are not engaged to him?" cried Bernard eagerly.

"No, nor ever shall be. He is my cousin, and we have been like brother and sister all our lives, but we could never care for each other in any other way." Ellie's tone betrayed her wounded feeling.

"Ellie, my darling, what a fool I have been! I thought you were engaged to him, and I went away because I could not bear to see you and know that you could never be mine. It is I who have blundered this time. Can you ever forgive me?"

Her hands were held in his, his eyes were looking into hers. On the very spot where first they met, Ellie looked up shyly blushing, and whispered, "Yes!"

"I never should have thought that you would have believed such a thing," she said, with a little reproachful accent on the "you" that went to her lover's heart.

"I must have been mad, I think," he answered. "But I could not distrust what seemed the evidence of my own eyes."

"I thought you knew all about George," she said. "He is an orphan, and his home was always with us. He was at home on leave, and we hoped would have been with us all the summer, but he came down suddenly to say that he had been ordered off to Australia for five years, and had only three days to say good-bye in."

"But you looked so miserable; how could I tell that you were only parting with a cousin?"

"He has been a brother to me all my life, and we were always so fond of each other that several of our friends used to call him my sweetheart. Poor George! He is so tender-hearted too, and could not bear leaving us. Besides——"

"Besides what?" he asked as she paused.

"Besides, you never came near us for three days, and I could not think what was the matter," owned Ellie softly.

"I thought I had no right to come near you," but he held her close now.

"I think you have been very unlucky," she said, smiling, "or very much ill-used. This is the second time that you have been warned off your own property!"

THE FEET AND THEIR TROUBLES.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

THOUGH I am far from considering myself either very old or very old-fashioned, I have nevertheless a firm belief in the sageness of some ancient saws, that have reference to the preservation of health. Here is one, for example, the wisdom of which is apparent enough:—"Keep the feet warm and the head cool." A cool head means cool judgment, and warm feet, nine times out of ten, health of blood and body. But no foot could be warm in winter if encased in a tightly-fitting boot. It does not stand to scientific reasoning that it could be so: for, first and foremost, the blood that contains the essentials of animal heat is squeezed out of the skin; and, secondly, the air-spaces of the sock or stocking, on which the retention of heat depends, are diminished, or rendered almost *nil*. Even a Board-school boy knows, or ought to, that cotton wool or flannel is no warmer in reality than linen, the extra heat the former gives resting in the fact that it contains more blood-warmed air, and therefore conserves that which the latter lets escape.

This paper of mine is not meant to be a sermon on boots and shoes, but there are so many little things connected with the subject which are so beneficial to learn, but so easy to forget, that I hold myself justified in saying a few words more on it.

If the remark were made, that there is nearly as much evil done by the constant wearing of tight boots as by tight lacing, it would at least be going in the direction of the truth. Were the reader to be conducted round the walls of a large surgical hospital, and to witness the ugly cases of deformity, distortion, and ulceration caused by the neglect of the feet, he would not soon forget it. And the worst forms of these are caused by the tight boot. Toes are plaited, bones are twisted, become necrosed, and have to be removed, and lameness for life ensues. But apart from any such painful results as these, the very discomfort alone of having the feet worn in a vice must be great, and certainly does not tend to improve either the health or the temper.

That a nation's sons and daughters should learn to walk well and with some degree of stateliness is, perhaps, more important than it seems. For the *upright* position conduces to the health of every organ in the body. But no man in tight boots ever did or could walk properly, and no young lady with very high heels either. In the last case, the most that can be said for the gait is that it is fashionable; it certainly is not beautiful. It is when young that one should learn to walk. Even the little bear's mother knew that, when she threw him on the ground and told him to be off. Perhaps we human beings know the fact too, but it would hardly appear so in thousands of cases, for in good society do we not often notice that the poor wee feet of "totties" not ten years old have been cramped into boots sizes too small for them? No wonder such children are sometimes peevish, though they strive to look prim. Their feet may become stunted in size, but the cruelty is likely to stunt their very minds as well.

The wearing of heavy boots is bad for the feet and the health also. The strength of the boot or shoe ought to be in proportion to that of the wearer, if comfort in walking is to be studied, and stateliness of gait acquired. This hint is of the greatest importance when purchasing for children. Deformities of many kinds are caused by too heavy boots on young feet, and the prospects of the little wearer probably spoiled for life.

I do not remember that any one has ever written an ode to slippers. Yet who has not felt the comfort of them and an easy chair after a long day's journey? A good thing may be abused, however. There is a difference between making oneself extra comfortable at the fireside of an evening, and going slip-shod most of the day. The feet need a certain amount of support when walking has to be done, even if it be but in the house.

The word "talipes" may sound a strange one to many. It is expressive enough, however, when we remember its derivations: *talus*, the ankle, and *pes*, the foot. It is used to designate all species of deformities generally known as club-foot, and common among children. The bones of the ankle, &c., may be twisted down or up or to either side. I merely mention club-foot to remind mothers that in nearly all cases it is capable of being remedied if the child is taken early enough to the surgeon; and that the more experience the surgeon has had in this class of cases, the more simple and perfect will the cure be.

If, on the other hand, the ankles are only weak, attention to the health, more nourishing food, Parrish's chemical food in small doses, and sea-bathing will put matters straight. But an indiarubber bandage should be worn round the ankles, in order to give support. If matters do not mend, the little sufferer should be taken to the surgeon.

Sometimes contraction of the sole of the foot takes place in older people, or contraction of one toe. Either ought to be seen to as soon as possible, as, though not dangerous, the ailments lame, and they, of course, get worse instead of better.

Flat-foot, as it is called, is another accidental deformity, which must be taken very early if much good is to be done. It is, unfortunately, too well known to need description. It is simply what it is—a flat foot; the bones and ligaments have given and come down, so that the whole sole touches the floor. It is impossible that much walking without pain can be done by

"THOUGH IN YOU IS BEAUTY,
RAREST OF THE RARE."

"*THE BEST OF REASONS WHY*" (*p.* 223).

an individual so afflicted ; but if he or she be young, there is hope. One thing must be borne in mind—if possible, for a time no heavy weights must be lifted. The cure consists in having rounded soles placed in the inside of the boot. These are made higher as the treatment proceeds, but the surgeon must see to this.

While on the subject of deformities, it will not, I suppose, be considered an unpardonable departure from my text if I mention two troubles which afflict a great many boys, and even girls, and which I am very often asked about. I refer to the *bow-leg* and the *knock-knee*. Parents like to see their children growing up straight in limb as well as plump and healthy. When they are not so, it is not only a grief to the former, but often a positive misery to the latter. The bow-leg is caused, as a rule, by a deficiency in the earthy salts of the bone. This simply suggests the cure. The trouble is caused by rickets to some degree or other, and therefore, while splints in some form will nearly always be necessary, the most nutritious diet will become a *sine quâ non*, good milk and cod-liver oil being looked upon as sheet-anchors. There is an idea only too prevalent among parents—namely, that children "grow out" of the deformity, or that, in other words, the bent legs may grow in again. This is all but a fallacy ; besides, it is surely right to be on the safe side and have things seen to.

The dietetic treatment of *knock-knees* is just on the same principle, because this deformity, like the last, occurs mostly in children who are not too strong, though they need not be the subject of rickets. It is really the ligaments of the joints that are in fault, and in every case a surgeon should be consulted. Too much exercise must not be taken, and the soles of the boots should be well kept up. Indeed, growing lads, if weakly, who are always down at heels, need never be surprised if their legs go a little out of the plumb.

It is somewhat strange that in England corns are regarded as quite as much a portion of the anatomy of the foot as toe-nails. Corns are simply thickenings of the skin on any part liable to pressure ; and if proper boots and shoes were worn, with always care taken that the socks were soft and warm and clean, they would never exist. The cure is self-evident. I ought to say, however, that, as a rule, caustics are dangerous, except in the hands of an expert. Sometimes corns suppurate. They are then exceedingly painful ; but a poultice, and rest, with the cutting of the corn to get off the thick skin and let out the matter, soon put things to rights.

A bunion is a business of another sort, and a far more serious one, and may run on to the destruction of the bone itself and a lifetime's lameness. If one occurs, the treatment must at first be palliative, but a doctor should be consulted, for old-standing cases are all but incurable. Another gentleman who must be consulted is an intelligent bootmaker, for on his skill, as much as on the surgeon's, will your future comfort depend.

A lesser evil that the feet have to suffer from is cold. This is purely constitutional with many, and only a system of hygiene, with now and then medicines which improve the blood, are to be relied upon. The cold bath can hardly be recommended in cases of this kind, because the subjects are usually not of strong recuperative power. Bed-socks may be worn, but I have no great faith in the warm water baby or bed-bottle.

The dangers of damp feet or wet feet are proverbial. They are certainly best avoided, as they give rise to chills and colds. Many people catch cold very easily through the feet.

To conclude : the hygienic treatment of the feet consists not only in the wearing of proper boots and socks, but in the most careful washing, with either warm or cold water, and mild soap. A thick, rough towel should be used, and the drying made a very complete thing, even between the toes. If this is done every day, thickened skin will rarely need the rasp. "A cool head, then, and warm feet," is the excellent saying I began this paper with, and so let me end.

THE BEST OF REASONS WHY.

LOVE, my love, I love you,
Not that you are sweet,
Though in you all graces,
All perfections meet.

Love, my love, I love you,
Not that you are fair,
Though in you is beauty,
Rarest of the rare.

Love, my love, I love you,
Not that you are wise,
Though in you all knowledge,
Joined with prudence, lies.

Love, my love, I love you,
Not that you have gold,
Though in large abundance
Wealth to you has rolled.

Love, my love, I love you,
Not that you are great,
Though in you concentre
Rank and high estate.

Love, my love, I love you
But for reasons two—
Just because I love you,
Am beloved of you !

J. H. D.

THE FISH CAVES OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

BY H. G. SPEARING.

THE ROAD TO THE CAVES.

IT seems almost like an anachronism to talk of English robbers inhabiting a cave, and sallying forth from it to lay the surrounding country under contribution; and yet it is not so very many years ago that this good old custom was revived in Australia, and flourished too, the robbers having been lucky enough to discover one of the most convenient and intricate series of caves that the most fastidious chief could have desired.

Away up beyond the wild Blue Mountains, whose precipitous cliffs offered for so many years an impassable barrier to the enterprise of the earlier colonists, away and on towards Bathurst, once of golden fame, there lies a large stretch of broken country covered with primeval bush, and even yet hardly invaded by the far-wandering squatter or the patient free selector. There, at the junction of two of its deep and narrow valleys, the wily bush-rangers were at last run to earth; and their pursuers, finding the gigantic cave at the entrance encumbered with the bones of innumerable horses which had been stolen to help carry the booty, and afterwards slaughtered for fear of their wandering home and betraying the secret hiding-place, christened it the Devil's Coach-house. A weird place truly by night or by day, and the effect is not diminished when you enter it again, after hours of wandering in the wonderful passages that ramify in every direction around it.

It is difficult at first to realise that beneath its lofty vault shelter could be given to the towers of Westminster Abbey, or perhaps even to the dome of St. Paul's; but careful measurements are said to have been taken, proving that it is nearly 300 feet in height.

It is not altogether easy to trace all the steps in its formation, but it is certainly due to the comparatively rapid washing away of the rocks in the valley beyond. Like all other stalactite caves, it is formed in hard limestone rock, a vertical bed of which runs right through the country, and now presents, where it crosses the valley, the form of an immense wall several hundreds of feet in height, completely blocking off the channel of the main stream from its tributary valleys above. The rock on both sides of this wall was more easily eaten away by water, and the stream, having been obliged to find a way through the fissures and crevices of the limestone, has gradually enlarged, and shaped, and adorned them with their present fantastic beauty.

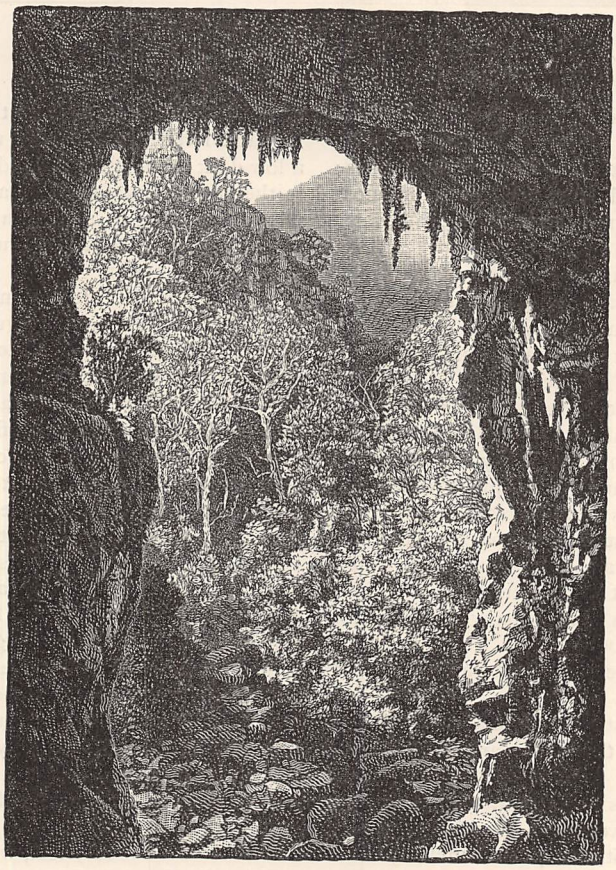
In bygone years—no one knows how long ago—the valleys must have been much less deep, and the stream must have run at a much higher level, and it has left its traces in the solitary "Carlotta" arch piercing the rocky wall like a vast window in some ruined giant's castle. Above this arch you can pick your way along the uneven top of the narrow ridge, but take care to avoid any fissures, however harmless they may appear to be, for in some places, if you test them with a small boulder, you will hear it go thundering down and down, sending out with every plunge a new series of reverberations, each booming more hollow and

dismal than the last, until, just as the sound seems to have died away in the bowels of the rock, you are startled by a loud crash issuing from the mouth of the cave in the valley beneath, and the guide tells you with a quiet smile that *that* is where you would have gone to had you managed to slip down that hole.

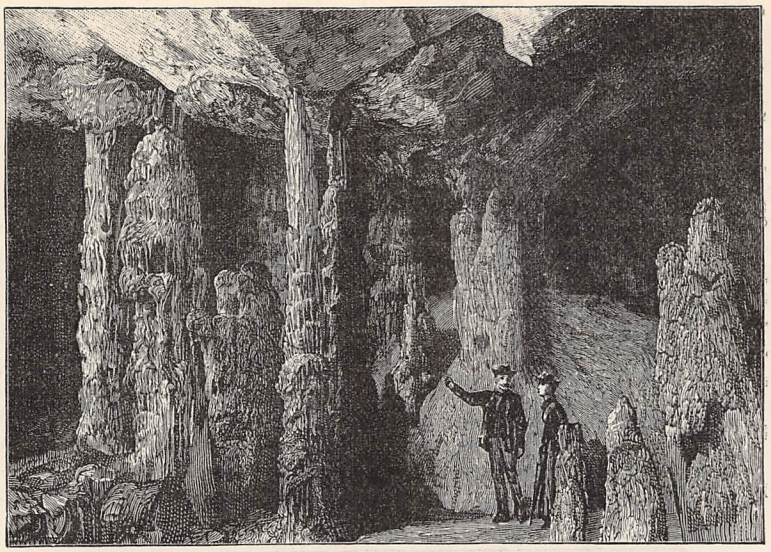
This guide, Wilson by name, is a most interesting companion, and quite devoted to the caves. The Government of New South Wales have been public-spirited enough to take them under their protection, and have appointed him as keeper. At an expense of some thousands of pounds they have constructed a road through the bush and down the almost precipitous sides of the valley, and they have built two or three houses to accommodate travellers and their horses. No one is allowed to visit the caves without a guide, and great pains are taken to prevent them being spoiled by the smoke of torches or the profane hand of scribbling or relic-hunting tourists. Explorations are constantly being made, and with such success that entirely new series of passages and caverns have been opened up, so fresh and perfect in their crystal beauty as to far excel the most famous caverns of Europe.

Clambering up the sides of the Devil's Coach-house, you can wind in and out among stalagmitic bosses, some of which curiously resemble petrified judges' wigs, till you reach the Nettle Cave, a sort of ante-chamber to the dark vaults beyond. The stalactites here have a peculiar appearance like fretted Gothic work, each column being encrusted with thousands of little columns arranged around it with considerable symmetry.

The passages out of this are wonderfully regular, just comfortably broad enough for an ordinary man; and the roof is rounded off as if by artificial vaulting. The water-level of some bygone period is very clearly shown here, or rather I should say the water-levels are shown, for in various parts of the same passage the level varies several inches, or even feet. When the passage ascends, the brown line of the water-mark is found higher up; you descend, and yet the mark hardly ever seems to reach to the top of the passage. There almost always seems to be a portion of the vault unstained by the water. The guide pointed this out as a wonderful phenomenon, but the explanation seems simple enough. In each undulation of the passage a portion of air got imprisoned at the top, and prevented the water rising any further, and these large bubbles of air being at different levels, the water-



THE DEVIL'S COACH-HOUSE.



STALACTITES IN THE NETTLE CAVE.

mark was naturally different. The brown coloration of the sides shows that it was probably flood-water, and therefore did not remain long within the passages; indeed, if it had remained long, the air would most likely have oozed out through the rock, and the water have risen to the top.

It is a great relief to your head and shoulders when you emerge from these narrow tunnels into a large chasm, although its gloomy heights are equalled by depths as gloomy, and far more dangerous. Some of these overhanging masses of rock might indeed fall and crush you; many have already fallen, as is proved by the huge blocks lying about in wild confusion, but one naturally disregards that possibility in presence of the much more evident danger of slipping down into one of the numberless rifts and fissures.

However, through most of the caves a very fair pathway has been made, and every precaution taken for the safety and comfort of visitors. Massive iron bridges have been thrown across many of the worst places, and tunnels have been cut so as to avoid as much as possible the necessity of returning over the same ground.

It would be very interesting to have a good plan of the caves, but I do not think that any reliable ones have been made.

Of the aforesaid fissures and chasms you can get a very good idea from one weird den to which access is now fairly easy, although it hardly looks inviting when your guide stops at the mouth of an apparently bottomless pit, and, pointing to a small wire rope ladder, remarks that "you can go down there if you like. It is said to be about eighty feet deep." As it is pitch-dark, there is no danger from giddiness, but it requires a little care to keep your knuckles from the rocky sides, and to prevent your candle getting to the bottom long before you do. At the end of the ladder is a steep earthy slope, and at the foot of this runs a veritable river Styx. Issuing noiselessly from beneath a low dark arch, it flows rapidly past, and disappears in the mysterious depths of a gloomy cavern, which, filled from side to side with its cold, dark stream, seems to defy the rash intruder to follow its course even in imagination.

What a contrast it is to wander back into one of the upper caverns, and get the guide to light up his magnesium lamp and flash it on to the myriads of brilliant snow-white crystals that seem to have come pouring out of the crevices above, and running down from roof to floor, have become fixed and rigid in their magic glitter, like enchanted cascades in the bower of some vanished Sleeping Beauty. Wonderfully varied, indeed, are the shapes assumed by these incrustations; sometimes they even grow into long stalactitic pipes, pure and transparent as glass; and their stems are often branched and curled and twisted in the most fantastic manner. In most famous caverns the pristine purity of these crystal growths has been sadly sullied by the smoke of torches; but as torches are not allowed in these caves, these lovely, delicate forms may be preserved for years as pure and beautiful as they were when first the eyes of man rested upon them.

Another very interesting form assumed by these deposits is that of a curtain. Great sheets hang down some fifteen or twenty feet, with curious curved folds, and bands of red and orange following every curve; sometimes, too, the edges are even toothed and scalloped. They are so thin as to be quite translucent, and a very rich effect is got by a few candles skilfully disposed behind them.

I am reminded, as I write, of a curious property possessed by some of the stalactites. In a small secluded cave at the end of a short passage,

were hanging some massive pendants seven or eight feet long, and each of these, on being struck, gave out a deep bell-like note. Strange that such music should have remained so many ages dumb!

Not that there have been no inhabitants in the outer part of the caves. For centuries the rock wallabies must have made it their habitation; and often you may find a projecting knob beautifully polished by the continual passing over it of these little animals. In some of the crevices, too, are to be seen numerous bones of smaller marsupials, curiously resembling the fossil finds at Cheddar and elsewhere. I discovered a few bones in some of the stalagmitic deposits, but I was unable to determine them. Perhaps some day patient research may unearth treasures there similar to those of Kent's Cavern or the Neanderthal. Certainly, in many parts the floor sounds quite hollow to the tread, and evidently layer upon layer of stalagmite has been formed at very different periods of its history.

In some of the smaller caves the floors have been broken through, and the underlying material washed away, so that there is a certain resemblance to a two or three-storeyed house with its front wall knocked down. In these cases the lowest stratum is, of course, the oldest, and each layer represents a long period of rest, during which the accumulations of sediment from floods or running streams were covered up by these slowly-formed crusts of stalagmitic stone. It is beneath these that ancient remains are to be sought for. What a tomb for the ancestors of one of the lowest of the known races of mankind! Mighty emperors have built themselves vast edifices, and sacrificed the lives and happiness of thousands to secure a resting-place befitting their grandeur and their might; yet now the empty vaults of St. Angelo contain no trace of Hadrian; Augustus Cæsar can but haunt a gaudy Roman circus, and lament his vanished mausoleum; even the cyclopean work of ancient Pharaohs could not preserve their remains from the desecrating hand of avaricious Arabs; and yet in caves like these the unthinking and unambitious savage has been treasured up for countless ages, guarded by intricate labyrinths, and shrouded in primeval gloom; for him the living rock with silent tears still weaves a winding-sheet of crystal stone, and moulds a peal of crystal bells to sound his funeral knell.

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

A STRANGE OLD MAN.

MR. LESTRANGE.

AS I had promised Redlands, I went over to Loecliff the next morning, and straight to the Court. There I found Miss Sylvester in her neat morning dress, decorating her rooms with fresh flowers from the conservatory. She was in remarkably high spirits, and, setting down the sprays she was arranging, gave me both hands, and held up her cheek to be kissed—for, as I have said, we were real friends, and only stood upon ceremony in our business relations. I attributed the brightness of her eyes, the glow on her cheek, her general gaiety, to the influence of her grandfather, knowing nothing then of what had happened the preceding evening; but when, after our greeting, I inquired about the old man, her countenance fell, and I saw that the source of her happiness was not in his society. So dropping into a chair, I opened the question I had come about, as a good way of changing what was clearly an unpleasant subject.

"My dear young lady," said I, "I've come to talk to you about that poor young Redlands."

"Have you?" said she, turning to pick up her flowers, but without much concern in her tone.

"Yes. His success over this mining business seems to have turned his head; and I am sorry to say it looks as if he were going to make a fool of himself."

"Why, how's that?" she asked cheerfully, still bending her brightening face over the flowers.

"Well, it seems he's smitten with this new teacher you have up at the school. At first I thought it was old Jigger; but he swears it isn't she."

"Does he really, *really*, REALLY love her?" she cried, in a crescendo of emphasis.

"Oh! he's mad—raving mad—about her, as you may imagine when I tell you that he declares he will marry her, and that actually before he knows her name or anything about her."

"Are you quite sure he doesn't know her name?" she asked archly, yet not daring to look me in the face, lest I should see the pitfall she was leading me into.

"As sure as I sit here. Why, he came over to Coneyford expressly to find out, through me, what her name is. To humour him, I promised to inquire, but in his real interest chiefly I came here to see if you and I couldn't prevent his making such a mistake."

"But is it a mistake to marry her if he really, *really* loves her?" she asked.

"Assuredly it is, and an awful, irremediable mistake. Why, he's a peer of the realm!"

"I don't see what difference that makes—except that it must increase her love to think he has sunk all consideration of rank for the sake of his love and her."

"You astonish me, my dear," said I, after a gasp—"You who are so practical and clear-sighted in all things. Can't you see how his infatuation must perish, and regret mingle with the last remnants of love, and that love in time become no more than a duty, when, with his growing fortune, rich friends gather about him, and twit him with having made a *mésalliance*—snub his wife, perhaps?—though, as for that, she probably deserves snubbing—most likely she's a wheedling little hussey."

"But suppose his wife was not to be snubbed; suppose she could show descent as good as his, and possessed a fortune enough at least for her own wants and needs?"

"Oh, that would be another matter, of course—IF!" I laid a very strong and disagreeable stress on that "if"; then I added contemptuously: "Whoever heard of a girl of decent condition and means teaching in a little out-of-the-way village?"

"Did you ever hear," said she quietly, "that the teacher who took the singing class in that school every afternoon was Miss Sylvester? and have you any reason to doubt that her condition and means are—*decent?*"

"Why, good gracious me!" cried I, springing from my chair, "you don't mean to tell me he's in love with you?"

"He tells me so, surprising as it may seem to you," said she mischievously; "but after what you've said about my wheedling propensities, I cannot expect to astonish you by adding that I have consented to be his wife."

"A pretty scrape you've led me into, you little puss!" said I, as she burst into laughter; and then I laughed heartily too, and never have I enjoyed a laugh at others' expense more than I now enjoyed laughing at my own. Then I kissed her, and made a little speech felicitating her and her lover from the bottom of my heart.

"Well," said I, when this was over and she had wiped a tear of happiness from her eyes, "I've made an old fool of myself, to be sure. But I was right in one hit, and that was at your poverty, for, literally speaking, you haven't a farthing you can call your own. However, that shall be arranged at once; and it's a good job your grandfather is here now, that I can tackle him about the settlement that ought to have been made on you long ago."

"I have been thinking of that," said she seriously, "and I should like you to speak to him upon the subject while you are here. Hark! He is coming downstairs now."

"Then just you introduce me to him, and get out of the room as quickly as you can," said I.

I had not yet seen the old man, and though I was prepared, from his seclusion, and the exceptional character of his few and brief letters, to find him unlike the generality of old men, I was completely taken aback by the spectacle presented to my eyes as the door opened. You may understand my surprise if you picture to yourself a little scarecrow of a man, not more than five feet high, muffled in a superb dressing-gown of fur that came up to his ears and down to his heels, leaving nothing of himself visible but one thin hand loaded with rings (the right was in a sling, he having, I was told, injured it on the journey), and a small weazen face, rigid and shining with enamels and fards employed to conceal the mark of Time's finger, and chiefly remarkable for a pair of little deep-set black eyes, that reminded me of nothing I had ever seen that was human; their furtive wandering, their painful restlessness, their apprehensive dread, and treacherous shiftiness, their purposeless regard to right and left, their vacancy, their very movement and the blink of his eyelids were emphatically distinctive of the monkey.

I might almost say that his eyes alone were all that were visible of his face; for the rest of his features were as completely concealed and disguised by the coating of waxy enamel and other appliances as his body by the dressing-gown that enveloped it.

"Good heavens!" I thought, with disgust; "what can this thing be like at night, when wig, teeth, aye, for aught I know to the contrary, his very eyebrows and moustache are removed, and the coat of paint and pomade washed from his skin?" That was my first thought, but the next impression was that the bare and yellow, parched and puckered skin of extreme old age would be less repulsive than this palpable pretence to youth. Perhaps it was the knowledge of his great age, the consciousness that this old man was getting on for ninety, that made the sham so disgusting to me; I had never seen anything like it before: that was another reason for my being so unpleasantly shocked. I remember feeling surprised to find how coolly Redlands treated the subject when I expressed my disgust to him. "I don't see anything particularly hideous in his make-up," said he. "One meets lots of old men in the world who make fools of themselves. If you could think of the old man as being no more than the age he tries to appear, I fancy half your antipathy would be lost." I dare say he was right.

A young man looking like a gentleman's body servant, clean-shaved, smart, active, and dressed in a closely-buttoned frock coat, accompanied the old man. This was his secretary, his constant attendant, and general factotum, Mr. Lestrange; but I had little attention to give to him just then, being absorbed in the contemplation of his master.

Marian advanced to meet him, and offered her hand with a kindly greeting.

"Charming, charming!" piped the old man in a reedy little voice, but seeming not to move a muscle of his face for fear of cracking the enamel; and with this compliment to his grandchild, he raised her hand and bent his head as if he intended to kiss it; but he

let it slip from his shaking fingers as though the intention had gone from his feeble mind, as his eye rested on me and produced a new idea.

Marian introduced us, and then left the room. There was no need to offer an excuse for going; the old man had forgotten her.

"I shall be glad to speak to you on a matter of business," said I. He still kept his beady eyes fixed vacantly on me. Lestrange, raising his voice, said in his ear—

"Mr. Keene, solicitor; business."

I saw as he led his master to a chair that there was

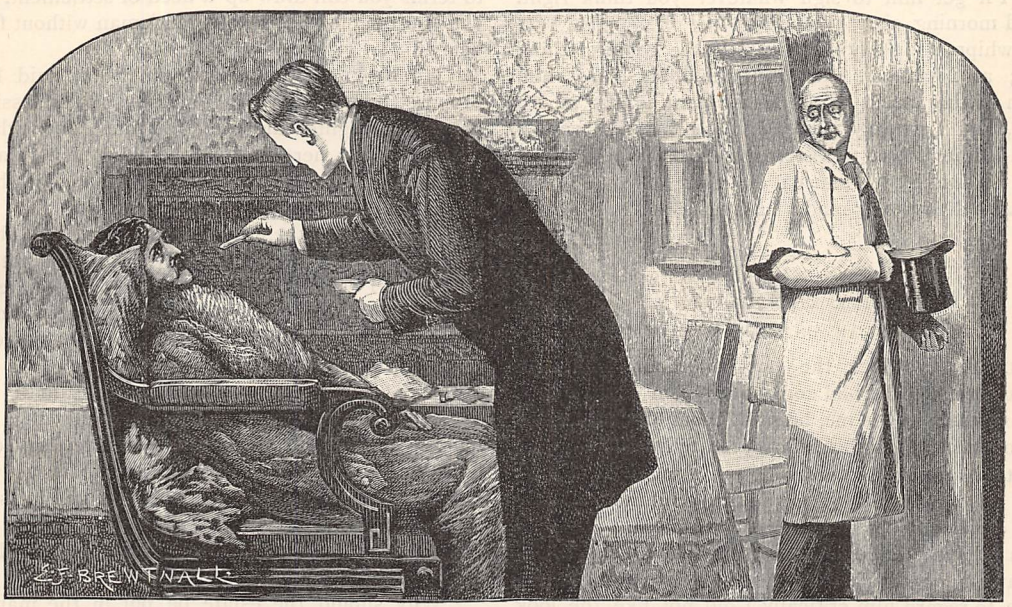
"Going to marry. Whom?"

"Lord Redlands."

He glanced, first on one side and then on the other, with that simian look of apprehension; then leaning back, let his head sink until the fur of his gown mingled with the curls of his wig; by which time his memory had gone astray, and he glanced from me to his secretary, squeaking petulantly—

"What's it all about?"

Lestrange replied, "Miss Sylvester, your granddaughter, going to marry Lord Redlands;" then, pointing to me, "Your solicitor, Mr. Keene."



"LESTRANGE COOLLY DABBING HIS FACE WITH A WASH-LEATHER STUMP" (*p.* 230).

a small aural instrument fixed in the old man's ear. He sat down slowly, and with the movement of an automaton.

"You have heard, sir, perhaps," said I, drawing a chair near and seating myself, "that Lord Redlands no longer wishes to sell his estate."

Lestrange repeated what I said.

"Don't shout, fellow," squeaked the old man; "one would think that I was deaf. I hear what the lawyer says."

Then turning to me—

"I don't want to buy his estate. I don't want to be bothered with anything concerning it. I've told you so in my letters often enough. I've not come this distance to talk about business; I've come for pleasure. Understand that, please!"

"Very good, sir; I hope I shall minister to your pleasure in telling you that your grandchild, Miss Marian Sylvester, is about to marry."

The old man put a finger into his mouth as if to secure the fastening of his teeth, and then, with the same empty look, said—

"Well?" asked the old man, fixing his eyes absently on me.

"I feel it my duty as a friend of Miss Sylvester, and as Lord Redlands' adviser, to suggest the advisability of your making a settlement upon her. By the exertions of your son, the late Colonel Sylvester, and his daughter, Miss Marian, this estate has been made what it is, and I feel sure that you, consistently with the generosity you have displayed in making her your sole legatee, and the strict equity that has characterised your life, will not hesitate to assign this estate to her for her sole use and profit, as a due return for a most faithful stewardship."

"You have not lost the will I made?" he squeaked.

"No, I hold that safely."

"Well, isn't that enough for her?"

"No, sir, it is not. If that will from any unseen accident should be rendered void, she would be penniless."

"What could render it void?"

"Many things; for instance, supposing a claim were put in by some one who in years gone by——"

"Years gone by!" he cried in terror. Then suddenly raising himself with his one hand, he craned his neck round to stare behind him, first on this side then on the other, with terrible quickness.

Lestrange had his hand on the old man's shoulder in a moment.

"It's all right, sir, it's all right!" said he soothingly. "There's no one there."

Then turning to me, he added quickly in an undertone—

"Leave us for to-day, sir, please. When he's taken like this there's no doing anything with him. I'll make the matter clear to him. He'll agree to it, and I'll get him to sign whatever you think right. Good morning, sir."

I whipped up my hat, and left the room, nothing loth; as I glanced back from the door, I saw him again sitting back in the chair panting, his mouth open, and Lestrange coolly dabbing his face with a wash-leather stump to restore the enamel where it had been cracked by the unusual emotion.

Was old Sylvester mad? I asked myself.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

I LEARN AN UNPLEASANT SECRET.

ABOUT three o'clock the next afternoon Lestrange called on me. He had come over from Loecliff in a fly, expressly to see me, he said, about the business I had opened the day before with old Sylvester. I bade him take a chair, and, drawing mine opposite to him, took this opportunity of examining him more closely than circumstances had hitherto permitted.

As I have said before, he looked like a gentleman's servant, clean-shaved and neatly dressed; but now I came to regard him critically I did not like the look of his face. There was avarice in his long hooked nose and thin lips, and an unpleasant hint of cunning in his narrow eyes. Whilst making these observations I asked after the health of his master.

"Oh, he's all right to-day, sir," said he. "I've made him keep his bed, and locked him in."

"Locked him in!" said I. "Surely there's no need of restraint?"

"Oh, isn't there, though!" said he airily, with a knowing jerk of his head. "I have to turn the key on him if I go away for half an hour; however, he knows what's good for him as well as I do, or he wouldn't keep me on."

"Is he subject to some sort of mental hallucination?"

"He's not mad, if that's what you mean; only his nerve is giving way, and he is at times overcome with terror, as you saw him yesterday. At his age something is bound to give way, and it's his nerve that's giving—and he knows it. That's partly the reason of his coming to England. The old buck has led no end of a fast life; that, and the relaxing climate of Italy, is telling on him, and he hoped to be braced up by the change. It's not a bit of good. Once a horse gets weak-kneed he's never safe."

"Dear me!" said I, "this is distressing. What is the object of the old gentleman's terror?"

"Now, sir, you ask me a question that I must decline to answer—unless I find it worth my while."

I saw clearly enough that he wished me to make it "worth his while"; but I pretended indifference, knowing already the kind of man I had to deal with.

"I have no wish to inquire into your secrets," said I, "and so we will go at once, if you please, to the purpose of your visit."

"Certainly, sir. I explained your proposal to Mr. Sylvester last night, and he authorised me to come here and make an arrangement with you. If we come to terms you can draw up a deed of settlement, and I will get it signed by the old gentleman without further delay."

"I don't know what terms you mean," said I. "I proposed simply that Mr. Sylvester should assign to his granddaughter the whole of that estate which is now nominally hers, and will actually be hers at Mr. Sylvester's death in accordance with the will he has made in her favour."

"The whole of the estate. That," said he, shaking his head slowly, "won't do. No, that will not do at all. May I ask, sir, what the value of the estate is?"

"I should value it roughly at two hundred thousand pounds; if it were put in the market it would probably realise no more than half that sum."

He took time for reflection, and then said—

"Well, sir, we will say that you shall put it in the market, and we will divide whatever it realises equally. That will be fifty thousand pounds for Miss Sylvester, and a very good lump sum too. You cannot say we are ungenerous."

I was astounded by this proposition, and not less by the attitude of the man.

"Why should the estate be put in the market at all?" I asked.

"To settle the matter quickly. If Miss Sylvester marries she won't wish to stay in that dead-and-alive house. And the sooner I get the old man out of it the better for him—and me too. I'd never have let him come if I had foreseen the danger; he's ten times worse here than he was in Italy. It's no joke, I can tell you, to be constantly on the watch night and day with an uncertain customer like him, who in one unguarded moment might——" he finished the sentence with a vaguely significant turn of his hands.

"Do you mean that he is in danger of—of destroying himself?" I asked.

"Something like it, at any rate. However, that is neither here nor there. The question is, will you accept on behalf of Miss Sylvester the terms I propose?"

"I can tell her what Mr. Sylvester offers," said I.

"Do, and," said he, dropping his voice and bending towards me, his elbow on his knee and his forefinger raised warningly, "if you have a friendly regard for her interests and peace of mind, advise her to say 'Snap' to that offer; get the business concluded and old Sylvester out of the way as quickly and quietly as possible. I'll back you, for my own sake, and the

moment we touch the money I'll whisk the old man off in a Pulman and get him back to Amalfi sharp."

"Upon my word, Mr. Lestrange, I do not understand you," said I.

"Is it necessary that you should understand more?"

"Undoubtedly. As the matter stands, I should never advise Miss Sylvester to accept fifty thousand now, when by waiting a few years she will inherit an estate worth four times as much."

He laughed. "Well, Mr. Keene," said he, drawing himself up with an air of contempt, "for a lawyer, you seem to attach a singular amount of importance to that will. Why, man, it isn't worth the paper it's written on. It was revoked months ago. If old Sylvester were to die now his granddaughter wouldn't have a penny to bless herself with."

I was not altogether surprised to hear this, though I pretended to be sceptical.

"Perchance you can tell me," said I, "whom he has left the property to."

"Yes, I can," he answered. "He has left every farthing he has to me. And if I were as sure that he would go off the hooks in twenty-four hours or even twenty-four weeks, I shouldn't be here now. But I'm not sure. The old fellow may linger on three or four years, and I can't afford to wait; it's too risky. That's why I make this offer of fifty thousand down if you can dispose of the estate in a week."

"Will you tell me," said I, "why you are so careful to prevent Mr. Sylvester destroying himself if his death would be so greatly to your advantage?"

"That's a riddle I don't choose to explain; I can only give you this clue—there are more ways than one in which a man may destroy himself."

I was fairly perplexed by this enigma—annoyed also; and, I may add, irritated by his tone and bearing; but a lawyer has to put up with a deal of insolence, and put his pride in his pocket more often than he would in his own affairs, when his client's good is to be considered. However, I thought I had let him go far enough, so I rose.

"You must know, Mr. Lestrange," said I, "that an honest man can have no dealings that are not perfectly straightforward and above suspicion. I must refuse to have any further negociations on this matter except with Mr. Sylvester himself."

"In that case we shall have no further negociation at all," said he, in a tone of irritation. "I shall take him away to-morrow, and you'll hear no more of him till he's dead and buried."

He beat his knee with his glove in silent thought for a minute or so, and then, as if to make one last attempt, he said, thrusting his hands in his pockets—

"Come, Mr. Keene, you profess to be the friend of Miss Sylvester, and for a whim you deprive her of fifty thousand pounds. As I live she won't get a shilling, everything will be taken from her unless you accept my terms. Think what you are doing."

I did think, and I own my reflections made me silent and dubious.

"I have candidly told you why I wish to make this arrangement; I don't want to wait with this perpetual watching night and day for an indefinite time. I am not greedy. Fifty thousand pounds is as much as ever I wish to have. I would rather have that now than twice as much later on."

"Can you tell me what claim you have to a share in this estate?" I asked. He was silent. "I must have an explanation of that kind," I continued, "not only to justify such an arrangement to the satisfaction of my own conscience, but to the satisfaction of my client also."

"If you consider the satisfaction of your client you will ask for no such explanation. Believe me," he said, speaking earnestly, "I am dealing honestly, and kindly too, in this; an explanation may ruin Miss Sylvester's peace of mind for ever. Come, sir, I know what you are thinking about—that a man cannot make a deed of gift without giving some reason for his donation. Well, I will give you a plausible and absolutely true reason for old Sylvester's generosity to me—if you choose to call it 'generosity'—I have saved his life and his honour; he has stated the fact in the will made in my favour. Now let that suffice, and, as you respect Miss Sylvester, push me no further."

I hesitated still, feeling that I should be compounding with a rascal, as I felt sure he was.

"I tell you frankly," he continued, "that if you do drive me up in a corner I shall tell you all, and then you and Miss Sylvester will be only too glad to stop my mouth with fifty thousand pounds and more besides to get old Sylvester back into Italy."

Well, thought I, honesty is the best policy, all the world over. I never knew any good got by a lie, nor any good lost by a truth, and I'll stick to my principle at all hazards.

"Mr. Lestrange," said I, "my mind is made up; there must be no reservation. I must have the whole truth respecting this affair or wash my hands of it entirely."

He looked at me searchingly. "You mean what you say?" said he.

"Emphatically. I have named my condition, and will abide by it."

"Very well," said he. "You will heartily wish you had not, but that is not my affair. I have done the best in my power to avoid explanation, in kindness to Miss Sylvester, whom I admire and sympathise with heartily, though not to the sacrifice of my own fortune. Now then, ask what you will, and I will answer without reserve or hesitation."

Now that I was brought face to face with the crisis of my own seeking, I felt anything but comfortable—the man's evident sincerity at this point shaking my faith in the wisdom of the course I pursued. However, there was no way out of it now.

"First of all," said I, getting my thoughts into some sort of categorical order, "what is the old man afraid of?"

"Of himself, chiefly. In a reasonable state of mind he is aware that his nerve, as I call it, is giving way; that there are times when he is not master of his own actions, and that in those times he is likely to pour out all that lies on his conscience to the first

person he meets—or to the empty air. He was seized with one of these attacks, which he calls remorse, and I term loss of nerve, yesterday, and you saw how I had to stop him. He is liable to them at any moment upon the slightest provocation. You produced the attack by a casual suggestion of something in the past. But the most dangerous times are at night, when he sinks into a state of somnambulism, and would rush out of the room if I did not keep the door fastened and the key under my pillow. His cries would alarm the whole neighbourhood if I were not sharp to wake him up, get him into bed, and quiet him. I never sleep out of his room. You can understand, therefore, why I wish to be quit of such a service."

"You spoke enigmatically of his destroying himself," I said.

"It's clear enough. He would destroy himself, if I let him, by betraying a secret that would bring him to gaol for life."

"Impossible!" I gasped.

"True enough. If he escaped, it would only be by a successful pleading of insanity. But that could hardly be maintained in the face of the facts, and would certainly never clear him in the estimation of any reasoning man."

"But what deed has he committed?—when?—where?"

"When?—fifty years ago. Where?—in that very house where he is now lying. What deed?—the fatal injury of his friend, Lord Redlands!"

I sank back in my chair, speechless.

"'DELIVER IT YOURSELF—WON'T YOU, KEENE?'" (*p.* 234).

"I have heard the details of that crime over and over again from his lips," Lestrange continued. "He was a widower. Friend of Lord Redlands. Redlands, in difficulties, borrowed money of him and gave him the receipt. In the night he gagged his friend with a pillow, and stole the money he had brought down. Redlands shortly died of the shock. Made it appear that highwaymen had done it. To show his own honesty, Sylvester tore up the receipt he had received from Redlands. Redlands' widow, still in difficulties, sells the Court and half the estate. Sylvester buys it, and offers the title-deeds to the widow if she will marry him. She refuses—suspecting him, probably. He, to avoid inquiry and forget his disappointment, goes

abroad. From the very first he seems to have been pursued by remorse, for he lived in utter seclusion, and had not the courage to look on his own son. But his secret was his own until a couple of years back, when he perceived that he might at any moment betray himself under the pressure of remorse. Then he engaged me to watch him night and day, promising any reward I liked to demand. I demanded all he had; and he agreed, making the will I have told you about. For two years this has gone on; I have stuck to his side like a shadow, and if ever man deserved reward, I do. Night and day, day and night, I have to watch him. I'm getting tired of it. I cannot answer for my own reason under a prolonged stress of this awful kind. For it *is* awful. Besides that, I have to occupy his mind; I have found the greatest success in pampering his vanity. In Italy he is regarded as a millionaire, and the baser kind of aristocracy receive and flatter him. He thinks he is witty and pleasing; you see his fatuity. Well, as I say, I can stand it no longer, and either I must leave him to go his own way to the fate that has been standing before him fifty years, or—I must have fifty thousand pounds to get him back to Italy and keep myself a bit comfortable. Now, Mr. Keene, it is for you to decide which course I am to take."

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

A FINE FELLOW.

I CANDIDLY confess I was completely staggered by the revelation of this man. I did not know what to do—that's the fact; and, as he had prognosticated, I heartily wished that I had not compelled him to make the disclosure. Instead of being guided by the axiom that "honesty is the best policy," I might have trusted to another, "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," with considerable advantage. While these reflections were passing through my mind I sat silent enough.

"Well, Mr. Lestrange," said I, at length, "you cannot expect me to do anything in this matter without mature consideration."

"I can't give you long," he replied. "Delay is dangerous, especially in a case of this kind. The associations make that house unfit for the old man to stop in. If any accident should happen to me it would be all up with him, and me too, so far as my fortune is concerned. The servants are inquisitive; one never knows what may take place. Supposing this affair should be blown and the old man were convicted, the Redlands family might contest his claim to an estate that he got through a fraud, as you may say. No"—shaking his head—"I can't give you long—a couple of days or so, not more. I shan't be easy until I get him out of the country. If you cannot decide sharp, I must try some other means."

"You shall have my answer the day after to-morrow," said I; "in the meantime you will, of course, say nothing to anybody of what has passed between us?"

"I'm not a fool," said he, with a knowing look, "and I don't think you can accuse me of being a rogue, either. I have acted straightforward with you, and as fairly as any man, with a due regard to his own interest, might. Good day."

For a long while after his departure I sat turning the thing over in my mind, looking at it on this side and that with the hope of seeing my way out of the difficulty, yet for the life of me I knew not what to do. One thing I certainly could not do; I could not tell poor little Marian that her grandfather was—the worst of criminals (I could not even bring myself to call him by the name with which the world would brand him, if all were known). I felt sure it would go near to break her heart, and I was morally certain that with this stain on her family she would never consent to be the wife of young Redlands. This certitude put me on a new train of thought, and I asked myself if I ought, in common honesty, to let Redlands marry her in ignorance of this family disgrace? The answer to that was so clearly "NO!" that I sent round at once for my gig, clapped on my hat, and drove off to find Redlands, and let him know the state of affairs. I knew where to find my lord, and instead of going down the breakneck path to the Gap, I kept on along the road to the point where it was intersected by the new cut to Red Rift. It was traced out, the wild growth of furze and bramble had been cleared off, making it already practicable for my gig, and dozens of men were hard at it with pick and shovel, making a cutting through a rise in the Combe. It did one good to see these signs of activity on this land, which no foot but the poacher's had traversed for years and years, and to observe the cheerful good-will with which each of these men, who had so long stood in despondent idleness for want of work, now lent himself to labour. I was known to them as Lord Redlands' lawyer, and, as I passed along, the cheery "Good a'ternoon, Mr. Keene," with a touch of the cap, was a testimony to their respect and gratitude towards their new master.

"I suppose I shall find the governor at the head of the rift?" said I.

"Aye, sur, he's bound to be theere som'eres," was the reply.

A wooden shanty had been knocked up at the lower end of the Combe, and here I found Redlands seated at a deal table, on which were writing materials and a pile of letters under a paper-weight. A shelf of books hung against the wall, and all sorts of plans, sections, and that kind of thing, were roughly nailed on the deal planks for reference. The only ornament in the place was a richly-carved oak frame that he must have bought at Coneyford, in which was set a pen-and-ink tracing from the Ordnance map—that, as I learnt afterwards, which Marian had given him.

I had opportunity to make these observations, for Redlands, who rose on my coming, was now concluding an interview with a man who seemed loth to go away. I knew the man by sight. His name was Coneybeare, a speculator, and one of the wealthiest men in Coneyford. He had for years been hankering after the Loecliff estate, intending, it was rumoured, if he could only get it, to run a rail there from Coneyford,

build a big hotel, make it a fashionable watering-place, and realise cent. per cent. on the investment.

"Well, my lord," said he, going slowly towards the door, "you'll think it over, won't you?"

"I have thought it over," said Redlands, with good humour, "and I have resolved to work the thing myself. If I knew the exact value of the property, and you were to offer me double that sum, I would not sell."

"I can understand that, my lord," said Coneybeare. "I dare say there is no one who has a keener sense of enjoyment in working a thing to advantage than I have. To see one's hopes realised, to see one's exertions richly rewarded, is the greatest happiness in the world, to my mind. And this delight takes a wonderful hold on a young beginner, I know. But it's only an old soldier like me who can stand reverses; the young 'uns can't stand it. You'll get reverses: you're bound to in the natural course of things, be your luck as good as it may, and I don't think you will keep up your spirits to the present level when things go wrong, in conjunction with a spell of bad weather and, say, a sluggish liver. Then you'll say to yourself, 'Why should I be hanging about here in the slush and mud, making so much a day, when old Coneybeare would give me twice the amount to go away and enjoy myself in the society I've been used to?' I don't say you won't be well paid, my lord, for all your work here. You're bound to make money; but I can make more. I've got the working plant ready to set down, whereas you have to buy yours, and set up everything new. I shan't take 'No' for an answer to-day. I believe sooner or later you will ask me to buy; all I shall trouble you with for the present is to remember my address—Coneybeare, Coneyford—it's easy to remember, and I hope soon to hear from you." With that he shook hands, nodded to me, and went off. Redlands came back to me, his face beaming with happiness.

"Well," he asked, "what have you found out about the teacher at the school? Have you found out her name?"

"Yes, I know her name, and so do you now. I know all about it."

He was so light-hearted and joyful that I felt sick to think of the part I was about to play, and the bitter disappointment that must soon overcloud all his hopes. Seeing me so leaden and down in the mouth, he concluded that I was displeased with the errand he had sent me on the day before, for he laughed outright at me.

"You're sure her name is not Jigger, eh?" he asked. "Certainly, it's no compliment to her better qualities to say she's as good as she looks! After all, you have more right to laugh at me than I at you. But you're not surprised now that I fell in love with her before I knew her name even."

"No," said I; "I am not surprised at that. There's not a lady in the world more deserving of a good and honest gentleman's love."

He grasped my hand in eloquent silence; I couldn't look up in his face, but sat there jogging the paper-weight to and fro idly with my left hand, as miserable at heart as if the young fellow were my own brother.

After a brief pause, in which he must have been studying my face, he said, with sudden conviction, "Keene, you have come here to bring me bad news."

"Yes," said I, "it is bad news that has brought me here."

"Nothing has happened to *her?*" he said, with quickened breath.

"No, thank God. She knows nothing about it, and she mustn't. I shouldn't let you or any one else know but for her sake."

"Out with it, Keene; I am a man," said he, with fierceness in his voice.

"Well, a quick step is best on miry ground, so you shall have the truth in a couple of words — Old Sylvester is a scoundrel, a thief—and worse!"

"A thief!" he exclaimed incredulously.

"*And worse*," I repeated.

He seated himself without a word, and I then told him the whole wretched story from beginning to end. When he had heard all—I was careful to omit nothing, and, indeed, said considerably more than I have written in narrating my interview with Lestrange—he said with decision—

"Miss Sylvester must never hear a word of this ghastly business. We must get that awful old sinner out of the way at once. Can you set about this immediately?"

"Yes; but lawyer as I am, I have not the slightest notion what is to be done."

"I know what is to be done," said he decisively, and without a moment's reflection. "Will you follow my directions?"

"With all my heart, and at once," said I, rising from my chair.

"You must find Lestrange."

"He is at the Court, without doubt."

"See him, and exact his promise to leave the country to-morrow, and take that horrible old rascal with him."

"He won't go without money, and he'll not be satisfied without a lump sum."

"He shall have as much as he demands."

I scratched my chin.

"Money can be raised, certainly," said I, "though it will be sharp work to get any in twenty-four hours; and how I'm to get the mortgage afterwards without awaking Miss Sylvester's suspicions, I don't know."

He had been hastily writing while he spoke, and now blotting the sheet and folding it, he said cheerfully—

"This will do it!" He stuck the folded sheet in an envelope, and as he addressed it, said, still in the same brisk tone—

"When you have settled that blackguard Lestrange, take this over to Coneyford, and deliver it yourself—won't you, Keene? I feel that I am not asking a favour," he added, with a softened tone, as he rose and put the letter in my hands, "because it is for *her* sake."

I glanced at the envelope and read the address—

"Mr. Coneybeare, Coneyford." I knew what that meant. Redlands had accepted the contractor's offer. With one stroke of the pen he had given up his fortune to save Marian from the shame of knowing her grandfather's crime. The heroism of our age lies in the exercise of moral courage, which surely surpasses mere physical hardihood as much as our reason excels the instinct of brutes; and I say that in this generous act my young Lord Redlands showed more fortitude than any of his ancestors who fell in battle. For certainly —though I have never fought any one save in a court of law—it is ten times easier for a man to risk his life in the heat and passion of battle, than in cool blood to relinquish with good and cheerful heart the fortune he has won, and can scarcely hope to recover.

With these thoughts in my mind I grasped the young man's hand.

"You are a fine fellow," said I, "and worthy of the name you bear. I know what is in this letter——"

"Then off you go," said he cheerily. "You are wasting time, Keene, and there's none to spare; I'll change these muddy things for others, and go over to the Court presently, so that Miss Sylvester may have no suspicion. Meanwhile, you see Lestrange and Coneybeare, and arrange matters, so that we get the old man out of the country by to-morrow night."

"It shall be done," said I, and jumping into my gig —for he had taken me by the arm and got me out of the shed while he was talking—I drove off as fast as my nag would go.

Now, as I could not have gone up to the house without being seen by Marian, and exciting her curiosity, I pulled up when I came near the park gates, and sent a boy, who chanced to be there, with a note written on a leaf of my note-book, addressed to Lestrange, and telling him to come to me at once.

After waiting some time, I got his answer by the boy, saying he would come immediately.

While I waited I settled in my mind how I would manage my man, little doubting that I could induce him to accept something on account, and go with an agreement that the rest of the money he demanded should be sent on to him; by which arrangement we might avoid parting with the Redlands estate to Coneybeare, and so keep it in our own hands. If we only had time, we could get all the money that was needed on a mortgage, without cramping Redlands greatly for present funds.

I was getting this neatly arranged in my thoughts when Lestrange came to me with an expression of anger and bitter disappointment in his face.

"I have been thinking your offer over," said I, as he came up. "It's all right; I——"

"No, it isn't all right," he said moodily, interrupting me. "It's all wrong."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

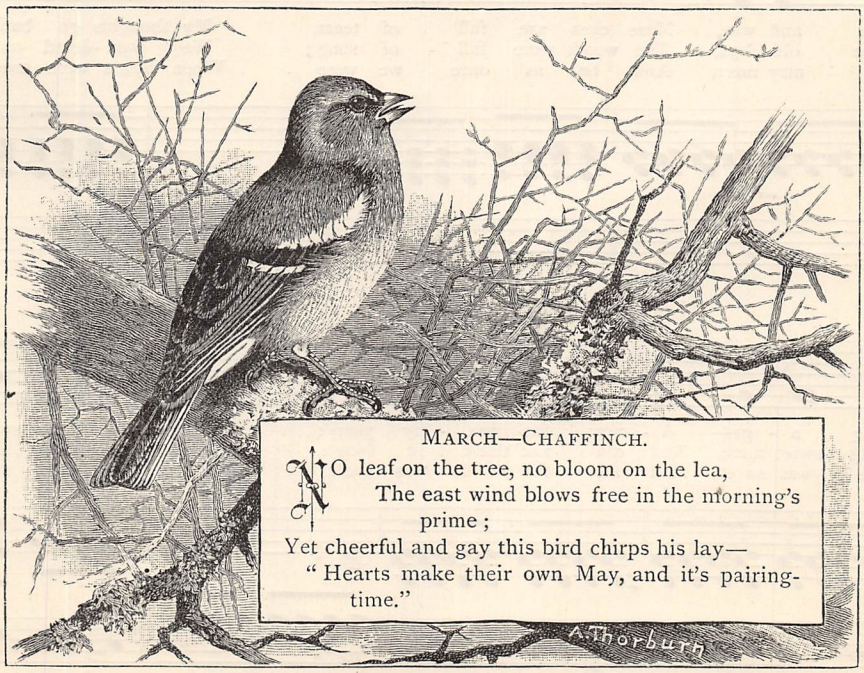
"It's all over," said he, throwing up his hands. "The cat's out of the bag."

"What?"

"Just what I feared," he explained. "While I was away the old man got loose somehow, and Miss Sylvester knows everything!"

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.



MARCH—CHAFFINCH.

NO leaf on the tree, no bloom on the lea,
The east wind blows free in the morning's prime;
Yet cheerful and gay this bird chirps his lay—
"Hearts make their own May, and it's pairing-time."

Drifted Away.

Words by J. A. McDONALD. *Music by* T. R. G. JOZÉ, Mus. D.

VOICE. PIANO.

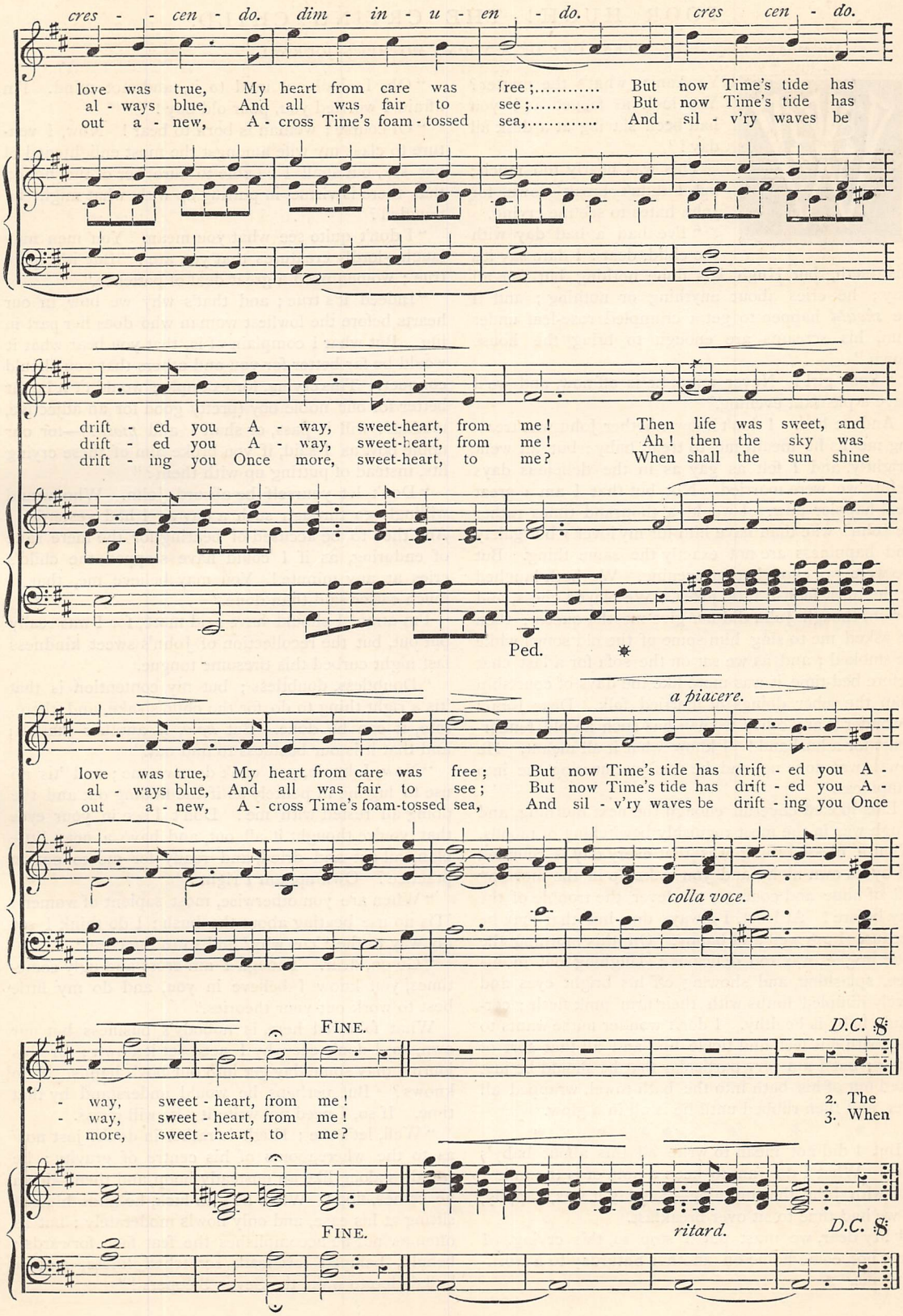
cres - cen - do.

1. My heart is full of
sun shone clear in
shall it be that

♩= 104.

pain and woe, Mine eyes are full of tears, My thoughts go back to
those old days, The woods were full of song; We wan-dered on in
we may meet, And be as once we were When hearts were true, and

long a - go— A - cross the wea - ry years: Then life was sweet, and
love's sweet maze, And did not think it long: Ah! then the sky was
life was sweet, And all the world was fair? When shall the sun shine


cres - - cen - do. dim - in - u - en - do. cres cen - do.
love was true, My heart from care was free;..... But now Time's tide has
al - ways blue, And all was fair to see;..... But now Time's tide has
out a - new, A - cross Time's foam - tossed sea,..... And sil - v'ry waves be
drift - ed you A - way, sweet-heart, from me! Then life was sweet, and
drift - ed you A - way, sweet-heart, from me! Ah! then the sky was
drift - ing you Once more, sweet-heart, to me? When shall the sun shine
Ped. *
a piacere.
love was true, My heart from care was free; But now Time's tide has drift - ed you A -
al - ways blue, And all was fair to see; But now Time's tide has drift - ed you A -
out a - new, A - cross Time's foam-tossed sea, And sil - v'ry waves be drift - ing you Once
colla voce.
FINE.
D.C. 𝄋
- way, sweet - heart, from me!
- way, sweet - heart, from me!
more, sweet - heart, to me?
2. The
3. When
FINE.
ritard.
D.C. 𝄋

POOR HUGH! THE CRYING CHILD.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

HY, Annie, what's the matter? You look as fagged as if you had been slaving at a desk all day!"

This was nearly too much; but I didn't break down, for John hates to see me crying.

"I've had a bad day with the child, dear: I dare say it's his teeth, but Hugh has done nothing but fret all day; he cries about anything or nothing; and if he *should* happen to get a crumpled rose-leaf under him, his screams are enough to bring the house down."

"Poor girl! Never mind, he is off now, and we'll have a pleasant evening."

And we had. I don't know whether John was treating me as he meant me to treat baby; but all went brightly, and I felt as gay as in the delicious days before we were married. Not but that I am a great deal happier now. I would a thousand times rather be John's wife than have him for my lover; but gaiety and happiness are not exactly the same thing. But we were gay enough that evening. We both laughed at the most foolish little jokes. We played chess, and I won, though John did *not* give me the queen; then he asked me to sing him some of the old songs while he smoked; and as we sat on the sofa for a last chat before bed-time, it was more like the days of courtship than the sober doings of married folk. Dear John! I wonder if any other woman has such an old tender-heart for a husband! I know what it all meant. He saw I was done up, and he was just nursing me into happiness.

Life looked cheerful enough the next morning, and Hugh was in the most roguishly bewitching of moods. What a blessed thing it is that every day is rounded off by its own night, and you wake up in the morning full of hope and courage, whatever the trouble of the day before! At least, I always do; but that may be because I am well and happy. On this morning the little rogue was too delicious; laughing out in his glee, splashing, and showing off his bright eyes and lovely dimpled limbs with their firm pink flesh; certainly baby is healthy. I don't wonder nurse wants to play with his feet and tickle him and all that sort of thing; but I am very particular that he should be just lifted out of his bath into the bath-towel, wrapped all over, and then rubbed until he is all in a glow.

* * * * * *

But I did not mean to write all this about baby's bath. What I do want to keep a note of is the talk I had with John that morning—Sunday it was, happily, so we had time to sit over breakfast.

"My dear, we must put a stop to this crying. I must not come home on another Saturday to a worn-out wifie."

"Oh, I shall get used to it, and not mind. I'm afraid I worried you, poor old boy!"

"Of course; woman is born to bear! Now, I venture to class my wife amongst the most enlightened of her sex, but shall I be able to cure her of the notion that there is virtue in putting up with what might be mended?"

"I don't quite see what you mean. You men may laugh—lordly creatures that you are! But it's quite true; women need a great deal of patience."

"Indeed it's true; and that's why we bow in our hearts before the lowliest woman who does her part in life. But what I complain of is, that you bear what it would be far better for you and others that you should conquer. This crying, for example; wouldn't it be far better for our noble boy (pretty good for an adjective, madam: will it pass, or shall I add *most?*)—for our noble boy, as I said, if you broke him of these crying fits, instead of putting up with them?"

"Don't let yourself be absurd, John. Who would willingly go through such a day as I had yesterday? And then to be accused of bearing for the mere sake of enduring, as if I could have stopped the child's cries at any minute! You may believe me, that is much easier said than done."

I'm afraid I should have said more, for I was really put out, but the recollection of John's sweet kindness last night curbed this tiresome tongue.

"Doubtless, doubtless; but my contention is that 'tis a right thing to do for the child's sake, and, therefore, it can be done. But *how*, is another matter; and that it is our business to find out."

"Now, Johnnie, you can't deceive me; and 'tis no use to lug me in politely as if the finding out and the doing all rested with me! Don't I see in your eyes that you've thought it all out, and have a neat little plan, all cut and dried, and ready for me to put in practice? Own up, am I right?"

"When are you otherwise, most sapient of women? 'Tis no use beating about the bush; I do think I see my way to the 'cos why,' and so to the cure."

"Go on, dear. Though I am cross and ugly sometimes, you know I believe in you, and do my little best to work out your theories."

What followed here, is nobody's business but our own, so I don't see why I need set it down; for this journal may some day get into our boy's hands. Who knows? But perhaps he would understand by that time. If so, I need not write it; he will guess.

"Well, let's see; Hugh is rather in doubt just now as to the whereabouts of his centre of gravity; he trundles along like an unsteady hoop, and then—down he comes, flop! When he's in luck, he finds himself sitting at his ease, and only howls moderately; but as often as not he accomplishes the feat face forwards; behold, bumped forehead, scratched knees, and a hullabuloo to wake the Seven Sleepers!"

"Well, what would you have? I'm sure it's a blessing the dear child does cry when he's hurt. Think what it would be if he came by some bad accident, and gave us no warning!"

"There's something in that; only, unfortunately, the bad accident would leave him without a howl to his name."

"Oh, John, don't be horrid! It makes me quite ill to hear you talk in that unfeeling way, just as if you did not care two pins for the little cherub! Just go straight on, and if he is *not* to cry when he's hurt, pray tell me how to prevent it. I do believe the best of men haven't much feeling."

John looked a little hurt, and I was ashamed of myself the moment the words were out; for don't I know him?

"Never mind, Johnnie; you know I don't mean it: please tell me what I must do."

"Just notice how a fond and ignorant mother behaves to her child in such a case. She runs to help him when he falls, kisses the place to make it well, purrs over him, pities him, fondles him, and all with a face a deal more long and serious than if she were hurt herself."

"Well, and what would you have? I would not give a fig for a mother who did not feel, really *feel* in her own flesh, every pain of her child!"

"By their fruits ye shall know them. Love would see that the child is being made a fool of, and would sooner cut off its right hand than do such damage to the defenceless."

"I suppose you are right. Certainly a child will cry so long as you pity him. I wonder why."

"Why, the fact is, the child measures his woes by the length of his mother's face. So long as she pities, he frets; thinks of his hurt, and, therefore, feels it. It's so with grown-ups. The chances are ten to one in favour of a patient with a cheerful nurse as against him whose nurse—his wife, say—gazes at him as if the world were coming to an end. And if we are influenced in this way, just think what it must be for the child whose only means of knowing how much he is hurt is by the faces about him!"

"But surely that is nonsense! Do you think children and frogs don't feel pain?"

"They feel pain, no doubt; but the sense of suffering comes as the thoughts measure and dwell upon the hurt. It is so with soldiers on the field of battle, with firemen in a burning house; the wounds and burns they get hurt afterwards, when they have time to think of them. Now this shows at once what is to be done with a hurt child. Give him something else to think of, and don't let him see that you are concerned about his troubles."

"But what a hard-hearted wretch of a mother one would be!"

"Now, my dear, don't confound seeming and being! Don't you see? When you seem tenderest, you are really most unfeeling; and when you seem hard-hearted, you are truly loving."

"It's a new idea, but I dare say I shall take it in, in time. But about Hugh; he certainly has a way of running to me with a pitiful face when he is hurt, or, if it's bad, screaming till I come."

"Oh, yes, and you rush up in a great fuss, seize him in your arms, with 'Where is mother's little boy hurt?' and so on, and so on, until he thinks he is very bad. I have watched the whole process many times. As for nurse, she is worse than her mistress: whips the 'naughty table,' or 'naughty chair,' that has done the mischief, until the boy takes up the cudgels for himself and beats the offending article. A sweet spirit of revenge for Christian parents to foster!"

"Oh, John, have you seen all this, and laughed at us, or worse, blamed us?"

"Don't be concerned; I am only beginning to understand, and constantly make far worse mistakes than yours. And we must talk it over with Jane. She is a good girl, and will take a hint."

"Well, so far as I understand, the thing is, not to let him see by our faces that we think there is much the matter. He is to fall on the gravel and scratch his poor knees badly, and no one is to run and pick him up; but you or I must chirrup cheerfully, 'Up again, Hugh! What made you tumble? Pick up your ball and come to mother!' And when he looks pitifully at the bleeding knees, cry out, more lively than ever, 'Why, Hugh's knees are bleeding! We must tie them up in two handkerchiefs, and then what a funny fellow he'll look!' It's all very wise, I dare say, but I should not like to harden Hugh at the cost of his love."

"Never fear it; every year will add esteem to his love for the mother who took the pains to restrain her emotions for his sake. And how well you have caught what I have in my head, though you make believe to laugh at it all! That is just how Hughie's scratched knees and other pains should be treated if we want to make a man of him. 'Pick up the ball' is a capital idea. It is a great thing to give a child something to do, whether he cries from pain or temper. When you give him something to do, you give him something else to think about, and that's the great secret. A plaything or a message, something to do or something to see, or to say, it does not matter what, so long as you 'change his thoughts,' as the nurses say; get a new idea into the little head filled with sense of pain and injury. Nothing is easier; the sweet infant mind is open to all new thoughts—that is, unless the child have been spoiled by his elders—and the new idea once in, the old pain is forgotten. I'm quite sure that a crying child—even when the child is sickly or suffering—is the handiwork of his parents."

I write all this down that I may not forget it. I do believe John is right, and Hugh shall not be a crying child if I can help it. Now, Hugh "howls," as John would say, for a variety of reasons: he howls when the cat runs away with her tail, when his porridge is too hot, when I don't take him up the moment I enter the nursery; indeed, whenever his feelings are hurt—which they are many times a day. He howls when the baby over the way won't speak to him; when he has a pain or an ache of his own; when he believes

that mother or nurse has pains; because he may not pull over him the contents of the cream-jug; when he tumbles—and for reasons inscrutable to the dull "*big*" people about him. Now, it seemed to me that John's notion of changing his thoughts, and not letting him see that we pitied him, could not possibly fit all these.

Next morning the poor little man got up out of sorts, ready to cry on the least provocation. The morning's bath was attended by bad symptoms, but

"ON THIS MORNING THE LITTLE ROGUE WAS TOO DELICIOUS" (*p.* 238).

nurse got over these by telling him how the mother camel washed the baby camel in the hot sandy desert: "Now this eye, and the baby camel never cried; now this ear," and so on, until the baby camel and the little boy were both washed, and the latter ready for the splashing and sponging, over which much laughter goes on. I had never asked nurse how she came to invent this story of the baby camel—an unfailing favourite—but it struck me now that she was unconsciously carrying out my husband's theory about "changing his thoughts;" in the interest of the baby camel's washing Hugh never thought of the inconveniences of his own.

By the way, so soon as his fifth birthday comes, Hugh shall be taught to take his own bath, and to make himself perfectly clean. Children do more difficult things than this; and if they are caused to wash their little persons bit by bit on succeeding days until at last they can do the whole—a feat to be rewarded by an ante-breakfast of ripe fruit or figs—why, the morning bath will be made a delight instead of a torment. Besides, they will be getting into two good *habits*—the enjoyment of the *feel* of water about them, and real pleasure in personal cleanliness.

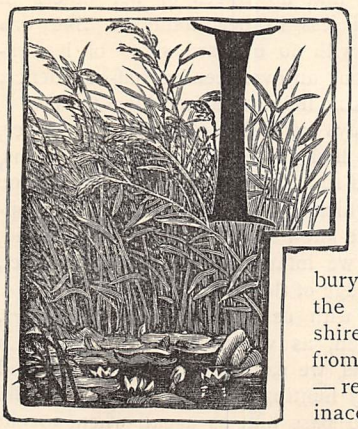
Our dear two-years-old Hugh must wait for this; but in the meantime his bath, the little simple cooling draught I gave him, and the cooling food he had all day, helped him to a better state of mind. But never believe we were without squalls, for quite half a dozen of the reasons I have mentioned, to say nothing of others beyond us. We got over a bad fall down four steps, with bumped head and a small wound from the little cart he carried, by taking it briskly and cheerfully, and treating arnica and sticking-plaister as excellent fun. Then, nurse told me, she stopped in the act a squall raised by my being suddenly called out of the nursery, by saying, "Hughie, *could* you open that drawer and find nurse a clean apron?" In fact, that one day's experience was enough to prove to my mind that, after all, John was right, and it was our own fault if every one's comfort—his own most of all, poor little man—was spoiled by a crying child.

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

OUR MYSTERIOUS NEIGHBOUR.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.



I SUPPOSE if you were to search England over in this year of grace you would hardly find a more out-of-the-way spot than the village of Shrimpton cum Scroobury. Hidden away in the folds of the Wiltshire downs — remote from town or railway — rendered frequently inaccessible for weeks together by the snow-drifts that enveloped it as in a winding-sheet, we three girls, whose fate it was to live there, would ask each other, was not our lot truly pitiable? It was a silly question, but then we were young and foolish, sighing after we knew not what, and not half appreciating our pretty home and dear kind father, the only parent we knew, for mother had died when I was born.

And when I say "we three girls," I ought to correct myself and exempt Margery, our eldest sister, who was far too bright and sensible to be guilty of such vain complainings. At the time I write of she was two-and-twenty, the life and soul of the house, always busy and happy; whilst Rose and I, aged respectively twenty and eighteen, would look on with some admiration mingled with contempt at her contentment.

Our father was a gentleman farmer, and we lived in a beautiful old farmhouse, all gables and mullions, but like all farmers we were suffering from bad times, and the pressure of poverty, which meant the curtailing of such pleasures as we had hitherto enjoyed.

Under these circumstances, any one may easily imagine what an excitement was created amongst us when we learnt that the Priory, which had stood untenanted for years in the village, had been taken by a gentleman. Our only regret was that, instead of being the father of a large family of girls and boys, as we had hoped when we first heard the news, the newcomer was reported to be unmarried. Still it was better to have the hitherto empty house occupied by an unmarried man than by none at all, and we refused to be laughed out of our visions of a pleasant neighbour by our father, who argued that only some one very peculiar would voluntarily bury himself alive at Shrimpton, more especially a single man.

In spite of this sound reasoning, our curiosity concerning our future neighbour continued unabated, and we sought to satisfy it by watching the unpacking of the vans, that were daily arriving with his luggage.

"He must be a gentleman, father," I reported one evening; "he has such loads of books and book-cases."

"Does that constitute a gentleman, Milly?" asked my father, laughing.

Mr. Burrell, as the owner of the books was named, was not long in following his luggage. He arrived one evening, and by the time two or three days had elapsed, a perfect host of stories respecting him were circulating in the village, coming from no one knew where, and from no one knew whom. He was hiding from his creditors; he was a swindler; he had poisoned his wife—for he turned out to be a widower; he had committed bigamy: there is no repeating all the absurd and wild stories that were set on foot against this inoffensive stranger, who had unwarily settled in our midst. Nevertheless, as there is no smoke without a flame, my father issued the fiat that he should not call upon him until he had heard something more satisfactory as to his character. I must confess that this was a blow to us girls, for we had already formed our opinion of Mr. Burrell, and it was a favourable one.

Shrimpton, as a village, is not wanting in interest. Built in and outside of what had once been a mighty stone circle, such as are met with in parts of Wiltshire, with a church dating back to Saxon times, and the remains of a priory that had once been famous, there was much to attract a man of antiquarian tastes such as Mr. Burrell appeared to be. In our walks about the village we would often meet him, intently gazing at, measuring, or examining the few remains of the stone circle that were left, and every time we saw him our impression that he was a gentleman, in every sense of the word, was confirmed. A tall, thin man, with good features, and a dark, melancholy countenance—a very clever one, Margery pronounced it to be—he might have been thirty or forty, but his whole appearance was such as to inspire confidence, and to give the lie to the ridiculous stories that were afloat concerning him. When we first met him, he did not so much as glance our way, so completely did he seem absorbed in thought; but, by degrees, as he grew familiar with our appearance, he would give us a swift look as we passed, and that look was always directed at Margery. She was very pretty in those days, as she is still, with her upright carriage, her elastic gait, and a face full of intelligence, sweetness of temper, and fun. Small wonder then that when Mr. Burrell's eyes did turn in our direction they should stop short at Margery.

In this way the autumn passed away, Christmas and winter were upon us, and we were no nearer to knowing our new neighbour than in the first days of his arrival, because of the something dreadful that he had done.

Rose and I would lie awake at night, wondering what the something could be, but when we spoke of it to Margery she only laughed at us.

"Something dreadful!" she said. "How can you both be so silly as to believe the nonsense you hear in the village? As though a man with that countenance could be guilty of anything dreadful!"

"Father thinks so," we answered.

"No, he doesn't," she retorted; "only he does not choose that we should know any one whose character is not above suspicion."

Unfortunately this was not the case with Mr. Burrell. In spite of the quiet secluded life that he led, the reports about him grew rather than decreased, fed by the fact that he sat up to unearthly hours in the morning, poring over books or trying experiments. With Christmas his son had appeared on the scene, a fair, curly-haired boy, with a grave, wise little face, too old by far for his size.

"Home for the holidays," we settled, pitying the child sincerely for the lonely time he would have; but our pity was thrown away, for the father and son seemed perfectly happy together, and quite inseparable. Thus the days sped by in unbroken monotony, save for the usual Christmas rejoicings, until with January there came a little excitement for us girls, quite independent of our interest in Mr. Burrell. It came in the shape of tidings of one of whom, in a vague way, we felt extremely proud. She was a cousin, living in London, who had made herself famous by competing with men on their own ground, and carrying off honours such as usually fall to the stronger sex. In one word, she was a Senior Wrangler.

We used to relate it to our friends in awestruck voices, not exactly understanding what it was, but aware that it was something that it would be as well to make much of. The information always produced a sensation, and made us feel as though we participated in the fame of this cousin, whom we had never seen in our lives.

And now, just as we were lamenting the dreariness of winter, what should come but the news that this wonderful cousin, Julia Gore, had been laid up with a severe illness brought on by over-study, and wanted thorough change to some rural spot where the air was pure and bracing, and she could live an idle outdoor life, and never look into a book.

"And when the doctor told me this, my dear Henry," wrote Mrs. Gore to my father—they were first cousins—"my thoughts flew at once to your sweet retired home and your three charming girls, so suitable as companions to my poor overwrought Julia, who would delight to share in their simple outdoor pursuits, so refreshing to a mind wearied with constant study." There followed a good deal more in the same strain, which did not impress us favourably with the writer, whose thoughts had taken twenty years to fly to us, the gist of which was that she asked us to receive Julia on an indefinite visit, hoping that one of us would accompany her back to London and make acquaintance with the whole family. My father, the most good-natured of men, answered the letter with his usual generosity, bidding Julia heartily welcome, and inviting her to stay as long as she liked. Mrs. Gore accepted the invitation by return of post, and the result was that, before the week was out, Julia and her boxes were installed at Bentash. We were agreeably surprised in our new cousin's looks, plain as she was to ugliness, for we had dreaded an invalid, and were delighted to find no traces of her illness in her face, and still less in her manners. She was bright and brisk, with no outward signs of her extreme cleverness but an overweening self-confidence, and a rather dogmatic habit of laying down the law.

In a very few days we had made friends together, that is to say, we had got on quite cousinly terms, although there was something about her that we none of us liked, but which we could not define. I suppose it was that she knew so much more than we did, for not only were we infants beside her in intellect, but also in knowledge of the world.

She had been with us some three or four days, when one afternoon, as we were returning from a walk on the downs, we came upon Mr. Burrell and his little boy busy hunting for fossils in the chalk. We were about to pass him as usual, when, to our surprise, Julia suddenly halted, and, with every token of astonishment, advanced to greet him.

"Mr. Burrell!" she cried, "who would have thought of meeting you here? How delighted I am to see you again, and dear little Georgie too! What ages it is since we have seen one another!"

This was indeed interesting. With every sense on the alert, Margery, Rose, and I stood and listened, whilst a red flush passed over Mr. Burrell's features.

"I did not think I should meet you either, Miss Gore," he answered in a low voice. "This is not a place where one runs against acquaintances."

"I hope you count me as more than an acquaintance," she returned. "I am staying with my cousin, Mr. Markham. I suppose you know him."

"I have not that honour," he responded coldly.

"Then allow me to introduce you to his daughters," said Julia promptly—"Miss Margery, Miss Rose, Miss Emily Markham."

Mr. Burrell bowed stiffly, but a sudden transient smile swept over his face as Margery frankly extended her hand to him, instead of giving him the stupid confused bows that Rose and I had been guilty of. The next moment he had lifted his hat and was gone, and we were surrounding Julia with a chorus of questions—How was it she knew Mr. Burrell? Who was he? What had he done? &c. &c.—whilst she in her turn wanted to know whether he lived at Shrimpton? Why it was we did not know him? and so on. She was intensely amused at the stories told about the poor man, but more so at our crediting them.

"You certainly are the most benighted people in these parts," she said. "I will now tell you Mr. Burrell's real history, and then you will see how very foolish you have been."

Did we desire anything better? Passing over the insult to our understanding, we were soon eagerly listening, whilst she related to us the true account of our much-maligned neighbour's misfortunes.

Mr. Burrell, it seemed, had been the master of a very fashionable private school in one of the home

counties, where he had been equally distinguished as a scientist. His school had always been full, and so devoted were he and his wife to the boys, that in term time he seldom left them, joining in all their games and sports as though he had been one of themselves. One luckless afternoon in June, he was playing cricket with them as usual, and fielding, when on throwing up the ball to the wicket-keeper, a boy about twelve years old, it struck him on the temple and killed him instantly. This boy was the only son of a great personal friend of Mr. Burrell's, Colonel Seymour, and heir to an important property, and the grief and horror of the unfortunate schoolmaster may be more easily imagined than described. And to add to it, Colonel Seymour, beside himself with misery, wrote him a cruel letter withdrawing his friendship from him, and begging to hold no further communication with him. But his cup of wretchedness was not yet full. The very evening of the funeral Mrs. Burrell was suddenly seized with illness and died in a few hours. Such a concatenation of misfortunes almost broke Mr. Burrell's heart. His health gave way; he threw up his school, and, a prey to melancholy, he wandered about England, seeking some retired spot where he might live alone with his books, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." Only his nearest and dearest had known, so said Julia, where he had finally pitched his tent, and it was a most curious coincidence that she should have come upon him thus unexpectedly at Shrimpton. As she said this, she looked us all three full in the face, and at the same moment an unworthy suspicion darted through my mind that she was not speaking the truth. I dismissed it, however, at once, turning to listen to the continuance of her narrative. She had made Mr. Burrell's acquaintance, she said, at the Seymours' house some five or six years ago, Colonel Seymour being her father's nephew. "We made immense friends from the very first," she related. "I think it was very refreshing for him to meet with a woman who could fully enter into his noblest and most intellectual tastes and feelings, for, between ourselves, Mrs. Burrell, pretty and sweet as she was, had not an idea in her empty little head."

After that they had met on and off at various places, and each time they had done so, according to her account, their friendship had waxed warmer, until, with the catastrophe of little Seymour's death, about two years ago, it had come to an abrupt conclusion.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

WE returned home to my father, bursting with our story, which he took very calmly. "Well, Julia," he said, "I am very glad that you have cleared up the mystery. I confess I always liked Mr. Burrell's appearance, and would gladly have called upon him, only one cannot be too particular when one is the father of three pretty motherless girls." Julia smiled, as much as to say, "Poor dear man! he need not have been so cautious. As though such a man as Mr. Burrell would look at your rustic trio!" She did not know how often he had looked at Margery. The next day my father called on Mr. Burrell, and finding him at home, had a long talk with him, which appeared to be perfectly satisfactory, for the visit was returned within a week. And meanwhile the weather grew colder and colder; bitter north-east winds whistled over the downs, and yet Julia stayed on, although we held out to her the prospect of being shortly snowed up.

It is easily to be imagined that, in a small place like Shrimpton, we very soon grew intimate with our new acquaintance. Whether he had formerly been devoted to Julia, as she related, I cannot tell. It was very clear that she was devoted to him now. When in his company she never left his side, and the fuss she made with Georgie was absurd, considering that she really disliked children. The boy himself did not reciprocate her attentions; he much preferred Margery, who, with her love for children, had won his heart from the first. So the days slipped away, and by degrees there stole over Mr. Burrell's melancholy countenance a glimmer of hope, a ray of light. Could this be due to Julia's presence? They had undoubtedly many intellectual and scientific tastes in common, but when Mr. Burrell explained to us any contrivance for saving labour—for he was a great mechanician—it was Margery who seized his meaning best, and was at once able to apply it in kitchen or farmyard. Many a pleasant hour we spent in this way, diversified by instructions in chemistry, in which Georgie played a prominent part. Like all boys, he loved trying experiments, and his greatest delight was to steal into his father's laboratory by himself, and there amuse himself with all manner of combustible substances. As is usually the case, he did this once too often. One afternoon there was a loud report as of an explosion, and Mr. Burrell, hastening to the laboratory, found poor Georgie, black as a sweep from gunpowder, and seriously burnt about the hand and arm. Without a moment's delay he sent across to Bentash to know what to do, but as it happened only Julia was at home, employed in writing. But at the message from the Priory she instantly left pen and paper, and flew to assist Mr. Burrell. Unfortunately, although her intentions were excellent, her knowledge was defective. She only irritated Georgie into reiterating, "Do go away; you know nothing about it. I want Margery," and there was nothing to be done but to send once more to Bentash, with a request that Miss Markham would come. In due course of time Margery arrived on the scene, armed with all the necessary appliances, and, before ten minutes had expired, Georgie's wounds had been dressed with a skill and tenderness that made him loud in her praises, whilst Mr. Burrell watched the proceedings with a strange, half-sad smile on his countenance, that might or might not have been provoked by Julia's lively sallies, as she assisted Margery in her task. From that day Georgie became the Bentash patient; and it was lucky he was so, for alas! my enemy the snow had come at last, and no doctor could penetrate to Shrimpton. We were snowed up.

Fortunately we were all prepared for the contingency,

"I WAS TOO LATE; THEY HAD ALL WITNESSED THE LITTLE SCENE" (*p.* 245).

which somehow did not seem quite so dreadful as usual, for was not the weather, in spite of its inclemency, very exhilarating?

Certainly it seemed to have that effect upon Julia, for she was full of life and brightness, proposing that we should get up some *tableaux vivants* for the amusement both of ourselves and of the village people during our enforced seclusion. The idea was suggested to her by the contents of a large chest—the property of a remote ancestress—that we had been turning out lately, and which was full of clothes of the Sir Joshua Reynolds period, that immediately made us think of scenes from "The Vicar of Wakefield." The suggestion met with approval on every side; soon we were all activity; our needles flying in and out of brocade and paduasoy, whilst lace ruffles and amateur periwigs were the order of the day. Julia was radiant and elated, giving us to understand that she expected Mr. Burrell to propose to her either the day of the *tableaux* or at their rehearsal, but that she was not sure whether she should accept him or not. As I listened to these announcements, I cannot say that my sentiments towards my cousin were amiable. It did seem rather a shame that she, who had plenty of friends and amusements in London, should come down to our quiet village and seek to captivate the man who I felt certain had been taken with Margery before her arrival. But when I looked at Margery to see what she thought about it all, she was turning away her head to conceal a smile, of which I could only catch the shadow. What did she mean by that smile? Our *tableaux* were of a simple character. They were to consist of one or two scenes from "The Vicar of Wakefield," and some other works of that period, in order to air our ancestress' costumes, whilst the rest were drawn from more ancient or more modern times. In the former Mr. Burrell was condemned to be the villain Thornhill, whilst my father made a splendid Doctor Primrose; and Georgie, Moses. Julia, who was a most efficient manager, elected to be Olivia; Margery was Sophia; Rose, Mrs. Primrose; and I, Miss Wilmot.

Everything being thus satisfactorily settled, we all assembled for the last dress rehearsal one bitterly cold evening at Bentash. Mr. Burrell and Georgie arrived betimes, all ready attired, the former looking so really happy, that I, who was the only one downstairs to welcome him, was quite taken aback. Undoubtedly Julia was right, and he meant to propose to her this evening. Feeling sick at heart for Margery's sake, I abruptly left our guest under the plea of attiring myself, and repaired to my bedroom, where I found Rose adorning herself in the midst of a litter of finery. Consequently, our dressing took us a very long time; and Margery was the only one of the four who was ready to go down to the drawing-room and arrange the impromptu scene for the *tableaux*. It was full twenty minutes later when Rose, Julia, and I descended the staircase together. On the way we met father emerging from his room, and after exchanging various jokes and compliments with each other on our appearance in our novel costumes, we proceeded to the drawing-room, feeling that we were anything but punctual to the appointed hour.

I was the first to turn the handle of the door, and, as I entered, what should meet my eye but Mr. Burrell, attired as Mr. Thornhill, on one knee beside our pretty Margery, to whom he was evidently making an offer in the most orthodox, but somewhat out of date, fashion. Even in this moment of happiness Margery could not restrain her sense of the ludicrous, for as I peeped round the corner, I heard her say, "Do get up; do, please; they will all be here directly," at the same time with a smile trying gently to withdraw her hand from his clasp. With difficulty repressing my laughter, I put out my arm to keep the others from entering, but in vain. I was too late; they had all witnessed the little scene, and whilst on Rose's and my father's countenances there gleamed smiles of satisfaction, on Julia's was to be read mortification and disgust, but ill-concealed under a satirical laugh.

Another second, and Mr. Burrell, roused by the sound, and flushing scarlet, had stumbled to his feet, and he and Margery, looking more like two culprits than a newly-engaged pair, were accepting the congratulations we were only too eager to pour upon them. As for poor Julia, she had retired upstairs, declaring herself suddenly unwell with a return of her old illness, nor did she reappear downstairs until two days later, when the roads being again open, her father came to fetch her home.

* * * * * *

Margery and Mr. Burrell were married in the spring, and a very charming couple they made. Mr. Burrell, restored to health and spirits in the first instance by a letter he received the very morning of the day he proposed, from Colonel Seymour, announcing the birth of another son and heir, and begging that his old friend would forgive him his past cruel injustice and come and pay him and his wife a visit; in the second, by his union with Margery, resumed his old vocation with all his old love for it, and before long his school was quite as full and as famous as in former days.

Julia, still smarting with mortification, refused, under some flimsy pretext, to be present at the wedding—where, however, we learnt from her cousin, Mrs. Seymour, the true history of her sudden recollection of, and descent upon, Bentash. From Mrs. Seymour herself, who had never lost sight of her husband's former friend, she had drawn the secret of Mr. Burrell's hiding-place, and, acting upon the information, had persuaded her mother to write and propose her visit to Shrimpton, no doubt with a view to becoming the wife of a man for whom she had conceived an extravagant admiration from the first moment that she had met him.

How her designs were frustrated the foregoing story has related. She attributes their failure to Margery, in blissful unconsciousness that Mr. Burrell has been heard to say more than once, "If she had been the only woman in the world, I would not have married her. She is a great deal too clever for me."

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

SECTION I.—(HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE)—PART 2.

COMMON-SENSE MEALS.

HERE are a good many worthy housekeepers in these days who blame themselves, and think themselves a failure, because, notwithstanding all their efforts, they are not able (perhaps with limited means, insufficient domestic help, and indescribable difficulties connected with an inferior cooking range, and a deficient supply of cooking utensils) to place on their tables delicacies with high-sounding names, which have been prepared for a mere trifle. Let these individuals be comforted. "She does well who does her best." A house-mother has a thousand and one things to superintend besides the daily meals; a domestic also, who lives in a family where she has other work to do as well as to cook, must think occasionally of other things than eating and drinking, and it is a poor thing for a human being to sacrifice all other interests in life to the elaboration of daily meals.

Nevertheless, we must beware of carrying this philosophy too far. There is no denying that the neglect of the daily meals leads to ill-health, low spirits, want of energy, discomfort, and unhappiness—yes, and even to immorality, because badly-cooked and ill-chosen food leads to drinking. Also there is no denying that, with a very slight alteration, there are numbers of families who now sit down to humdrum meals, who might have their enjoyment and satisfaction in life considerably increased, and at the same time gain both in health and vigour. So long as we live in a world where eating and drinking is the rule, it is useless to turn our backs upon the subject, and pronounce it beneath our notice. We shall be much wiser to take it up bravely, deal with it reasonably, and try to make it an elevating, pleasurable, and refining influence, as well as a means of gaining health and strength, and of building up the body.

To do this, the first thing that is wanted is forethought. Our meals are too happy-go-lucky; they are what they are because the dishes which compose them happen to be more convenient than anything else for the time. If we wish to raise our standard of living, we must think the meals out beforehand, and try to make one meal work in and prepare for another, in every case using up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost. The necessity for forethought in this matter is indeed so great, that it is a very good thing that in our National School of Housewifery housekeepers have been encouraged to draw up a bill of fare for a week, which is to come within a certain sum, because the experience may suggest to them that they would find it an advantage if they would make a practice of doing the same thing constantly all through the year. The fact is that tasty, refined, health-giving food is not necessarily expensive food—expensive, that is, so far as regards the current coin of the realm. Its chief cost has to be paid in time and trouble. This is why many housekeepers are afraid of it. They know that they have as much to do as they can get through, and they dare not attempt more. Yet if they would arrange the family fare beforehand, they would find that it would be quite possible to arrange also to reduce trouble as well as expense, by killing two birds with one stone now and again. For example, when the oven was hot for one dish, they might let it partially cook another; when making gravy for to-day's hash, they could make a little stock for to-morrow's soup, and so on. By wise forethought we may save steps as well as labour and money, and every saving thus made would be a gain. But if we have not calculated to-day what our needs will be to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow, we shall certainly never think of preparing for them.

After giving forethought, the next thing we housekeepers need to do, if we want our weekly bill of fare to improve our standard of living, is to get out of our grooves, and in the culinary line to venture into fresh fields and pastures new. We have too much accustomed ourselves to think that certain dishes, large joints and substantial puddings, are *the* thing; that they are wholesome and excellent; and that to limit ourselves to them is a sign of virtue. It is nothing of the kind; it is a sign of prejudice. Large joints are most costly; cold meat is less nourishing than warm meat; these are facts which there is no gainsaying.

Numbers of housekeepers are faithful to the orthodox *régime* because they are in favour of plain and simple food as more health-giving and less likely to lead to mischief than rich and complicated dishes. They are right here; simple diet is the best. The mistake they make is in thinking that because a dish is new, and has a fine name, therefore it is not simple. Some of the French dishes that have names most absurdly long are made of the simplest and most homely ingredients. There are English people who hold that it is a pity that French names should be so freely given in cookery; and there is a great deal to be said for the opinion. At the same time we have to remember that the French excel all other nations in cookery; and they excel the English far and away. Very often, too, it has happened that the French have given a title to a dish to honour the memory of some person who made a fortunate discovery concerning it. Thus Béchamel Sauce, to quote a familiar example, though simply superior white sauce, was named after Louis de Béchamel, who invented it; and Cutlets à la Maintenon, which are cutlets cooked in an envelope of buttered paper, were thus named because Madame de Maintenon found out that meat was made more succulent by being wrapped

in oiled paper whilst it was being cooked. Why should English-speaking housekeepers lose the advantage of a discovery of this kind merely because the author thereof was French? Housekeepers would, indeed, show their wisdom by trying a new dish once a week—no matter what its name is. They do not want for recipes, because recipes abound in these days. They know very well, however, that those recipes only are of value to themselves which they have made their own by trying and proving. Let them add continually to the number thus proved, and they will insure variety in the daily fare. More than this, they will lessen the drudgery of cookery and elevate it into an art. We housekeepers are in error when we say that servants will not take trouble in cookery. As a rule they are glad to make experiments, and they like to add to their knowledge as much as we do. When there is never a thought of change, they grow weary of the monotonous round, (as which of us would not?) but they like the excitement of something new. One way of making a good servant "settle" in her situation is to give her the opportunity of learning new ways.

In carrying out bills of fare, economy is best effected by choosing food wisely; and to this end the housekeeper should if possible go to market and choose her food—she should not order it. This point has been so much insisted on of late years by experienced writers on domestic management that it need not be dwelt on here at any length; it is, however, of great importance. As the Spanish proverb says, "He who wants a thing goes for it; he who would miss a thing sends for it." The housekeepers who send for food miss more than they know.

Last, but not least, in drawing up her bills of fare the housekeeper should try to anticipate difficulties, so that she may smooth them away before they arise. For example, she should keep her stock of saucepans well in mind, and refrain from setting down a preparation for the making of which there is not a suitable utensil. She should have a thoughtful regard for the little peculiarities of the kitchen stove, and not try it beyond what it is able to bear; and she should endeavour to prevent one dish being a stumbling-block in the way of another, as would be the case if a fried dish succeeded immediately another fried dish, or if the whole of a dinner had to be cooked in the oven, whereas it is easier when one portion is cooked in the oven and another portion is boiled or stewed. Attention to small details of this kind paves the way to success, and success is a great incentive to perseverance and a very delightful experience. We respect ourselves more when we succeed. Let us hope that every housekeeper who feels inspired to introduce variety into the family meals may be rewarded by an abundant share, not of success only, but also of applause and appreciation from the admiring members of her family.

PHYLLIS BROWNE.

*** Our readers are reminded that, according to the curriculum published in December last, March 10 is the latest day for receiving MSS. in the "Bill of Fare" Competition.

NEEDLEWORK COMPETITION.—(SECTION II.)

The Prize of One Guinea is awarded to
Mrs. ADELINE DAY, Lenham, Maidstone.

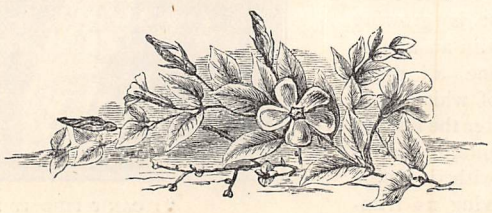
CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR.

Name.	*Address.*
Allen, M. B.	Malmesbury.
Cooke, Agnes	Luton.
Deeble, E.	Plympton.
Gardner, Clara	Banbury.
Gibson, L.	Durham.
Hayter, A. F.	Axminster.
Jackson, Maude	Moneymore.
Kirk, Annie	Stockport.
Lyall, Annie C.	Arbroath.
Nau, Bertha E.	Hampstead, N.W.
Stanbridge, Mary A.	Reigate.
Taylor, Maud M.	Isle of Ely.
Whitelock, M.	Stokesley.
Williams, Annie	Penzance.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Carr, Ada J.	Regent's Park, N.W.
Cox, Frances E.	King's Stanley.
Dellow, Louisa J.	St. Mary's, Scilly Isles.
Earl, Lottie	Leicester.
Forward, Emily	Stanford-le-Hope.
Forward, Sarah	Chard.
French, Annie E.	Thrapston.
Griss, Maria E.	Ascot.
Harpham, Emma	Harrogate.
Holman, Kate M.	Lausanne, Switzerland.
Irons, Elizabeth	Waterloo.
Newton, Fanny	Doncaster.
Orrell, Amy G.	Droylsden.
Pagan, Margaret	Glasgow.
Pearce, Emily H.	Falkingham.
Pridham, Lilla	Weybridge.
Robinson, J. A.	Kirkham.
Shute, Clara M.	Bristol.
Stowell, Sarah J.	Brighton.
Wassell, Rosalie	Bradford.
Williams, Frances	Long Ditton.
Wright, Annie E.	Forest Gate, E.

The successful candidates may have their Certificates posted to them, on their sending to the Editor a fully-addressed label, together with two penny postage stamps, to defray cost of postage and roller. The Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage to Certificates in the post.



WHAT TO WEAR IN MARCH.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

PARIS is in the throes of providing for the English market such novelties as will best please our stolid, practical minds, and our eyes, trained as they have rarely been before to a keen knowledge of colour.

We are to adopt the Empire modes if we follow the French lead, and waists grow shorter and shorter. Our sashes start from beneath the arms, and the bows at the back climb up beneath our shoulder-blades. All very well, this, for women who have no figures, but how about slender waists, finely-developed busts, and the long graceful limbs on which we as a nation congratulate ourselves?

Linen—viz., night-gowns and under-garments—is treated in the same way, with the waists beneath the armpits; and in tea-gowns the style has a certain beauty made with bodice and skirt in one, or the join concealed beneath the belt. All these styles of dress open at the throat, with wide revers, often double revers, for those which appertain to the vest are turned back over the others; the sleeves have a distinct over-sleeve, forming a puff from the shoulder, the under-sleeve plain and close-fitting. Even the coats now being made in silk for outdoor wear have the short waists, with sleeves put in very full on the shoulders. The collars to these are made like those worn in the Medici period, the ends somewhat square and standing a little away from the neck, so that the inside lining shows, and this is mostly of some light tone of satin or silk—pink, dove, light drab, or peach.

The pretty, useful dress in our illustration is made on more moderate lines, and is suited better to general wear, but even in this there is an indication that the waist is growing shorter. It is made in a cloth with an almost invisible hair-line of darker tone all over; the panel and vest are made of white cloth worked in gold. The bodice is after the fashion of an Eton jacket adapted to feminine requirements, and brought together with invisible fastenings just in the front, having no trimming whatever, but turning back with two simple revers. A pointed piece fills in the vacuum at the waist, while the white gold-embroidered vest is made in two pieces, divided by bands of the cloth, not more than a couple of inches wide. The white and gold peep out at the wrist, and the sleeve is set in very high at the shoulder, but is not cut, as so many sleeves now are, *en gigot*. The basque of the jacket forms a simple point at the back, but is lengthened at the side by an additional pointed piece with five large buttons, which, in good truth, has no *raison-d'être* whatever. The front breadth is slightly draped; all the rest of the skirt is cut in long straight folds, with the gold-embroidered panel arranged outside like a revers. This dress should be made up on a silk foundation, and not be distended by either steels or mattress. A small pleating of crinoline, by which horsehair-cloth is meant, may if desired be inserted at the back of the waist, but this depends on the wearer.

"I CAN'T FIND IT IN THE DICTIONARY."

Young girls in France are, as a rule, dressed in more simple fashion than the "Mees Anglaise," as English lassies are called in Paris. The simple little dress in our illustration is made in corduroy, which promises to be the most fashionable material for the next month or six weeks. It is of a light brown tone, the plain skirt set in knife-pleats, and slightly raised at the back. The bodice is high to the throat, the band rather higher and stiffer than usual. The sleeves just clear the elbow, and are fulled into a band; nothing could well be simpler, but at the same time it is a simplicity which shows infinite grace. The skirt is separate from the bodice, which ends in battlemented tabs all round.

A good deal of the charm of this dress, however, is due to the apron. This is made in thick coarse white linen, or sometimes in soft white silk, and is embroidered round in a design of small flowers and leaves, which appears also on the pocket; the upper portion is bound with red, matching the colour of the embroidery; over this a fulling of muslin buttonholed at the edge turns down, the neck-band being treated in the same way. The bib and the apron are cut in one, and the union at the waist is marked by a series of upright tucks; a band of ribbon is tied loosely about the waist. The bib at the back is a repetition of the front, and the novelty in both is the curious vandyke cut out on the shoulder, dividing the strap on the point of the shoulder, ornamented with a ribbon bow, from the rest.

"ALL WELL AT HOME?"

Aprons are being again much worn by grown-up women in the house, as well as by young girls, but their original intention has been quite lost sight of. They are made of dainty lace, muslin, and ribbon, and would hardly save the front of a gown much: even if they did, they are in most cases as costly as the dress itself.

Short skirts, and skirts just touching the ground, will be worn the year through, except for evening reception gowns, when a very grand toilette is desired; the majority of ball and dinner gowns will be short or just rest on the ground. The exceptions, however, are wedding-dresses, which are furnished often with detachable Court trains, that can be removed after the wedding-day. The Empire gowns are short, save when a train comes from the shoulder, but the shoes are always seen in front. Still fashions are so various it is almost impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule, and where classic drapery is indulged in, as it so often is just now, a very short skirt would be an anomaly. Such classic drapery is now arranged to show a close-fitting bodice distinctly; the soft falling scarf starts from one shoulder and simply crosses the waist, fastening on the left side, long ends from the shoulders reaching almost to the hem of the garment.

Everything Oriental and Japanese finds a certain amount of favour, and the loose robes flowered and embroidered brought over from Japan are adapted with very little alteration to the requirements of a tea-gown. They are slashed up a little at the back; the waist is encircled with a wide sash of soft silk tied in a large bow placed high at the back. An under-dress of soft silk of the dominant tone of the embroidery is arranged as a petticoat, vest, and tight sleeves, the latter being made to look as though they swathed the hands. The robe rolls back at the neck and shows the vest. For a boudoir-gown it is perfect, but for a tea-gown used for dinner wear it savours too much of the dressing-gown.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

"MARCH winds and April showers," you know the adage, "bring forth May flowers." But whatever these may result in, we may surely reckon upon the wind, and should "ne'er cast a clout," as the old saying is, till the blustering month is over. Lent begins late, on the 6th of the month, and Easter will not be upon us till April is three weeks old, which will make

the London season late. And all this has a great deal to do with the choice of clothes. We are such a conservative nation in our habits, whether or no in our politics, and the fact that from time immemorial it has been the custom to wear our new spring raiment at Easter, is more certain to actuate the majority of womankind than the weather, or the late or early season.

This being so, we may this month safely discuss the prevailing modes rather than make uncertain guesses as to what is likely to be worn when fashions are more decided.

There is nothing very new in the form of the bonnet which appears in our initial letter, but nothing newer has as yet come to the fore. It is tied with short strings beneath the chin, and is made of a light tone of velvet; red, green, or brown would be suitable. It is richly embroidered at the sides, and turns upwards in a point over the face, like the gable or the Olivia shape, a fulling of velvet resting on the hair, and an appearance of height produced by ostrich-plumes and ribbon velvet bows.

Green continues to be the favourite colour, especially the rich watercress shade. Many of the strings come from the centre of the back of the bonnet, and are not attached in any way to the sides. A new shape is not unlike a sailor hat placed bonnet fashion on the head, the front of the brim cut up in the centre, and the trimming above and beneath the brim united. Some other new bonnets have a sort of treble brim at each side, edged with beads, and richly embroidered.

There is a complete revolution in dressmaking, as you will see if you look closely into the costumes worn by the figures in the picture. The child's frock looks simpler than it is. It is made in a soft woollen of one tone, with a yoke piece carried from the shoulders in a point back and front, ending at the waist beneath the belt. The skirt starts from this yoke, to which it is gathered, and follows its outline. Some five rows of velvet edge the hem of the skirt, and a wide ruche pinked out at each edge encircles the throat. The sleeves are cut just as the old gigot sleeves were shaped years ago, fitting the arm at the wrist and becoming considerably wider at the shoulder, so that when sewn into the armhole they stand out well and form an important feature in the dress. The accompanying hat is of a very comfortable shape, made in felt, shading the eyes, the crown high, the back square, and the ribbon trimming carried up to the apex of the crown. This child's toilette has much to commend it—it is loose, gives full play to the limbs, does not tighten the waist, and is not burdened with skirt drapery.

The older child wears a Directoire dress, arranged in a striped woollen, the same class of material, in plain colour, being used to bind the jacket and cuffs and to border the drapery. The stripes are cleverly treated. In the vest they are horizontal, in the jacket perpendicular. The jacket is cut straight at the waist, with a high straight collar of plain material, and the sleeves, rather high on the shoulder, are of the old coat form. A wide ribbon sash surrounds the waist, and is fastened at the side with a buckle, whence hangs a side sash, fringed at the edges. The skirt is cut in straight folds, which open on the right side to show an under-petticoat with horizontal stripes. This kind of dress might be worn all the year round, and is quite suitable for early spring. When the days are warm, only a boa or fur tippet is required to make it fitted for outdoor wear. In cold weather it could quite well be worn with a cloak.

The hat is of a very fashionable form, made of velvet covering a flat shape, the brim is brought well over the face, a triple-plumed feather standing up straight with drooping tips above the crown. Hats continue to be worn by young women, even in town, in preference to bonnets. The choice lies between toques and the large Gainsborough shape. There is always something new in toques. They are now mostly made of two materials or two colours, the heavier or darker on the crown, with loose soft folds round, which are arranged in an upright bow in front. They are easy to make *if you know how*, but the difficulty is that a good pattern should be first seen. Long streamers are attached to muffs, which are almost always made to match the hat or bonnet.

In the uncertain weather that characterises our English climate, woollen under-clothing will be found a really great boon and of inestimable comfort to those in weak health. Knitted stays, knitted with soft wool, are being more boned, and are now so well shaped that even those who are most fastidious about their figures need not object to wear them. Woollen clothing is a modern craze, which, like all manias, may run into absurdities. The common-sense view of the question is that wool does not retain the perspiration, that all the exhalations from the body pass through it. If any of you have ever had the misfortune to look into the room where, in a German household, the Hausfrau garners the family dirty linen until the three-months wash comes round, you will know what a terrible odour they emit. If woollen clothing were worn instead of linen or cotton, there would be no smell whatever. For rheumatic and consumptive patients, woollen night-gowns are a great boon. The objection to them is that the natural-coloured wool is not pretty, and that bleaching and dyeing deprive the material of some of its virtues. Now, however, under-garments can be bought of pure white wool, taken from an animal with a white coat; it is costly, but soft as soft can be.

The divided skirts are made up in woollen textures, and for climbing Swiss mountains, for calisthenics, and similar purposes, commend themselves to the notice even of the prejudiced.

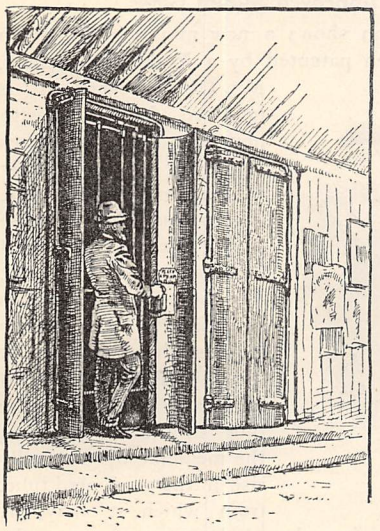
If you want a light, pretty woollen stuff for spring wear, Mr. Ruskin's homespuns are very attractive—made of pure material, in the best known method of weaving; cheap, wide, light in weight, and now dyed in a great variety of light colours. It is not often a philosopher devotes his practical attention to women's clothes.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

An Automatic Door.



A door which opens automatically on putting a coin into a slit has recently been brought out. Obviously there are a number of uses for such a contrivance. The door is made double, each half being of L shape, seen in the plan, and hinged at the angle. They are closed and held fast by a lock, which unlocks when the coin actuates it, and the door opens. The door closes again after the person enters. A turnstile on the same principle has been fitted up at Charing Cross Station.

The Great Stave of Eleven.

Teachers of musical theory constantly complain of the difficulty that besets them in their endeavour to instruct their young pupils in the mysteries of "the great stave," and the derivation of the various clefs used in musical notation. Various contrivances have been designed on paper with the view of simplifying the matter; but we know of no device so successful as the one now before us, which Madame Roeckel, a professor of music, has recently invented. The "pamphonia" is a neatly-constructed wooden model with movable notes and clef signs, so managed as to enable the teacher to collect the lines of any stave, and to teach the positions of the notes to a single pupil, or to a class of fifty or more at a time. The "pamphonia" is very light and portable, and every teacher of theory should become possessed of one.

The Decimation of the Osprey.

A correspondent writes to us from Clevedon, Somerset, as follows:—"In reading your interesting and useful Magazine, I am sorry to find in the article on dress in the December number that the fluffy plume from the osprey is recommended to adorn the fashionable bonnet. I cannot help thinking that most ladies would shrink from wearing this questionable ornament if they knew how cruelly it is obtained. My nephew, writing from Florida, says—'The graceful osprey will soon be extinct, if not speedily protected by law, as they are slaughtering them by waggon-loads to send to Europe for the sake of that little plume which the parent birds only have in the nesting season, therefore the young are all left to perish!'"

Lettering Ivory.

A process of lettering bone or ivory, by sinking the letters into the material in a permanent fashion, has recently been introduced. These ivory plates are taking the place of engraved metal plates for signs, checks, badges, and so on. Electrical engineers have also adopted the new plates, which can likewise be applied to organs and pianofortes.

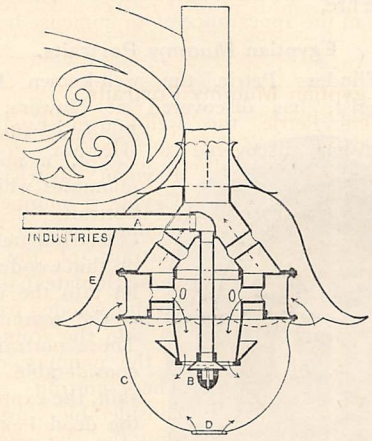
A Phosphorescent Storm.

During a recent voyage of the Anchor Line steamer *Anchoria*, she ran into a dense fog about 350 miles east of the American coast and on the borders of the Gulf Stream. The water became suddenly luminous under the fog, and a school of fish darting round the vessel created a turmoil of light. The foam was dashed back from the bows in masses of brilliant violet, which illuminated the entire ship's rigging. A storm of wind coming on increased the effect by tearing off the crests of the illuminated waves. The whole horizon-line had the appearance of an immense belt of light blue fire.

Egyptian Mummy Portraits.

Mr. Flinders Petrie, the well-known Egyptian archæologist, has discovered at Hawara, in the Fayoum district of Egypt, a number of mummies which have portraits of the deceased inmates painted on thin wooden panels let into the front top of the mummy-case. These portraits show considerable artistic skill, the expression of the dead being faithfully rendered. They are painted with wax for a medium instead of oil, and the suggestion is that the mummies were kept in the homes of their

surviving relatives for many years—presumably until a new generation having less interest in them had sprung up. Then the mummies were taken out and buried. They belong to the Roman period, and date back 1,700 years ago or more. One of the most interesting is a portrait mummy of one Artemidorus, who appears to have been a poet or philosopher, a man of note. His head in the portrait is crowned with bay or myrtle, if not olive, the gilt leaves being small enough for myrtle, which grew in Egypt. Samples of these mummy-cases were exhibited by Mr. Petrie in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, a few months ago. They included persons of various ages and quality, some of the female portraits showing signs of wealth and personal comeliness. Among other interesting articles exhibited were the fragments of one of the seated colossi seen by Herodotus at the Lake Mœris, and many relics of Egyptian life in that period, such as domestic utensils, shoes, dolls for children, a model of a Sedan chair, jewels, clothing, and so on. It should also be mentioned that Mr. Petrie has discovered and brought home an interesting papyrus of the second book of Homer's Iliad, dating from the first century B.C. It was found buried in the ground under a skull which retained a lock of the dark hair of the dead owner. Mr. Petrie, we understand, will resume his excavations next season. While upon this subject we may mention that a company has been formed in Philadelphia to bore into the pyramids by means of the diamond rock-drill. It is hoped in this way to penetrate the mystery of these enormous structures. We trust, however, that if the project is carried out, it will be accomplished in a reverent and scientific spirit. We may add that another company has been raised to explore the old Inca burial-grounds in the Province of Cuzco, in Peru, and a concession has been granted for the purpose.

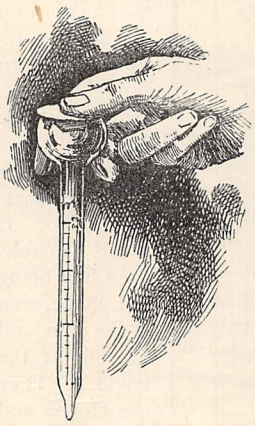


The "Sunflower" Lamp.

A recuperative lamp, giving a steady and brilliant light, is shown in section in the accompanying figure, where A is a pipe supplying gas to the burner, B, from which it issues in a cup-like flame of great power. The air to support the combustion enters the lamp, and traverses it in the direction shown by the small arrows. A shade of ruby glass, E, covers the mechanism, and C is an enclosing globe of glass. In order to keep this globe free of soot an opening, D, covered with wire gauze, is provided in the globe, to allow the air to pass up in the direction of the arrows. This arrangement does not disturb the flame, and supplies more oxygen to the burner.

An Improved Minim Glass.

Our illustration shows a new minim glass which has recently been patented by a Yorkshire chemist, Mr. C. C. Vevers. It is intended for using with homœopathic medicines where a few drops only are required, and where it is important that only the prescribed infinitesimal quantity shall be used. The method of using it is very simple. It is merely to press the caoutchouc at the top of the thistelled tube, and then insert the tube in the bottle, when the medicine will naturally rise in the graduated tube, from which it may be driven drop by drop, by slight pressure upon the caoutchouc. The tube is graduated up to twenty minims, so that the required quantity of the tincture may be found without the slightest difficulty. The tube might either be kept in the medicine, or any surplus carefully returned from it to the bottle by continuous pressure on the rubber, but we need hardly caution those of our readers who are in the habit of using homœopathic medicines that it would be necessary to carefully cleanse the tube after using one tincture before employing it with another.



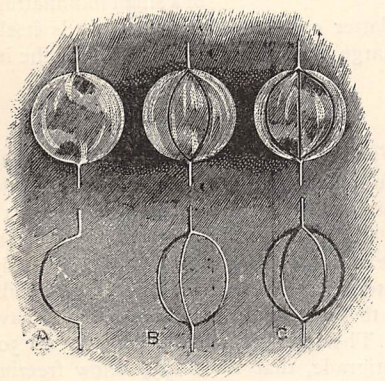
Electric Smelting.

The method of extracting aluminium and aluminous alloys direct from their ores in a crucible heated by electricity has now been introduced into England; works for the purpose having been erected at Stoke-on-Trent. The plant consists of a powerful Babcock engine of 600 horse-power to drive the dynamo supplying the electric current, which is passed through stout carbon rods within the crucible, and in the midst of the ores to be smelted. The engine has a centifrugal governor, and maintains a speed of 76 revolutions per minute. The fly-wheel is some 20 feet in diameter and weighs 30 tons. It is geared to the pulley of the dynamo by means of rope-driving gear. The spindle of the dynamo is of steel, 18 feet long, and has three bearings, one being situated on either side of the driving-pulley. The armature consists of 128 copper bars connected to form 32 conductors. Each bar is $\frac{7}{8}$ inch deep, and $\frac{3}{8}$ inch wide. They are insulated by fiburite. The commutator is 20 inches long, and has 64 parts. The currents are

collected by eight brushes. The field magnets are of the horizontal double type; the coils consisting of a few turns of copper bars 1½ inch wide by 1 inch thick, forged to fit the magnet-cores. Thin mica wedges keep the bars from touching the cores. The armature is ventilated by a Schiele fan driven by a belt from the armature spindle. At a speed of 380 revolutions per minute the armature gives a current of 5,000 amperes at 60 volts, the temperature never rising above 70° C. A current of 8,000 amperes has been obtained, but 5,000 amperes is likely to be the working current. A safety cut-out of lead plates is introduced to fuse at 8,000 amperes. The current indicator is a solenoid of nine turns through which the whole current passes. The core is connected by chains to two pointers indicating the current. This powerful dynamo is designed to feed the crucibles, of which there are six. Each consists of a long trough of fire-brick, having the ends closed by cast-iron pipes through which carbon electrodes pass, so as to be moved in or out. Lime and charcoal are used as a lining to the furnace. Each electrode consists of nine carbon rods attached to a cast-iron head, which is mounted on a copper rod passing through the cast-iron pipes. In starting the furnace the electrodes with the current joined up are brought together, then drawn apart. Pure aluminium is only supplied by the furnace in a powdery form; but as the chief commercial use of aluminium is as an alloy for other metals, this does not matter much.

An Optical Illusion.

Mr. Rapieff, a well-known electrician, has observed a curious optical illusion which is illustrated in the figure. A polished wire is taken and bent into the form shown at A. If, then, it is twirled between the thumb and fingers, it will present the appearance seen



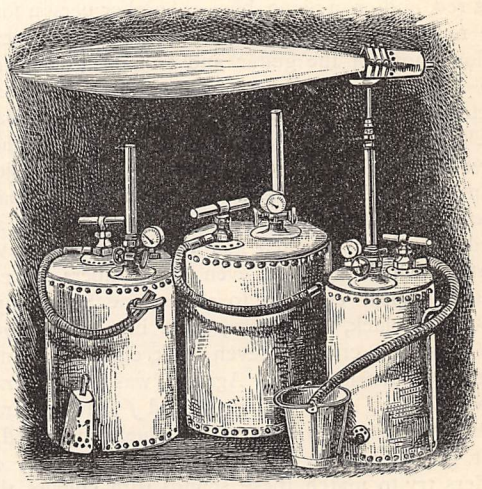
immediately above. If the wire is made as at B, the illusion above it will be seen; and if it has four loops, as at C, the figure over it is produced. The wire should be held so that the light is reflected as much as possible from the inner surface of the wire. The effect is due to the eclipsing of this bright surface.

The Weather Plant.

Professor Nowack, of Vienna, contends that the weather plant (*Abeus precatorius*) is electro-magnetic, and that if it is placed with its north branches towards the north in an apparatus of his design, it can be made to foretell the weather with success forty-eight hours in advance, as well as earthquakes or subterranean disturbances. Professor Nowack has closely studied the plant for over four years. The observatory of the Austrian Tourists' Club, on the Sonnwendstein in the Styrian Alps, has adopted the plant for its weather forecasts. An earthquake at Stolac in Bosnia, on the 10th November last, was, it is alleged, foretold by the plant eight days before.

The "Wells" Light.

The "Jupiter" and "Doty" lights for use in lighting large areas, such as engineering and building



works, have already been described in the GATHERER. Another powerful light of the kind, which requires no expensive air compressor and the necessary engine to drive it, is the "Wells" light, now employed throughout the works of the Manchester Ship Canal, and many other places. The light is derived from the consumption of a special oil, and the lamps are quite portable and self-contained. They are made of various sizes, running up to lights of 4,000 candle-power. The figure represents a group of three sizes. The tank is steel, and contains air under a pressure of 25 lbs. on the square inch. The oil is pumped into the lamps from a bucket by means of a hand-pump and a hose-pipe, both shown. The burner is then heated by burning some oily waste in the cup, a valve is opened, and the oil is forced into the burner by the air pressure. When ignited it burns with a powerful flame, which is constantly fed by the ascending oil being turned into gas. The lamp can be recharged with oil or air without stopping the light. The burner can be raised aloft on a mast, and the lamp can be mounted upon a travelling carriage. A great variety of small unbreakable lamps, and burners, for domestic or industrial purposes, are also supplied by the same makers.

Colour and Words.

It has long been known that certain words or musical and vowel sounds suggest colours to some people; and the phenomenon has recently been studied. In extreme cases the hearing of the sound suggests the colour, and *vice versâ*. The names of the months, or of persons, are also associated with colours. Musical notes have been expressed by individuals as colours; and Dr. Nussbaumer, of Vienna, when a child, amusing himself with striking a fork against a glass to hear it ring, saw at the same time certain subjective colours. He afterwards met a student at Zurich to whom high notes were as bright colours, and low notes as dark shades. Another instance is that of a gentleman who, on hearing the Breton air "Au Hallaika" played on a harmonium, found it yellow; whereas if played on a clarionet it was red, and on a piano, blue. Another person found the notes of a flute red, those of a clarionet mostly yellow, those of the guitar and trumpet golden, and those of the piano white. A certain Dr. Z—— connected colours with the vowel sounds, *a* being black, *e* yellow, *i* red, *o* white, and *u* coffee-coloured. Others, however, find *u* blue and *e* grey. Of 596 subjects examined by Bleuller and Lehmann in Germany, seventy-five answered that *a* was black, *o* white, and *i* red. Professor Holden has also made some investigations which show that even the numbers and consonants appear coloured to some; one, for example, appearing black, two cream, three blue, four brown, five white, six crimson, seven pink, eight white, nine greenish, and ten brown. Again, *a* was a light straw-colour, *b* grey, *c* tan, *d* blue, *e* and *f* black, *g* straw, *k* blue, *l* black, *m* brown, *n* dark blue, *o* light red, *p* light green, and so on. Probably if some of our readers try to match these sounds with colours, they will arrive at different results. It is difficult to explain this phenomenon. Some might answer that every note of the gamut has its corresponding sound, while noises are represented by brown and impure colours. But this is by no means proved. The influence of language and association has, perhaps, something to do with the matter, which at present has not been satisfactorily elucidated.

A New Copying Apparatus.

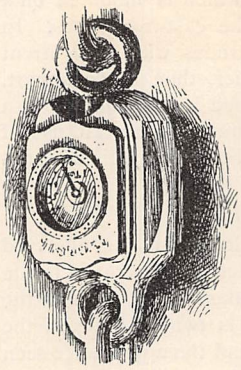
A new copying apparatus, worked upon the old "graph" plan, but in which no gelatine is used, has lately been introduced. What are the ingredients of the composition is not stated, but the result is a printing-slab of putty-like consistence, and not so sticky to the touch as the gelatine "graph." The new composition has several advantages over its predecessors, notably in the fact that the writing may be removed from its surface with great readiness by cold water, and that it is ready for use again in a few minutes. This new apparatus will give twenty or thirty copies from good bold writing in ordinary blue-black ink. We should add that the ink specially prepared for this apparatus flows remarkably well, and may be used without the slightest inconvenience.

A Miniature Type-Writer.

A type-writer, so diminutive in size as almost to justify the term "pocket type-writer," has recently been invented by Mr. A. E. Wynn. Its extreme dimensions are four inches by three inches, and its weight less than four and a half ounces. Yet it carries all the characters necessary in ordinary correspondence on the inner edge of the revolving disc which forms the principal feature of the machine. The whole frame travels across the paper, which consequently may be of any size, and a roller, to which a spacing-check is fitted, secures an absolute straightness and evenness in the line of printing. Its inventor claims for it that this is the smallest type-writer in the market, and we can recommend its use under circumstances where the more expensive and elaborate machines are not available.

A Load Indicator.

A load indicator, for use on cranes, lifts, and such apparatus, is illustrated in the annexed figure. It is specially designed to give warning of an excess load, and this it does by dropping a red disc over the dial-face; but the pointer also shows the strain upon the chain in hundredweights. It is, in fact, a form of weighing machine. In addition to showing the red disc it also sounds an alarm, which is in the form of a gong, where a gong would be audible; or in the form of a loud report produced by the explosion of a small fulminating charge. In the latter case it automatically feeds itself with a fresh charge to replace that exploded by the hammer.



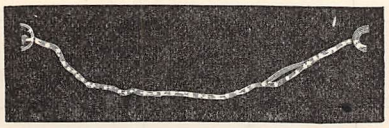
Across Greenland.

Dr. Frithiof Nansen, the snow-shoe traveller, has successfully crossed Greenland from east to west. He left Uminik, on the east coast, on August 15th, and reached Godthaab on October 3rd. For nearly three weeks he and his companions traversed the ice-fields of the interior at an elevation of 10,000 feet above the level of the sea, and encountered some heavy snow-storms. The temperature fell from 40° to 50° below zero centigrade, that is to say, below freezing-point. Dr. Nansen is understood to be engaged in writing a narrative of the journey, which will probably be published next spring.

A Natural Battery.

It has long been known that if two plates of different metals are buried in the ground and connected by a wire above the surface, an earth battery is formed and a current of electricity is found in the wire. A curious natural instance of the kind recently occurred

at Bridgewater, in Nova Scotia, whence a telephone line was run to a gold-mining district some thirty miles distant. A steady current was found to flow through the wire; and the explanation is that the mineral lodes in the neighbourhood gave rise to it. There are gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron ores there, and it is supposed that the gold, silver, copper, and lead formed the negative plate of the battery, whilst the iron formed the positive, the moist earth and rock completing the circuit with the wire. The natural current is observed to be stronger on rainy days, probably owing to the increased moisture of the earth. Being a steady current, it does not interfere with the working of the telephone. This case is evidently to be distinguished from the ordinary "earth-currents" observed in telegraph lines, when the "earth-plates" at their extremities are of the same metal; and it seems to be a real case of a natural battery formed by mineral deposits underground.



Photographing a Spark.

The electric spark, like the lightning-flash, is known to exist for so short a time that some hold it to be instantaneous, others think its duration is measurable. Mr. J. Wimshurst has therefore photographed the spark from one of his "influence" machines, by means of a special camera, in which the sensitive plate rotated at a velocity of 2,500 revolutions per minute. The figure is a reproduction of the photograph of the spark taken under these circumstances. The spark is so clear and definite, in spite of the moving plate, that one must consider its duration as practically instantaneous.

An Invisible Lacquer.

"Ardenbrite" is a new invisible lacquer recently introduced into London. It is so strong as to withstand weather, steam, smoke, sea-air, or sea-water; and gold, silver, copper, steel, brass, or iron does not tarnish when coated with it. As it is so fine as to be unseen on the most delicate instruments, the new lacquer has an extensive field of application.

Electrified Soap-Bubbles.

Mr. C. Vernon Boys has recently made some interesting experiments with soap-bubbles, which demonstrate that while it is difficult to make two soap-bubbles burst each other by pressure or collision, they will do so readily if one has a very slight charge of electricity. The phenomenon might thus be employed as an indicator of the presence of electricity. Mr. Boys, by blowing one soap-bubble within another, also showed that there is no electric force inside a closed conductor, a well-known fact of electric science.

The Electric Light in Dredging.

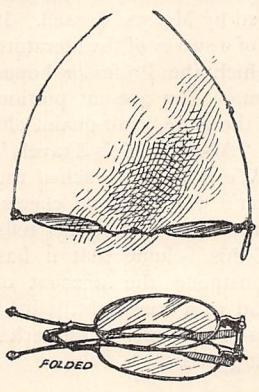
It is well known that the electric light acts as a lure for fishes, and has been used for this purpose. During a recent trip of the *Hyena*, a vessel of the Liverpool Salvage Association, some members of the Liverpool Biology Committee employed the light of a 60 candle-power Edison-Swan electric lamp to attract submarine specimens to their tow-nets. The trials took place off the Isle of Man, and it was found that the lamp when placed in the mouth of the tow-net brought abundance of crustaceans to the net. On the other hand, when the lamp was absent the net was nearly empty.

An Automatic Telephone Exchange.

In Glasgow and its district there are nearly a hundred automatic telephone exchanges at work, enabling any person to speak to any of the subscribers to the local Telephone Company. The apparatus is usually lodged in a shop at some convenient point of the city. A person intending to speak by telephone goes to the apparatus, and by means of the call-bell attached "rings up" the nearest telephone exchange with which the apparatus is in communication. His call is immediately answered by an operator at that exchange, who asks him if he is a subscriber to the Telephone Company. If he is, she tells him to put one of the "checks," with which subscribers are provided, into the slit of the automatic box beside the apparatus, and when she hears (by her telephone) the check inserted, she at once puts him into speaking communication with the person he desires. In the case of a non-subscriber she tells him to put three pennies into the slit if he desires to speak with some one in the city, and sixpence if he wishes to talk with some one in a neighbouring town to which "trunk" or long-distance lines run. The apparatus is so arranged that the operator can hear the money drop. Being automatic, no attendant is required.

Folding Spectacles.

The greater firmness of spectacle-frames, as compared with the familiar pincenez, leads many people who only require the aid of glasses occasionally to carry the somewhat awkward spectacle-case now required with the ordinary form of spectacles. But recently Mr. Stephen Dixon has invented a new form of frame which combines the firmness of the spectacle-frame in use and the convenience of the "nippers" in portability. Our illustration shows the new frame, which scarcely needs further explanation. The bridge is hinged, and the ear extensions are also made to fold, and the whole frame consequently packs away into a space little more than that occupied by the



pince now in vogue. The absence of any spring clip will render these new frames very acceptable to many persons who are obliged to have their spectacles always within reach, but who are not compelled to wear them continually.

Cocoanut Oil in Sugar-Making.

Cocoanut oil has been used for making sugar in one of the West African coast settlements. The oil is added to the sugar-pans in the proportion of about a pint to the ton, and the result is stated to be an increased yield of sugar from the "masseccuite," owing to its facilitating the operation of "striking," and preventing a too turbulent boiling at the finish.

"Lady Brassey's Last Voyage."

There is a melancholy interest attaching to the record of "Lady Brassey's Last Voyage," which Messrs. Longmans have just published. Before the *Sunbeam* had completed her voyage, the writer who had made the yacht so famous, died and was buried at sea. The voyage was a singularly interesting one, including, as it did, visits to India, Siam, Borneo, Australia, and New Guinea. Lady Brassey's notes have been worked up for her by a former helper of hers, and Lord Brassey contributes a touching memoir of his well-known wife, and his own journal of the voyage after her death. Unfortunately the volume comes to us just as we are going to press, and we cannot, on that account, give it quite such detailed attention as it deserves. The descriptions of Sarawak and the Australian colonies strike us as even more interesting than the rest of this eminently readable book. The illustrations, from drawings by Mr. Pritchett, claim something more than a mere passing word, and some of them are among the finest specimens of wood-engraving we have seen. Certainly the last of Lady Brassey's books is not behind its predecessors in attractiveness, and we predict for it an equal popularity.

Five Centuries Ago.

The fourth volume of Professor Morley's "English Writers" has now been issued by Messrs. Cassell. It is occupied by the first part of a survey of the literature of the fourteenth century, which the Professor hopes to complete in his next volume. The present portion deals with the "Romaunt of the Rose," and quaint old John Gower, as well as with "Maundeville's Travels" and "Piers Ploughman." We have not reached the full consideration of Chaucer's work and its effects, which Professor Morley promises us, but he tells us in the "last leaves" of this volume that it has seemed best to him to postpone the account of Chaucer until it can be read in a true light, gained by study of the other authors of his time. This series loses none of its interest as it grows.

Richard IV.

Apparently Professor J. F. Hodgetts does not believe the generally accepted story of the murder of the two Plantagenet princes in the Tower, by order of their cruel uncle. He has based his last story, "Richard IV." (Whiting & Co.), partly upon his own rendering of the history of this period, and partly upon evidence which he believes he has discovered of the existence of a son of Richard of Gloucester, born before his father rose to greatness. The story tells how the son, Richard IV., as he is called, became ultimately Caxton's apprentice at Westminster, and Professor Hodgetts would have us believe that the English printer who produced Tyndall's New Testament at Wittenberg, was none other than this same Richard Plantagenet. We cannot say that we are convinced that Professor Hodgetts has rightly rendered the history of this period, but his story is full of life and interest, and is well worth reading. Of course, it is intended mainly for boys.

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A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

MONK'S HOLLOW.

OW still! how peaceful! how beautiful!"

Involuntarily the exclamation rose to my lips as I stood at the little gate of the Monk's Hollow village school and gazed around me. Twilight was slowly creeping on, and the moon was just beginning to rise. A soft, saffron-coloured light—the dying rays of the faint spring sun—lay on the little village that, for some time to come, was to be my home; a faint murmur of voices—now rising, now falling—reached my ears, proceeding, as my instincts told me, from the public-house; and afar I could distinguish the swirl of the river as it came tumbling down from the moor, and rushed eddying and foaming through the valley on its way to the sea.

My home! How strange the word sounded to me who had not known one for two years, and what a different home from anything I had ever anticipated in my youth! How long ago was my youth? I was twenty-three when I stood that calm spring evening at the gate of my new domain, and gazed my fill at the blue misty tors that stood out like sentries in the distance against the sunset sky, and my youth forsook me when I was twenty-one. Something crushed it all out of me, and left me, to my amazement, not grey-headed, not mad, but with a heart seared as with a hot iron.

Yet it must have been only dormant, not dead, for I felt it vaguely stirring within me that evening, in the hush and the stillness that preceded my entry on a new life, as, with an interest that I had not known for years, I looked around me, wondering whose could be the large grey house, the gables of which I could just espy amongst the pale green woods that filled up the greater part of the narrow valley, and whose the much more pretentious building which crowned the further hill—new, imposing, and ugly.

"How glad I am that I never let fa——!" The word died away from my lips; for one second the waters of Lethe had flown over my memory; for one second I had forgotten. Shivering from head to foot, as the tide of recollection came rushing back upon me, I was just about to retreat indoors when I heard my name called, "Miss Morton," and turned to face the rector.

I had been expecting this visit ever since my arrival that morning, knowing that sooner or later it must come off, and nervously dreading it. But when I looked at the old white-headed man who stood there before me, with the sweet, calm countenance, all my fears fled. I felt that I was in the presence of a good man and a gentleman, one who seemed to fit in with this peaceful valley, as the picture fits into its frame. At the same time, by the restless clasping and unclasping of his hands as he leant them on his stick, I could perceive that he, too, was a little nervous, and I thought I guessed the reason why.

I was a lady—at least, I had been brought up, educated as one, and mixed all my life in what is termed good society; only two years ago my right to the title, with all else that I held dear and sacred, had slipped away from me, leaving me——But why revert always to that time? For the reason that, except when I was asleep, I do not think the recollection of it was ever absent from my memory for ten minutes together. Therefore I thought I knew what the rector was feeling. He was an old man, who had reached the prime of his life in a day when it was not the fashion for ladies to earn their own living, and when for one to become a village schoolmistress was simply unheard of. And it troubled him; he would so very much rather—and so would I, had I been in his place—that I had been a simple working woman, born in the ranks from whence village schoolmistresses are usually drawn, and with whom he would at once have known how to deal.

This insight into his thoughts, whether real or fancied, restored my confidence.

"Mr. Talbot, I believe?" I said, as I advanced towards him; then remembering my new *rôle*, of which I felt very ignorant in some of its social particulars, "Won't you come in, sir?" I continued. "I have been working very hard since my arrival, and have made my room fairly tidy."

I saw him start the moment I began to speak, and a look of relief cross his face, as, with a few kind words of welcome, he accepted my invitation, and followed me down the path into my little house, which adjoined the school.

I had, as I said, worked very hard since my arrival, and my tiny sitting-room already looked home-like. Again I saw Mr. Talbot give a start—a very perceptible one this time—as he crossed the threshold; and then I recollected that the room must be very different from what it had been under the last *régime*, in that the furniture all belonged to my old life, where everything had been of the best.

"That is a charming bit of Chippendale, Miss Morton, if I mistake not," and the old man, trying hard to repress his surprise as his eye went roving amongst my possessions, pointed to my bookcase, which enshrined my favourite books. How thankful I felt at that moment that I had, from the very first, announced that I was a lady in reduced circumstances, so that no one need wonder at the few poor

little treasures left to me out of the wealth of costliness that had once been mine.

"Yes, I believe it is genuine," I answered; "and it just fits nicely into the recess, doesn't it?"

"Capitally," he said, "as though made for it; in fact," still looking around him, "all your possessions seem to fit. You have managed wonderfully, for you have even accomplished a piano."

"It is only a piannette," I answered, "and is very tiny, you see."

"Well, I can hardly believe this to be the same room in which I used to visit your predecessor, Miss Jones. And yet," looking at me anxiously, "they are but poor quarters for you. I do trust you are comfortable."

"Quite comfortable," I answered. "I think them very nice quarters, and I am looking forward to beginning with my children to-morrow."

He scanned me gravely for a minute; then—

"You are fond of children?" he asked.

"I love them dearly."

"That is right," he said, "for if you did not, you could never be a schoolmistress. The children here are, I take it, much the same as in any other parish. People do tell me that in this southern part of England they are duller than they are in the north, and I cannot contradict them, for I have been rector of this parish twenty years and know but little of the north. But," he continued, and he smiled as he spoke, "they also tell me that they are much prettier, and I am human enough to think a pretty little child, with great wondering eyes, one of, if not quite, the fairest of God's handiworks."

"And so do I," I cried. "I love a pretty child."

"That is very wrong in a schoolmistress," he said, a kindly smile playing about his finely-curved lips, "although quite permissible in a rector. However, in confidence, I have very little practically to do with the school, beyond visiting it every day of the week. My kind neighbour," and he pointed vaguely towards the window, "on the hill, Mr. Bostock, who was good enough to engage your services, manages all the business part, and so you must confess any misdemeanours to him. All I must caution you against is any favouritism. You will excuse me, my dear young lady," he continued rather nervously, as the stupid colour rose in my face; "you are young, and new to the work, I understand, and I am an old man."

"I am so much obliged to you," I said; "you do not know how much."

"There is nothing to be obliged for," he answered. "I was only giving you a piece of advice, as I would to any of my children—I consider all my parishioners my children—and now for a little real business. Mrs. Talbot and I thought you would like to know something of your little scholars to-morrow, so we have prepared this outline of their family history and circumstances, just to give you an idea, you know, of who is who," and pushing back my work-basket the old man spread out on the table a sheet of foolscap paper, on which was inscribed a variety of data.

I think our business must have lasted quite half an hour; and how I enjoyed it! It was such a treat to me to be talking to a gentleman once more, and one of such a kindly, simple, yet shrewd nature as Mr. Talbot. The name of every child brought to his mind a flood of reminiscences, and it was all in a hurry that he at last rose to go.

"Mrs. Talbot will think I am lost," he said, in his cheery way; "and, indeed, I have given her cause to do so. I must really run away now. But first I must give you her message. Will you come and take early dinner with us to-morrow at punctually one o'clock, and make her acquaintance? She is, I am sorry to say, an invalid, and cannot get out much, so I must ask you to come to her."

I felt the silly hot colour mounting up into my face again, as I answered—

"Thank you very much, sir. May I come and see Mrs. Talbot at twelve to-morrow, after school hours? But, if you will excuse me, I would rather not stay to dinner. It is so very kind of you to ask me," I added, for I fancied that he looked just a trifle hurt.

"Not at all, not at all. Do just as you like; but," looking at me gravely and pityingly, "remember you will be very lonely here, and you are very young."

Then I recollected that, in former days, I had always been told that I looked younger than I was. Yet it seemed to me that my trouble must have aged me, even though it had not turned my hair grey, as surely I had thought it would.

"I am not so young as I look, perhaps," I answered. "I am twenty-three, and I feel"—a hundred, I might have said—"forty."

"That is not right, Miss Morton. It is beautiful to be young."

"I have had a great deal of trouble, sir."

"Yes, yes," he interposed hastily, "I ought to have known that, or you would not be here. Pray pardon me my inconsiderate words. Nevertheless, to revert to what I was saying, you will be lonely, so come to the Rectory whenever you feel inclined; and if you have not already got one, I advise you to set up a dog."

We were walking down the path towards the gate now, and he stood still and faced me. "Set up a dog," he repeated. "In the first place, it will be a great safeguard for you; and in the second, next to a human being, there is nothing like a dog for company."

"Nothing," I assented; "and I have one coming to-morrow, a collie. He is an old friend, and with him, my work, my garden, my books, my piano, and you and Mrs. Talbot, I can't be very lonely."

We had reached the gate by this time, leading on to the road, a sweet shady lane, where the ferns grew in wild profusion and the tangled boughs nearly met overhead.

"It is so peaceful," I murmured involuntarily—yes, so peaceful and quiet. No one would come here to trouble me, no one would ever disturb me here. I was roused from my momentary reverie by the sound

of wheels — not loud and creaking, as those of a waggon, or even as of a carriage, but soft and almost noiseless.

"Why, here is Sir John," cried Mr. Talbot, as suddenly a Bath-chair appeared in sight. "How late he is out this evening! I must introduce you to him, now he is here. No, no, don't run away. You *must* know Sir John; he is the squire of the parish."

I was half-way up the path by this time, but I turned back—what he said was so true; for sooner or later I supposed I must run against Sir John—at a school feast, or some such festival—so I walked soberly back to the gate, where the Bath-chair had come to an anchor, casting a glance at its occupant to make sure I had never seen him before.

I could not see very much of him now, for Mr. Talbot was leaning over him, and his big hat shut out my vision; but I caught sight of a large hooked nose, and a pair of keen hazel eyes, that I felt sure I had never encountered before. As I approached the two friends, I knew I was the subject of their conversation, for I overheard the one word "lady" as Mr. Talbot drew back to introduce me.

"Sir John, you must make the acquaintance of our new schoolmistress," he said, "Miss Morton, who only arrived this morning. Sir John and Lady Challoner have always been very interested in the schools," he continued, turning to me, and not heeding a gesture of dissent proceeding from the Bath-chair, "and I fancy you will often have a visit from Lady Challoner."

But neither Sir John nor I was paying much attention to this introductory speech—I, for the simple reason that I had to bring all my powers of self-control to bear to prevent myself going off into a fit of hysterical laughter, so mournfully ludicrous did the situation appear to me. In former days I had associated with many a Sir John on an equality, and now I was being presented to one as the village schoolmistress. What ought I to do? Drop a curtsey? No, I remembered that that was a very old-fashioned proceeding, savouring almost of feudal times; that, in these Board-school days, mistresses were very important people, hard-worked on the one side, made much of on the other; and that, no doubt, Sir John would think it his duty to shake hands with me. But he did nothing of the kind. He simply stared at me, as if I had had some peculiarity; then, catching my eye, he straightened himself in his chair.

"The rector gives me too good a character, Miss Morton," he said. "I seldom interfere with the schools; I leave all that to Mr. Bostock," with a grim smile. "Lady Challoner is, I believe, very much interested in—buttonholes; and that reminds me that she will be awaiting me for dinner—good day to you," and with that Sir John made a faint movement of his hand towards his deer-stalking cap, which was to intimate to me that our interview was at an end.

"Good evening, sir," I answered, and was about to retreat again down the path, when the rector stopped me a second time.

"What, running away without saying good night to me!" he said. "Now, mind, if you want anything, you send to the Rectory for it. I am going as far as the turning with Sir John," and raising his hat as he would to a princess, the dear old man hurried after the Bath-chair, that had just been set in motion.

As I walked slowly towards the school I could hear Sir John talking to him, but only three words distinctly reached my ears. They were "utter mistake," and "Bostock." Was I the utter mistake, I wondered; and why did Sir John, who did not look much past fifty years of age, go about in a Bath-chair? Wearily I opened my door, entered my little domain, and lighted my lamp. I was tired, and the rector's words haunted me. "Too young!" Would they send me away? away from this sweet peaceful place, where I was within reach of all I loved best in the world? I walked to the fireplace, and gazed at myself in the looking-glass that hung over it. What I saw there was a ripple of red-golden hair surmounting a pair of dark eyebrows and brown eyes, so mournful that they ought, I thought, to take all suspicion of undue youth from me, as ought my white colourless skin, and my mouth, set firmly to face my future. And then I turned away impatiently, for I knew that although I looked almost as sad as I felt, still youth—imperishable youth—was there, and with it the beauty that had made Sir John stare to-night, and sent the hot blood coursing up into my face at the bare recollection of it. I suppose I was over-wrought, for I put my head suddenly down on the table, and cried and cried as I had not cried for months. I had thought that all my tears were dried up long ago, that mine was an abiding grief too deep for weeping, but to-night the springs overflowed, and it relieved me.

A quarter of an hour later I was so interested in the, to me, novel task of cooking my own supper, and recalling my South Kensington lessons in artisan cookery, taken in my happy days to teach my own village girls, that I momentarily forgot my troubles, and became absorbed in my fire, and childishly pleased with my kitchen range. Two hours and a half later, all alone in the lonely little house, I was sleeping as I had not slept for years.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE BOSTOCKS.

I HAD to hurry up the next morning, for there was no one in the house but myself to do anything for me. It was a lovely mild spring day; the sun came pouring in at my tiny window, and a thrush perched on a laburnum-tree heavy with golden blossom was singing its little heart out, as I threw open my casement and stood for a moment to drink in the soft balmy air. I dared not linger, however. I had my breakfast to prepare, my room to dust, &c. &c., and not being accustomed to these duties, and unlike the daintily-brought-up young ladies in novels who retire to the East End of London and perform them all as if to the manner born, I was both awkward and slow over them. Nevertheless, as I had taken time by the forelock, I had my breakfast ready and looking really

inviting by eight o'clock, and I flattered myself that my little room was as well dusted as if my old housemaid herself had had a hand in it. The exertion had done me good. I sat down to my meal with the rector's chart of the school by my side, taking in the history of a small scholar between each mouthful, and with a better appetite than I had known for months. I was surprised to find that I was really looking forward to my children half nervously, wholly pleasurably; to the big wondering eyes that Mr. Talbot had alluded to; to the little faces—fair, brown, or freckled, as the case might be. How I hoped they would all learn to love me, as my Sunday-school class had loved me at home; and how glad I was that it was such a tiny school—only forty names on the books—so that I could easily learn to know them all, their parents, their families, and in their griefs and joys try and still my own heartache.

I was still pondering it over—thinking, too, of many other subjects as I washed up my breakfast-things previous to putting them away in the cupboard, when I was startled by a rather loud knock at the schoolroom door, and a voice that I had heard before calling somewhat peremptorily "Miss Morton!"

I recognised it at once as belonging to Mr. Bostock, practically the manager of the school, who had engaged my services in London, and who, I concluded from what Mr. Talbot had said, was the owner of the large house on the hill, that was such a prominent feature in the landscape.

Hurriedly I put down the plate I held in my hand, and hastening to the schoolroom opened the door. There stood Mr. Bostock, and by his side a young lady, who might be any age from eighteen to thirty, but who was so like himself that there could be no doubt as to the relationship between them. It gave me a pang to see them standing there in the morning sunlight, for it reminded me of my own past. They were both tall and thin, with florid colouring; whilst in both the somewhat powerful jaw, the long upper lip, and compressed mouth, told of capacity and tenacity of purpose. In Miss Bostock all these characteristics were accentuated, and whilst her slightly prominent eyes were bright and hard, Mr. Bostock's gleamed mild and benevolent through his *pince-nez*.

"We are come early, Miss Morton," he commenced, in the pompous tone that agreed so well with the style of house he had built himself, "but I am desirous that Miss Bostock should at once see and know you, in order to give you some hints as to your new duties. I have also brought the keys of the cupboards where the books are kept."

"Thank you, sir."

"This is your first situation, I think?" interposed Miss Bostock, who had never taken her eyes off me since I had opened the door to her, and addressing me much as she might any cook she was interviewing.

"Yes."

"Then I hope you will be very particular as to discipline. The last mistress was culpably lax, and I am extremely particular on that point. It is impossible that efficiency should be attained without discipline."

Whilst she was speaking I had led the way into the schoolroom, a nice cheerful room looking south and east, and lighted up by the sun, which was pouring in at the open windows. Miss Bostock looked at them approvingly.

"I am glad to see the windows open," she said. "Now then, father," turning to Mr. Bostock, "where are the keys? The children will be here soon; we have no time to lose."

There was a briskness and energy about her speech and actions that betokened that she was not a person likely to let the grass grow under her feet, as, taking a bunch of keys from Mr. Bostock's hand, she proceeded to unlock sundry cupboards, from whence she drew the necessary books. For the next ten minutes business reigned supreme, and even in that short time I could see that it was lodged in the right quarter. Mr. Bostock's explanations, as also those of his daughter, were lucid and terse; and when he told me that he was treasurer, secretary, and everything else for the schools, and that I must report to him any complaints or wishes, I had an instinctive feeling that they would be dealt with probably judicially and inquisitorially, but still with sound common-sense.

"And now as to your own domain, Miss Morton," he proceeded, as he closed the last book with a bang, and cleared his throat; "I had it all put thoroughly into order for you—re-papered and a touch of paint, new grate, and the little strip of garden overhauled. I hope you will be very careful about the walls—don't knock in too many nails. I am very particular about keeping down expenses when it is a case of public money; it is a matter of conscience with me, and I assure you that I thought twice about doing the house up."

"It was very kind of you, sir, to have it done. I have already knocked in some nails, but I will be very careful in future."

"That is right. We have still a minute or two to spare. I should like to see what you have done."

I was not to be allowed to escape, and I began to tremble for my brackets and pictures, for my dear Bartolozzis and Boydells, for my mezzo-tints, my water-colours and photographs, and to enumerate guiltily to myself the many nails I had hammered into the rather ugly new paper, with the view of covering it up as much as I could. Quaking inwardly, but putting on as bold a front as I could command, I led the way into my sitting-room, not daring to look round at my companions' faces, for I felt sure that I should meet nothing but disapproving glances. The little room did indeed look very pretty and inviting as I opened the door—too pretty, a great deal, I thought remorsefully, for a village schoolmistress, and I had a conviction that Miss Bostock would think so too. I was right.

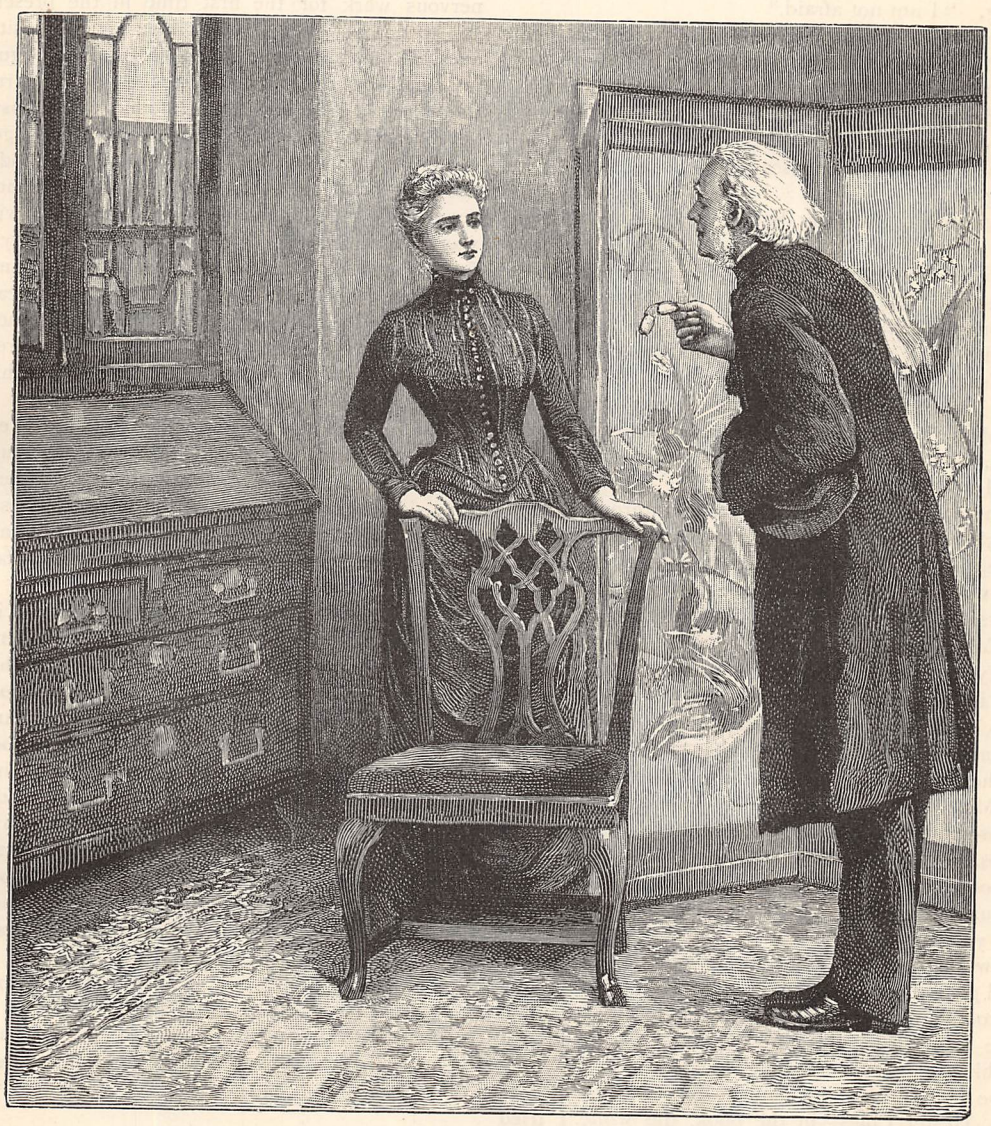
"You have certainly done wonders, Miss Morton," she said satirically. "You have transformed Miss Jones's little parlour into a lady's boudoir. It is very pretty, but hardly suitable. I cannot fancy much

work being done here ; for, you know, your work does not only lie in school hours."

The admonitory tone roused my indignation ; it was so different from Mr. Talbot's. But I tried hard to control myself, remembering that after all it was only what I must expect in my new vocation.

done anything to displease you. When I leave, I will see that the room is re-papered ; but," with my most bewitching smile, "I hope that may not be for a very long time."

Mr. Bostock smiled back. "I hope not indeed, Miss Morton," he responded heartily. "I earnestly



"'THAT IS A CHARMING BIT OF CHIPPENDALE, MISS MORTON, IF I MISTAKE NOT'" (*p.* 257).

"I am very fortunate," I answered as meekly as I could, "in having by me some nice bits of furniture that fit so well into the room ; they make it homelike, and will only help me to work all the better."

"But the nails !" cried Mr. Bostock, at last finding his voice. "Why, you must have knocked in"—taking a rapid survey, and checking them off on his fingers—"at least thirty. Did you do all this yesterday ?"

"Yes, sir. I am very vexed that I should have

trust you may justify my choice of you. Don't you my dear ?" turning to his daughter, who was standing by, silently observant.

"Certainly, I trust so, too," she answered severely. "Miss Morton must know that it entirely depends upon herself."

Mr. Bostock gave a little nervous half smile, half laugh. "I am sure Miss Morton will do her best," he said ; "and now I am going to give her a word

of advice. Do you really purpose," he continued, addressing me, "to live here alone?"

"I think so," I answered. "I intend to get a girl from the village to do my housework, and to be here all day, and go home at night."

"And you mean to sleep here by yourself?"

"Yes." Somehow I felt I had better not mention my dog. "I am not afraid."

"You are a very courageous young woman. Perhaps you do not know that you are within ten miles of one of the large Government prisons, which harbours many desperate characters? Sometimes—very rarely, I am bound to admit—one escapes."

"Do they really ever escape?" I asked, my heart beating fast.

"Very rarely, I tell you, but such things have been known to occur."

"Yes, of course, very rarely," I murmured, almost to myself. "But," in answer to Mr. Bostock's eyes fixed on me, "if any one did escape, he would not stop within ten miles of the prison, would he? He would surely make straight for the coast."

Mr. Bostock smiled again. "You are too much for me, Miss Morton," he answered quite playfully. "Well, if you are not afraid for yourself, I do not think I need be so for you."

"There is no necessity for fear," interposed Miss Bostock, with some contempt. "There are a few bad people in this village, as there are everywhere, but none who would attack a lone woman in a house by herself. Here comes your first batch of scholars, Miss Morton."

They were, indeed, beginning to arrive—a little trio hand in hand, ranging from eight to twelve years of age, evidently members of one family, for they were all blue-eyed, white-faced, golden-haired. They approached me shyly, dropping deep curtseys to Mr. and Miss Bostock, who were, however, too intent on observing my conduct to take any notice of the salutes.

"Come in, children," I said, as they hovered nervously near the door; "come in, and let me write down your names."

How heartily I wished that Mr. and Miss Bostock would go and leave me to myself! But, alas! it was only too plain that they had every intention of staying. There they stood, watching me intently, their keen searching glances paralysing my pen and tying my tongue as I entered the names—Susie Coles, George Coles, Hester Coles—in the book, the while I tried to recall the note on the Coles family in Mr. Talbot's chart of my pupils. Suddenly it flashed across my memory. "Very superior people—well-to-do. Three children, all delicate, especially the youngest, Hester. Father in a slow decline; mother, spine complaint. Highly respectable." That was, as far as I could remember it, the note on the Coles family, fully confirmed by the children's appearance, so neatly and nicely dressed, with their big wistful blue eyes, and fair blue-veined skins, that the spring sun had not, as yet, been able to tan or freckle.

But I had not much time to devote to the Coles; my little flock was arriving rapidly now—in twos and threes, and larger groups—and all my faculties were centred in taking them well in, entering their names, and in trying to avoid making any mistakes under Miss Bostock's lynx-eyes. Still she and Mr. Bostock stayed on, stayed until all my pupils had assembled, and it was time for me to read prayers. It was nervous work for the first time in the presence of strangers, but I got through them without hesitation; and still with those two watchful observant figures by my side I began the routine of the day and arranged the classes, &c.; and here I found Miss Bostock a very material assistance. She knew the age and capabilities of every child, and was as methodical as she was practical, although the tone of admonitory superiority she thought it necessary to adopt with me, was somewhat trying to bear. I was not sorry therefore when the clock chimed out eleven, and she announced that she and her father must leave. I suppressed the pleasure I felt at the intelligence, and thanked them sincerely for their assistance, breathing more freely as I saw them walk down the path, and I was at last left alone with my children.

The rest of the morning passed quickly enough, almost too quickly for me, and I was quite surprised when it struck twelve and my small flock began to give signs of uneasiness. At the same time I saw Mr. Talbot approaching the school, the signal for a broad grin of pleasure to dawn on all the juvenile faces as he lifted the latch and entered.

"I am not come to have anything to do with you youngsters," he said as he smiled benevolently on them; "I am only here to hope that you have all tried to be good and attentive children to your new governess on this her first day amongst you, and that you mean to get a first-rate report at the inspection."

Then turning to me, and holding out his hand, "Good morning, Miss Morton," he said, "I hope you slept well, and have recovered your yesterday's fatigue. I thought it better and kinder," lowering his voice, "to leave you to yourself this morning, and now I am only come to carry you off. If you do not mind, I am going to take you to the Rectory, and introduce you to Mrs. Talbot."

"I shall be so pleased," I answered, "as soon as I have seen the children off the premises."

"I will do that for you whilst you put on your hat," he answered. "Now then, my children, make haste; don't dawdle, but get home as fast as you can."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

AT THE RECTORY.

I HAD a pleasant walk with the old rector to the Rectory. The way led through the village, that clustered on either side of the brawling, eddying stream, past the church (a massive Norman structure that I was longing to inspect), past Sir John Challoner's gates, up a small winding path to an old grey stone house, so completely covered with creepers that it was hard to tell of what material it was built. This was the Rectory, a spot I was to learn to love as much as its

inmates. I began the process by at once losing my heart to the garden, with its quaint old-fashioned walks and borders, its myrtles and hydrangeas set out in large green orange-tubs, its closely-shaven turfs, and its evidences on all sides that it was loved and cared for.

It took us some time to get up there, for it was a stiffish climb, although the distance was nothing; and Mr. Talbot stopped, not only to take breath, but to have a word with every parishioner he met, in addition to pointing out to me all the objects of interest that lay around, until we arrived at the terrace in front of the drawing-room windows, and stayed a minute to gaze our fill at a view which acted as a sedative to my troubled heart.

Far, far away I could just catch a glimpse of the sea glinting and sparkling in the spring sunshine—a vivid contrast to the brown rolling moor that stretched away, billow on billow, for miles around us, hiding in its folds here a village, there a valley, disclosing now a gleaming strip of white road, or the silver streak of the river, and crowned in the distance with misty tors that saved it from a desolate monotony. Suddenly, as I slowly turned round to take in all sides, there loomed on my vision a volume of smoke issuing from a stack of grim solid chimneys that seemed to curdle the very blood in my veins. Yet they were what I had been seeking ever since my arrival at Monk's Hollow, and now that I had found them I could not speak, I could only point to them in dumb inquiry.

"Those? Why, they are the chimneys of Fastmoor, the prison," answered Mr. Talbot, and it seemed to me an extraordinary thing that his voice should be as cheerful as it had been a minute before. "As the crow flies it is only about seven miles from here, by road about ten. But you look quite pale; I have tired you with this climb; besides which Mrs. Talbot will be impatient to see you. Come in now, and rest yourself."

I obeyed without a word. I could not have spoken if my life had depended on it. With my eyes still fixed on that gruesome smoke I passed through a French window into a little drawing-room, which was a pendant to the garden for old-fashioned sweetness and pleasantness—a cheerful medley of flowers and books, pictures and photographs.

"So you have come in at last," remarked Mrs. Talbot as she rose from her sofa—a tall, rather large woman; "I have been watching you both from the window, and wondering how long you meant to stay out there before you came in to me."

The manner was a trifle abrupt, but it was belied by the bright humorous smile that gleamed in her hazel eyes, lighting up the worn refined features that spoke of constant suffering.

"I have been looking at the view," I answered, finding my voice at last; "it is beautiful from the terrace."

I saw Mrs. Talbot give some such a start as the rector had when he first heard me speak; then she motioned me to sit down by her side.

"It used to be beautiful once," she answered, glancing through the window, from whence you could see the village and church, nestling, as it were, in the bosom of the Cappers woods, whilst on the opposite side of the valley, sharply defined against the skyline, rose the tower and chimneys of Mr. Bostock's house, "until man laid his desecrating hand upon it and spoilt it." Then, seeing the interrogation in my eyes, "By man," she continued, "I mean Mr. Bostock. He has spoilt our Arcadia, as far as looks go."

"My dear!" remonstrated Mr. Talbot gently; but his wife laughed.

"I am only stating a fact," she answered, "which is as patent to Miss Morton as it is to you and me; nor am I detracting from Mr. Bostock, whose acquaintance I feel sure she has already made. On the contrary, Sir John and I, the two invalids of the village, feel rather grateful to him, for he has supplied us with what is so very dear to the English heart—a chronic grievance, which rises up every time we look out of window."

"I would rather be without the grievance," I said, laughing.

"So would I, my dear; but since it is there I had better make use of it. But now to talk about yourself. Mr. Talbot tells me that you have refused to stay to dinner. But, do you know, I will not take a refusal. We dine at one, so you will be back in plenty of time."

"It is not that," I answered, colouring crimson, and becoming interested in the pattern of the carpet, "but, indeed, you must excuse me. I would rather have my dinner at home." How rude and ungrateful it sounded! Yet what else could I say?

For one moment she looked at me searchingly, and then her manner suddenly softened.

"My dear," she said gently, "I should like to be your friend. Won't you give me the pleasure of staying to dine with me?"

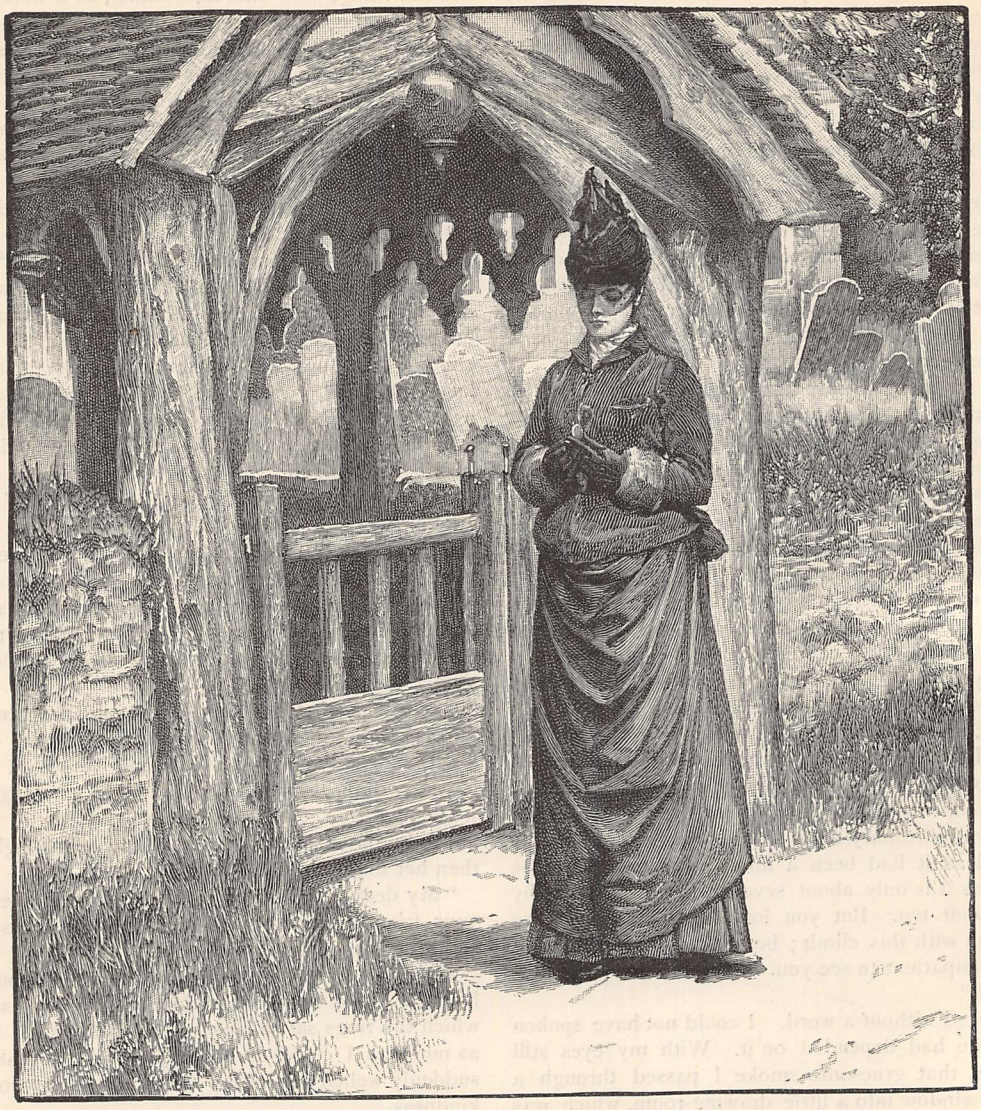
Ah! how hard, how very hard it was! I could not help it; I took hold of the thin transparent hand, on which the rings sat so loosely, and clasped it. It was as much as I could do to keep down the tears that suddenly welled up in my throat at those words of kindness.

"You are so good, so very good to me, you and Mr. Talbot, but please don't ask me to stay—please don't," I cried. Then, with a sickly smile, "I am only the schoolmistress," I added.

Mrs. Talbot smiled. "Ah! is that it?" she asked. "Well, do as you like. I don't care a rush what you call yourself," she continued energetically, "but I want to be your friend, and as such I will not press you to do anything you do not wish to. All I ask of you is to come very often and see me. Very often, do you hear?"

"Indeed, I will. Oftener perhaps than you may care for. You may have too much of me."

She shook her head; then laying her hand on mine, and glancing at the clock, "Now," she said, "we have not over-much time, as you have to get back to your dinner. I am sure there are a good many things you must want to ask me, as everything is new to you. Can I be of help to you?"



"HERE I PAUSED AND LOOKED AT MY WATCH" (*p.* 267)

Yes, indeed, she could. There were various subjects on which I wanted information connected with the prosy realities of life, which persists in flowing on relentlessly, however wretched or miserable you may be. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker will always thrust themselves to the fore, whether your heart be heavy as lead or light as thistle-down; and for a quarter of an hour Mrs. Talbot and I were completely absorbed in such homely details, of which an immediate servant for myself was not the least interesting. I could not have come to a better quarter for advice. The rector's wife was as practical and sensible as she was shrewd and humorous; and she had names and facts, ages and addresses; all accurately ready without reference to memoranda or pocket-book.

"Do you know the age of every girl in the village?" I asked at length in astonishment. She nodded her head.

"And most of their birthdays," she answered—"See what a tiny parish it is! Before we came here, we were for many years in a London one of 15,000 inhabitants. That was good practice for my memory. And now is there anything else you want to know?"

Our household talk had drawn us together as perhaps more elevating topics might not have done. For the time being I had forgotten that I was the village schoolmistress; I was one lady discussing with another domestic matters. I was off my guard, and now I forgot myself still further.

"Ah! yes," I answered without thinking, "there

is one thing I wanted to ask you. Why does Sir John Challoner go about in a Bath-chair?" The next moment I recollected myself, when I saw her fleeting look of astonishment. Of course she had expected further inquiries about tradespeople, &c., instead of which I asked a question that in no way concerned me.

"Ah!" she answered, "it is a sad story, a terribly sad story, but as the whole village knows it, there is no reason why you should not. He is paralysed; that is why he goes about in a Bath-chair; ruined and paralysed in one day through the wickedness of other people, although I do not mean to say that he has not had a hand in it himself."

"Ah, how sad!" I cried. "And he does not look at all an old man."

"He is just fifty-three. He is my cousin; so I know his age to an hour. He it was who gave my husband this living, when my health and—when my health completely broke down in London, and I was ordered to live in a mild climate."

"Yes?"

"He was, comparatively speaking, a young man in those days, and Cappers was the life of this part of the county. There was always something going on there, for Sir John was hospitality itself—generous, extravagant, and certainly not slow. He had already run through a great deal of money, and would have got through more had it not been for his first wife, one of the sweetest and most charming women I ever met with. She died, however, when her boy was about ten years old, and five years later Sir John married the present Lady Challoner, a woman in no way to be compared to her predecessor, but a pretty creature. With her arrival on the scene, and, in the course of time, that of six children, expenses did not diminish, as you may imagine. Gradually one bit and then another of the estate was mortgaged, and Sir John was seriously thinking of making a really vigorous effort at retrenchment, when his *coup de grâce* came two years ago. His London bankers failed. There were frauds and embezzlements, and I do not know what all, on the part of one of the partners—I dare say you remember it, for it was a very notorious case—the result of which was that Sir John, a ruined man, was laid low with a stroke of paralysis, which mercifully did not affect his brain. Now he is only awaiting the return of his eldest son from Suakim to get him to cut off the entail, in order to sell the old place, which has been in the family ever since the time of King John. It is sad, isn't it? But, my dear, how white you have turned! Are you faint?"

"No," I cried, "indeed I am not. I did not know I was white. It is nothing. Poor Sir John! How sorry I feel for him!"

"Yes," she answered, "and if you had known him formerly, you would feel even more sorry; such a fine, good-looking man as he was. But now I want to talk about you. Do you really think you are equal to the work you are entering upon? It is very hard, you know, although the hours do not sound excessive; but there is a good deal to be studied out of school hours, and you have undertaken to be organist as well as mistress. I doubt if you are physically up to the task; for, pardon me, you look very young and very fragile. I am a blunt woman, who say what I mean, and it is no good for me to pretend to regard you as an ordinary National School mistress. If I did, I should not have talked to you as I did just now. Of course, Mr. Bostock told us you were a lady, a title which nowadays is so extremely elastic that I confess I was not prepared for—for—well, perhaps I had better say it straight out—for an equal. I do not know, nor do I seek to know, your reason for coming here as schoolmistress, but I do know that I think your bringing up must have been such, that the work will be too hard for you."

"But I want hard work," I answered. "I want to be so tired that when I go to bed I may fall asleep, instead of tossing about all night. I am really strong, much stronger than I look; and the reason I took this situation is because I am poor, and I love children and teaching. Don't send me away," I continued imploringly. "Give me a fair trial."

She drew me to her, and kissed me.

"Send you away, my poor child! Certainly not! Besides," with her slightly satirical smile, "even were all the authorities agreed on the subject, which would not be likely, we have not the power to do that under so many weeks, so do not be afraid. Only take my advice—husband your strength as much as you can, and be very circumspect in your talk and actions. The schoolmistress in a little gossipy place like this is a public character, so take care; for, as I said before, you are very young, and," laughing, "much too pretty."

"I am not so very young. I am twenty-three, and very sober-minded," I answered sadly. "I have had a great deal of trouble, and I think that takes the youth and the nonsense out of one—don't you?"

"I don't know. It depends on the character. But, whatever yours may be, your position here is an anomalous one; you are a square peg in a round hole, or *vice versâ*. I don't want to discourage you—very far from it, for pluck is of all qualities one I admire most—but I want to warn you." Then, seeing me glance at the clock, "Well, as you will not stay with us, I suppose you ought to be going back to your dinner. This afternoon I shall send you down some flowers and books, and some other trifles to make you look and feel home-like. No, don't thank me," as I tried to express my gratitude; "I am by nature extremely meddlesome, only circumstances prevent my indulging in such an unseemly characteristic, but I mean to meddle with you."

"Please do," I answered, although her words gave me a sudden apprehension. "I am sure I shall require it."

We had risen, and were both standing by the door, as women do, for the last words that always give a fresh impetus to one's ideas. As I talked and listened, my eyes were straying mechanically over the pretty trifles that lay around, in and out of the numberless photographs that adorned every available space, until

they came to one that made me hold my breath, and ask myself, with beating heart, where I had seen the original.

It represented a young man of about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, with dark hair and moustache, and a peculiarly direct look in the eyes, that arrested your attention even in a photograph. But it was not in the eyes, nor even in the undoubted good looks of their owner, that lay the fascination for me. It was in the fact that the face recalled to me the one bit of sentimentality of my life, but one that I could never think of without blushing.

It had taken place so long, oh! so long ago it seemed to me; and, in truth, five years is a long time. I was barely eighteen, and as wilful and headstrong as spoilt children are apt to be at that age, when one bright morning in May I was thrown out of a hansom cab in St. James's Street. How well I remembered it, and how vividly the photograph brought it all back to me! I had been to a singing lesson, and dismissing the carriage when I had reached my destination, had declared my intention of going home in a cab. When the lesson was over, I asked the servant to call me a hansom, and, jumping into it, never gave the matter another thought until I found myself violently thrown out of my conveyance, and my head in contact with the curbstone, just in the region of the clubs. I suppose I was half-stunned, for I recollect getting up with difficulty, and gazing in a dazed stupid way at the dark strange man who was assisting me, and looking at me with some anxiety as he set me on my feet again. The face in the photograph was the face of that man, and in that moment of time, as I stared at him with dull senseless eyes, it imprinted itself on my brain for ever.

Needless to say that a crowd had collected round me, but I did not heed it. I only saw him, for he was the only gentleman in it; and I shall never forget the gentle way in which he said, "I hope you are not very much hurt?" whilst at the same time he just touched my hat to show me that it had slipped half off my head. Of course, I ought to have been thankful that in St. James's Street, instead of one, there were not a dozen men pressing their services on me; but as my senses came flickering back to me, my only feeling was that of intense annoyance and mortification at having made such an exhibition of myself.

"No, I am not hurt," I said almost resentfully, and certainly untruthfully, for I was still more than half-stupid, my head was swimming, and my hand giving me excruciating pain.

"Come into this shop, and rest until you feel better," continued the stranger, as with a gesture authoritative and a trifle imperious he parted the crowd for me to pass through. I followed him very obediently, thankful to hide my diminished head in the first retreat that presented itself, and seating myself in the nearest chair I could find, waited apathetically whilst he conferred with the shopman. The confabulation, which was conducted in low tones, did not last long. In a minute or two my unknown friend returned to me.

"Are you quite certain you are not hurt?" he asked again. "I am sure your hand is paining you." For answer I looked at him in the same dazed way as before, and then suddenly I became excited.

"No, no," I cried, "I am not hurt a bit. I am very much obliged to you, but I must go home at once. I cannot stay here," and so on, growing more and more random until he stopped me.

"No," he answered soothingly, and yet at the same time authoritatively, "you cannot go home at once. You must wait a little while, and one of the young women here will attend to you. If, however, she offers you any stimulant, mind you do not take it."

Another conference with the shopman and a nice-looking young woman who had appeared on the scene, and then the stranger lifted his hat and was gone, whilst I slowly came to the consciousness that I had been very rude and ungrateful to him. I suppose it was owing to his instructions that the shopwoman took me into a back room and did everything she could for me, for by this time I was almost unconscious, whilst a messenger was despatched to my home for the carriage, and for my maid to come with it.

An hour later I was lying on my sofa at home, with the doctor bending over me, and telling me that I must keep very quiet, for I had concussion of the brain, and that he would visit me again in the evening. I do not think that, in the whole course of my spoilt life, I was so scolded as I was for this misadventure later, when I was better, and I never recalled it without my cheeks burning, and a sense of extreme thankfulness that my unknown friend had never found out who I was. He might, of course, easily have done so, but he had left it to the shop-people to ask me my name and address in order to send for the carriage, a lack of curiosity which might have proceeded from delicacy or indifference. I preferred to think it delicacy.

I had to keep very quiet for some time, but my brain was excited, and during the long hours of enforced stillness the image of the dark stranger became indelibly fixed on it. When I began going about again, I must confess that the general run of men seemed to me very uninteresting, and a craving took possession of me to discover the name of my friend. This I might probably have done by asking it at the shop where I had been shown so much kindness, but I was too proud to do that, and so I remained in ignorance, until my old curiosity was once more awakened by the photograph in the Rectory drawing-room.

"You have not heard one word I have been saying," sounded Mrs. Talbot's voice in my ears, bringing me back with a bound from the past to the present. I blushed crimson; I could not deny the imputation.

"I beg your pardon," I faltered.

"You were very carefully taking in my drawing-room," she answered good-naturedly, "and so I will forgive you. Now you must go, or you will get no dinner. You must come again very soon and sing to me, for I know you sing. Good-bye, my dear."

She drew me to her and kissed me. "Take care of yourself," she said as she opened the door for me and I passed into the hall, where I found the rector talking to a parishioner.

"Well, had a nice chat with Mrs. Talbot?" he asked as he opened the front door for me; "I am sorry you will not stay for dinner, but come and see her again soon, will you? She is often very lonely."

There was a sadness in his voice that touched my heart. He, too, had had some great trouble—of that I felt sure—and if I could in any way be of the slightest comfort to him and Mrs. Talbot, how pleased I should be! The idea made me feel positively happy and light-hearted for two minutes, as I set off running down the hill, until the sight of the Cappers woods reminded me that I had no right to lose touch of my own trouble—no, not for a second.

"Everywhere, everywhere it meets me!" I cried under my breath. "Oh! my darling, my darling!" For the time Mr. and Mrs. Talbot, the stranger's photograph, everything, was lost sight of in the recollection of poor Sir John and the blow that had crushed him. Ah! how well I knew the sort of life he had led formerly—a careless, pleasure-seeking existence; kind, generous, wasteful, extravagant; and then the *coup de grâce*, as Mrs. Talbot had called it, that had suddenly quenched it, and left him a helpless invalid. I held my breath, for the agony of the thought seemed like real physical pain; and as I stood there in the road, trying to fight it down, I saw a door in the wall open, and heard the noiseless creaking of the Bath-chair. As one pursued I set off running, and never drew breath until I found myself close to the lych-gate of the churchyard, and here I paused and looked at my watch. I had just a few minutes to spare, thanks to my rapid flight, and I thought I should like to take a look at the church, where I was to practise on the organ this evening; but, alas! on trying the door, it was locked and I could not enter. I was therefore obliged to content myself with surveying the churchyard—a veritable God's acre—with its beautiful trees and shrubs, its blooming flowers and creepers, and its vividly green turf that sloped down to the river that ran at the bottom of the hill. On all sides crosses of every shape and size reared their heads, and amongst them one of Devonshire marble, lying immediately under the east window, at once caught my eye.

"To the memory of Blanche, only child of Ancaster and Blanche Talbot, aged eighteen. Born December, 18—; died April 3rd, 18—. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'"

So ran the inscription, and somehow I seemed to have foreseen that I should find it here. This, then, was Mr. and Mrs. Talbot's sorrow! Their only child! No wonder that poor Mrs. Talbot was "lonely sometimes;" no wonder the rector looked sad when he said it. Perhaps it was this that had made them so wonderfully kind to me. I was just the age their Blanche would have been had she lived. I stooped and gathered a white polyanthus from the little garden that lay within the marble coping, and then I sat down on a seat under a tree close by to rest a minute and think. Of what? Of Blanche Talbot cut off in the heyday of her youth and sweetness? Of Mr. and Mrs. Talbot's desolation and anguish? Of Sir John Challoner, ruined, paralysed, broken? Of my own living grief? No; I am ashamed to say I thought of none of these things. Swift as an arrow my memory recurred to the strong dark face that had crossed my path five years age, and that had once more, although only in a photograph, risen on my horizon. Who was he? Where was he? What had he to do with Mrs. Talbot? Oh! foolish futile questions. Whoever he might be, was not I the village schoolmistress, whose life was cut out and arranged, and whose mission was—to wait? What had I to do with such as he, except to pray that I might never see him again? Impatient and angered with my own weakness I rose to go home, when on turning round I found myself face to face with two little girls about eight and eleven years old, whom I instinctively recognised as Challoners. They looked at me severely, particularly the elder one; then, colouring up to the roots of her hair, she came up to me, and eyeing my polyanthus, "You must not gather flowers from the graves here, please," she said.

"I won't again," I answered meekly, "but I know Mrs. Talbot, and I do not think that she will mind my having taken this one. I am the new schoolmistress."

"Yes, Gwen," interposed her sister, "don't you know she was to come yesterday? But," turning to me with a puzzled look in her blue eyes, "are you really the new schoolmistress? You are not at all like Miss Jones."

"But I am the schoolmistress, all the same," I answered, with a smile at the look of mystification on the little thing's face. "They are not always alike, you know."

"No-o," laughed the child. "Miss Jones used to say 'ha-ow' and 'ra-ound,' and drop her 'h's,' too, sometimes. She wasn't a—a lady, like you. Mother didn't like her," confidentially; "she never opened the schoolroom windows enough. Shall you open them?"

"Wide," I said. "You must come some day and see me—will you?"

"Oh, yes," she answered; "I like coming to the school. Good-bye, new schoolmistress; we must go back to father. There he is, in his Bath-chair, coming down the hill," and off ran the two little girls, but not before I heard the younger one say—

"Gwen, isn't it funny?—she is just like the picture of Blanche Talbot in Mrs. Talbot's bedroom."

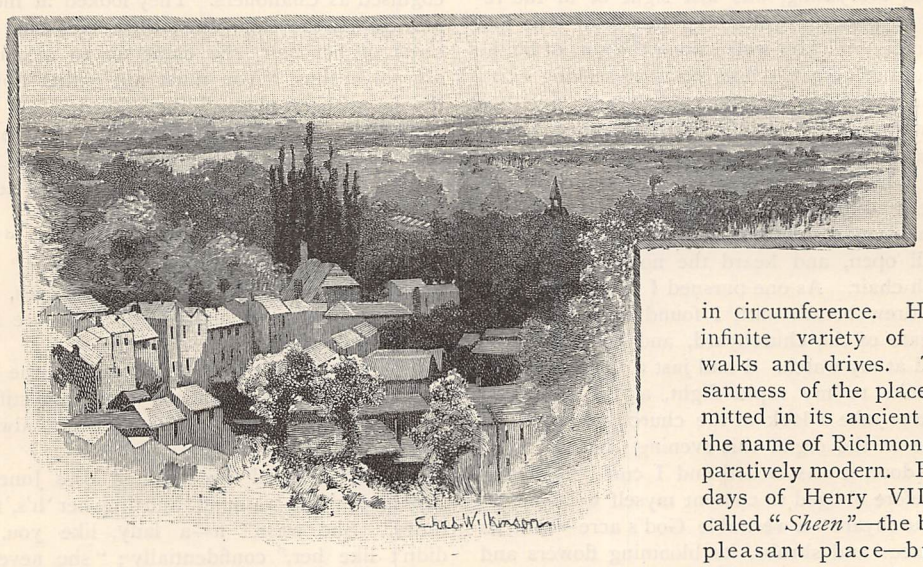
"She is much prettier," responded Gwen curtly; "but she had no business to gather——"

The rest of the sentence was lost to me as the children passed through the gate, and their clear treble voices died away in the distance. As for me, I retired behind the church until the Bath-chair had passed out of sight, and then I walked quietly and soberly home.

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRD.

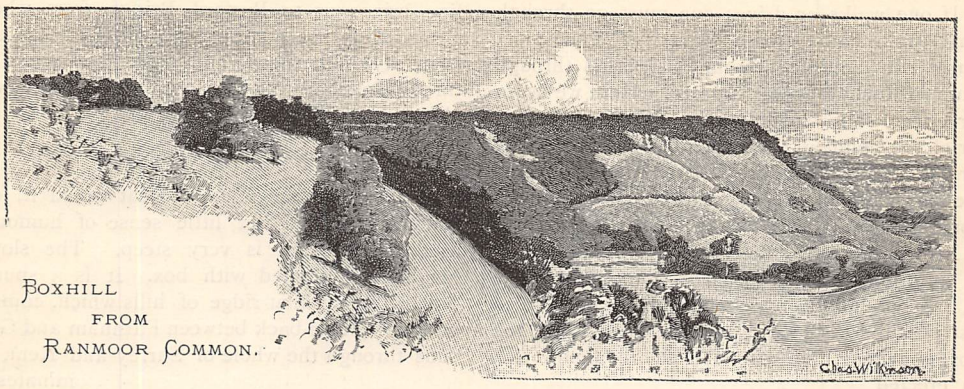
THE PRETTIEST SCENERY ROUND LONDON.

SOPHOCLES, in a magnificent chorus, has sung the beautiful scenery that may be found in the immediate neighbourhood of Athens; Horace, in one of his best-known odes, has celebrated the charms of Tivoli, near to the great city of Rome; but what poet of the first order has told of the lovely country that borders upon London? True, London cannot boast a Colonus, which Sophocles declared to be the fairest seat on earth, nor a Tivoli, the beauties of which surpassed anything that Horace had ever seen in other lands, nor can it from any point command such a view as



HARROW—THE VIEW FROM THE CHURCHYARD.

may be seen from Calton Hill or Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh; but there are in London and around London places of exquisite beauty, of which every Londoner should be proud, but of which very many know absolutely nothing. The present writer met only the other day a cultivated lady who had lived all her life in London, and who visited a good deal the favourite English watering-places—as Eastbourne, Bournemouth, and the Devonshire coast—who, moreover, thoroughly appreciated beautiful scenery, but who had never once seen Greenwich Park. And she is only a typical instance of tens of thousands in West, North, and Central London. Similarly with country visitors to the great metropolis. They go to see the sights of the day, the various exhibitions, the picture galleries, the Crystal and perhaps the Alexandra Palace, but very few visit the beautiful Victoria Park at the East-end, the well-laid-out Finsbury Park, the pleasant oasis at Kennington near the Oval, or Greenwich Park, above mentioned. Yet Greenwich Park, because of its wooded slopes, and other natural advantages, is more beautiful than Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. Except for its limited extent, it is little inferior to Richmond, and the trees are no unworthy rivals to those in Bushey Park. It is a park, too, celebrated in romance, as those familiar with Sir Walter Scott's "Fortunes of Nigel" will remember. Sir Walter was equally acquainted with Richmond. He called the view from Richmond Hill and terrace an "*unrivalled landscape.*" At the top of the hill is the great park, which is about eight miles in circumference. Here is an infinite variety of delightful walks and drives. The pleasantness of the place is transmitted in its ancient name, for the name of Richmond is comparatively modern. Before the days of Henry VII. it was called "*Sheen*"—the bright and pleasant place—but when Henry was securely seated on the throne of England he resided very much at Sheen, and out of compliment to him the place assumed the name of his old duchy in the north of Yorkshire. The palace stood on the spot now known as the Green, but not a vestige of it remains. Is there anywhere in England a more pleasant drive than from Richmond to Hampton Court through Bushey Park, when the chestnut-trees are in full bloom? Or where can one have a more lovely reach of river scenery than on the Thames from Richmond Bridge to Hampton Court? Nowhere in the immediate neighbourhood of London, though higher up the river, about both Pangbourne and Henley, this Richmond scenery is surpassed, as also between Maidenhead and Marlowe, which is the finest reach on the whole length of the Thames. Nowhere in England can three such Paradises of earthly beauty be found in such close and rapid succession as Kew Gardens,

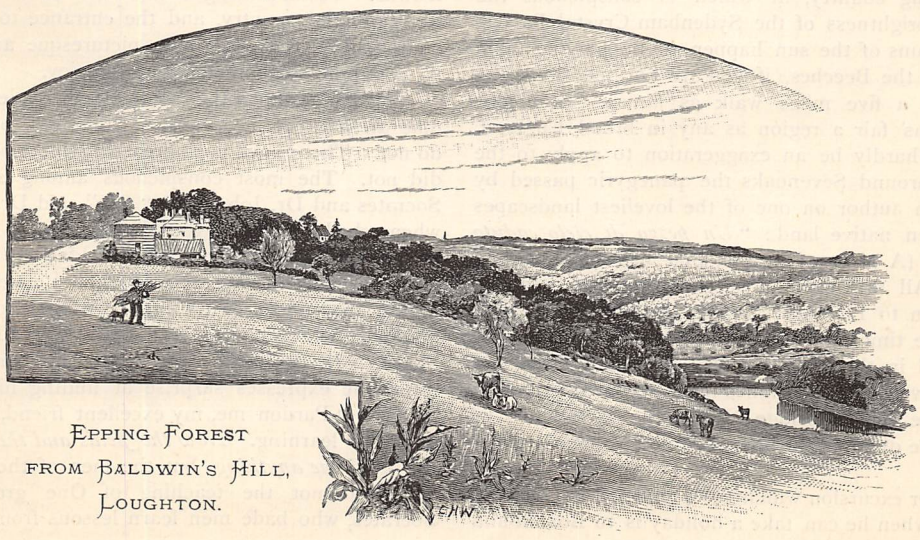


BOXHILL FROM RANMOOR COMMON.

Richmond Park, and the park and gardens of Hampton Court. In these last, besides the chestnuts, are many grand elms and oaks, and the hawthorns are almost as beautiful as the chestnuts.

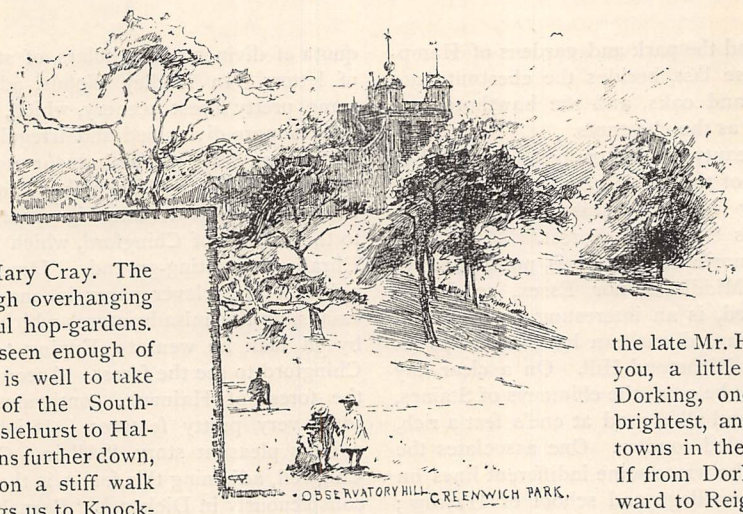
But not all the beauty round London is confined to the neighbourhood of the Thames, whose glories have been celebrated by Denham in his "Cooper's Hill," and by Pope in his "Windsor Forest." Away from the river, on the north side, there is no superlative beauty. Neither Middlesex nor Essex, so far as scenery is concerned, is an interesting county. But from Harrow Churchyard one can have a view as extensive as that from Richmond Hill. On a clear day Windsor Castle may be seen, the chimneys of Staines, the Chiltern Hills, and all around at one's feet a rich, fertile, and well-wooded country. One associates the place with Byron, who wrote some indifferent lines on a distant view of the village and school of Harrow; and some others, rather better, beneath an elm in Harrow Churchyard. Harrow was the school of Peel and Palmerston, as well as of Byron, and has contributed to the service of the Church and country a fair quota of divines and scholars, of statesmen and men of letters. In Hadley Woods, adjoining Barnet, is some pretty forest scenery, which, though not extensive, is more diversified and irregular than in Epping. By the way, let us remind our readers that if they want to see Epping Forest they should not go to the town of Epping—as some ignorantly have done—but to the village of Chingford, which is close to Queen Elizabeth's hunting-grounds. James Payn has written a bright and clever paper in one of his volumes of essays, on the misadventures which befell him, when by ill luck he went to Epping town instead of to Chingford to see the forest. According to Mr. Besant the forest of Hainault, contiguous to Epping, has some very pretty features. It is the scene of that writer's pleasant story, "All in a Garden Fair." At Chigwell, adjoining this forest, is the inn which figures conspicuously in Dickens's "Barnaby Rudge."

But now let us cross the Thames and turn to the real garden of England—the counties of Kent and Surrey. Perhaps one of the very prettiest walks or drives, or even railroad journeys, that one can take in



EPPING FOREST FROM BALDWIN'S HILL, LOUGHTON.

the immediate neighbourhood of London is to Chislehurst. If one walks or drives one must go through the long, well-planted main street of Lewisham. Omnibuses run continually from New Cross through Lewisham to Rushey Green, Catford. Here we begin to get free from suburban London and to breathe the pure air of the country. A walk of two miles and a half brings us to Bromley, before entering which town we may, if we like, diverge to the left for Chislehurst, or walk through the whole length of Bromley town. Either route is pleasant. Chislehurst is a village embosomed in a luxuriant plantation. The houses, and the gardens which surround them, are in the best possible taste, and show that they are the work of opulence and art. On the common is a column erected to the memory of the late Prince Imperial of the French, the gift of the inhabitants of Chislehurst. There is a delightful walk from Chislehurst Common to St. Mary Cray. The path leads through overhanging woods and fruitful hop-gardens. When one has seen enough of this fair land, it is well to take the main line of the South-Eastern from Chislehurst to Halstead, three stations further down, from which station a stiff walk of two miles brings us to Knockholt Beeches, one of the highest elevations in Kent. You pass through a succession of fruit-gardens which supply the London markets. From the knoll on which the beeches stand you have a splendid view of the surrounding country, in which is conspicuous the dazzling brightness of the Sydenham Crystal Palace, if the beams of the sun happen to be playing upon it. From the Beeches, if you are not too tired, you may take a five miles' walk as far as Sevenoaks, through as fair a region as any in broad England. It would hardly be an exaggeration to apply to the country around Sevenoaks the panegyric passed by an Italian author on one of the loveliest landscapes in his own native land: "*Un pezzo di cielo caduto in terra*" (A piece of heaven that has descended to earth). All this may be seen in one day, and one can return to London in good time by rail. Those who have time to spend a day or two at Sevenoaks may revel in the finest scenery of Kent. There are ten or eleven delightful miles from Sevenoaks through Tunbridge to Tunbridge Wells—the little town of Tunbridge dividing the journey into two nearly equal portions.



Another excursion which the present writer is very fond of when he can take a holiday is to Boxhill and Dorking. The London, Brighton, and South Coast line brings us to Burford Bridge, from whence we immediately ascend the hill; or one may leave the train at Leatherhead, and walk to Burford Bridge through a charming country. In this walk we come alongside and cross

"The sullen Mole that runneth underneath,"

as Milton in a facetious moment called it, for grand John Milton had but little sense of humour. The ascent of Boxhill is very steep. The slopes and heights are planted with box. It is a spur of the North Downs, that ridge of hills which, commencing with the Hog's-back between Farnham and Guildford, runs through the whole of Surrey and Kent, and terminates with Shakespeare's Cliff near Dover. Boxhill is a part of the beautiful Deepdene estate, while residing at which Lord Beaconsfield wrote his "Coningsby," and dedicated it to his munificent host, the late Mr. Henry Hope. Below you, a little to the right, lies Dorking, one of the cleanest, brightest, and pleasantest little towns in the south of England. If from Dorking you walk eastward to Reigate, or westward to Guildford, you go through some of the prettiest country in Surrey, keeping all the way under the North Downs. Some of the prettiest bits on the way to Guildford are the Silent Pool, Newland Corner, and the Merrow Downs. Towards Reigate the road leads through a well-timbered country, and the entrance to the little disfranchised town is over a picturesque and irregular common, so characteristic of Surrey.

We have assumed that some of our readers at least take an interest in scenery. There are people who do not. There have been great and good people who did not. The most conspicuous among such were Socrates and Dr. Johnson. "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, when asked to walk in the country, "when you have seen one field you have seen all fields; let us take a walk down Cheapside." And when Boswell showed him a magnificent view in the Highlands, he remarked, "Very fine, sir! but not so fine as Fleet Street." In the same way Socrates remarks, when some one expresses surprise at finding him outside the city, "Pardon me, my excellent friend, for I am a lover of learning. *Now the fields and the trees will not teach me anything*, but the men of the city do." Such was not the teaching of One greater than Socrates, who bade men learn lessons from the fowls

of the air and the lilies of the field. Such was not the teaching of the great poet of Nature, with whose words will we close this paper :—

'Thanks to the human heart, by which we live,
Thanks to its sympathy, its joys, its fears,
To me the meanest flower which blows can give
Thoughts which do often lie too deep for tears."

S. C. OVERTON, M.A.

A STRANGE TRADE

VERILY, one half of the world does not know how the other half lives! Never was this brought home to me more fully than one day when, walking in the Salzburg Alps, I caught up an old peasant laden with a sack, and learned from him what was his profession.

Now, the man was evidently very tired and hot with his load; but what that load was I could not conjecture. I slackened my pace to his, and we began to talk; and I—more than half inclined to give the old fellow a help with his sack—asked what it contained.

"You would never guess," he replied.

"Potatoes?"

"No."

"A pig?"

"I wish it were."

Now I asked, before I offered to relieve him of that sack, for this reason. When I was a boy of fifteen, I was in the South of France on a roasting-hot day, and I, in like manner, caught up an old woman toiling under a sack, which hung on her back. Her grey hair was dripping with moisture, and in an access of pity I said to her, "Tiens; ma bonne mère, I will carry your sack." I threw it over my shoulder, when the sack began to wriggle, and toss, and grunt. "Wee! wee! wee!" There was a pig in it.

That is why, before offering to carry the old man's burden, I desired to know its nature.

"There is no living being in your sack?" I said to the old man.

"I did not say that. I said I was not carrying a pig."

"Not a cat?"

"No—not a cat."

I knew that when "I" went to St. Ives I met seven wives, each wife had a sack, each sack had a cat, each cat had seven kittens—that is historical; and that nursery riddle, as well as the saying about letting a cat out of a bag, justified me in asking if there were a pussy in that sack.

"Then—you have a living animal in the bag?"

"I did not say *a* living animal."

"How many have you, and what are they?"

"How many—uncountable. What they are—guess."

We came to a "Schenk," a tavern, and I invited the old man in to have a rest. He put down the sack on the road at a distance from the tavern, and went in with me.

"You have no fear of any one taking your sack?"

"Oh dear, no! no one else would know what to do with my load, except he were an *Ameiser*."

"A what?"

"I will tell you while we rest."

This is what I learned, as we sat in the little inn.

The sack was full of tens of thousands of ants, black and red, along with their eggs; and the old man gained his livelihood by collecting the pupæ of ants to sell in Salsburg, Munich, and other towns, as food for cage-birds.

The business requires two; each Ameiser has an assistant. In the woods are mounds of the spines of fir-trees, collected by the ants, and the Ameiser goes in search of the ant-hills with a spade, a sack, and an assistant.

When a mound is found, then the Ameiser digs into it and throws it about. At once the ants swarm out, and each ant precipitates itself on one of the white eggs, or pupæ, and carries it off, and attempts to bury itself with it underground in one of the passages already bored for the dwelling of the colony. In a very few minutes every egg would disappear, unless the Ameiser were on the alert. He has, however, his sack of thick or rather close ticking, ready at hand, open, and whilst one man holds the sack, the other collects the pupæ, and pitches them in, as fast as he can, ants and eggs together, for the little creatures, when they have hold of an egg, will not let it go. His hands are rubbed with oil, partly as protection against the stings of the ants, partly to facilitate quick work with the eggs. The sting of an ant, especially of a red one, is not pleasant. I have myself had my hands blistered with them.

From twenty to forty thousand pupæ are got out of each ant-hill.

As soon as one ant-heap is cleared, then the Ameiser goes to another, till his sack is full, when he tightly secures the mouth. It is said that ants always rebuild on the same sites, so that an ant-collector knows where to go, but is careful not to revisit the same hills and disturb them a second time in a year.

In the sack an internecine war goes on. The red ants are the most irritable and pugnacious. They do not understand the situation, and they proceed to attack the black ants, as the cause of their disturbance

and imprisonment, so that when the sack is re-opened a large number of the black ants are found dead.

When the Ameiser has got a supply, then he seeks a solitary nook in a forest where he may let the ants run away. He may not do this on an alp, or near a cottage or pasture, because the escaped ants injure the grass, and overrun a human habitation. So he takes care to select a spot far from the haunts of men, and also dry, and otherwise suitable for the habitation of ants, for those allowed to escape he reckons will colonise where they are discharged, and in two years' time have formed a flourishing community.

Moreover, the release of the ants is always made in hot sunshine, so that the little creatures may take readily to the new locality, but also, of course, that there may be plenty of light thrown on them, lest they should skip off carrying pupæ with them. A sheet is spread on the ground, and the Ameiser has ready a vessel in which to measure the amount of eggs obtained. He has generally a good number of assistants, for those who suffer from weak chests believe that to inhale the fragrance that issues from the opened sack prevents decline. In collecting the eggs a good deal of sweet gum is also turned out from the swarms, the resinous droppings of the pines that the ants collect either for food, or to keep their habitations healthy and fragrant.

The sack is opened over the sheet, and what a scampering there is! Out the ants pour, red and black, with eggs and gum and fir-spines, and the poor little insects, seeing the green grass, rush over the white linen to reach it, and yet, conscientiously, do not like to desert the eggs. Sometimes, in the first transport of delight at their release, off they go, unburdened, then halt, hesitate, and turn back in quest of an egg. Each ant seizes a pupa, the nearest to her; a red ant staggers along hugging a great black ant pupa, and a great black ant scampers off slightly impeded with the smaller egg of her red sister and persecutor. The red ants are always the most expeditious, and would get away before the others, but that the Ameiser sits keeping watch on the frontiers of the sheet, and arrests those who are carrying off the white seed-like pupæ. He takes these, and fills his measures with them, till all the eggs are collected, clear of the ants, and then the little creatures, after running hither and thither in search of more pupæ, and finding none, desert the sheet, and find for themselves a home in the new district, where, as already said, they will in two years have formed a flourishing colony.

The eggs are sent to town, and sold in the market as food for singing-birds, and the grains of fragrant gums also are disposed of. Nightingales are specially supposed to delight in ant-eggs. In England we give them to pheasants.

There is another way of separating the ants from the pupæ, and that is to make a hole in the ground, well shaded, and to put twigs over it, and leading into it. Then the ants rush off with the eggs, and drop them or deposit them in the shade of this hole, and run back for more, and so by degrees fill the hole with eggs, when the Ameiser clears the pit out into his measuring-bowls, and leaves the poor little insects to consider about building again. As is well known, the ant-workers are devoted to the care of these helpless babies, and carry them about in the hills, according to the temperature, to the top to get warm when the sun shines, down into the deeper galleries when the nights are cold.

In Germany there are ant-baths, but these are supplied, not from the pupæ, but from the actual ants. The baths are hot, and the formic acid from the ants, strongly diluted, is supposed to have a good effect on the skin in certain cutaneous disorders.

Formic acid is what occurs in the sting-nettle, and is also found in decaying pine-wood through the oxidation of oil of turpentine. It was formerly made from ants, but can now be manufactured chemically with greater cheapness. On account of its readiness to reduce the oxides of superior metals, it is used in photography, in the place of pyrogallic acid.

Formic spirit is made by the distillation of ten parts of ants, fifteen parts of spirit, and fifteen of water. It is generally manufactured by pouring spirits on a number ot wretched ants in a bottle, and is used for skin application, as an irritant.

S. BARING-GOULD.

ORCHIDS, AND HOW TO GROW THEM.

THE GARDEN IN APRIL.

WHILE we are basking in the spring sunshine and luxuriating in the prospect of another fast-approaching summer, we amateur gardeners naturally find ourselves, more especially at this season of the year, devoting our attention for awhile to one or another favourite class of flower, and perhaps resolving to cultivate it with a little more persevering care.

And this little common-place observation is yet further suggestive of a resolution to take up some branch of gardening that *does* require a little more than ordinary care. Still it is a very erroneous idea to get into our head that our old and familiar friends can any of them thrive properly if left entirely to shift for themselves. Gardens so treated are, however, occasionally to be seen, but their very wilderness and overgrown appearance at once tells us that they are under the indifferent care of a half-hearted or idle gardener. On the other hand, there is, of course, no gainsaying the fact that the dear old homely currant and gooseberry bushes *do* require less attention than that wonderful orchidaceous tribe about which we are

purposing to say a few words this month, before giving a few general hints for April duties that we also cannot afford to pass by altogether.

Now those of us who have gone to the expense of an ordinary greenhouse of a fairly good size might surely, if interested in the cultivation of orchids, contrive perhaps at some little additional expense, either by way of enlargement or by partition, to set apart some portion in which to maintain the necessary temperature for the growth of the rarer and more delicate species.

Here then, at the outset, let us sketch for ourselves an orchid-house. Just now, however, we hinted at the sub-division of a good-sized greenhouse as a kind of make-shift for the culture of orchids, so that here we ought to state that for their effective cultivation two houses are really necessary, as some, more particularly those that we will call our East Indian collection, require a hot moist atmosphere, that would be unsuited to others of the Cattleya or South American tribe. Indeed, others there are that require a house cooler than either of these, and a temperature more perhaps that of our ordinarily well-cared-for greenhouse, so that we may even say three classes of houses are necessary for any great *variety* in our orchid cultivation. Or shall we put it that if our whole collection is grown in one house, a mean temperature of about 63 to 68 degrees must be maintained, and where there are two houses the warmer should stand at some 70 and the cooler at 60 degrees.

Reverting, then, to the structure of our orchid-house, one with a roof falling east and west is most advisable. The benches, or rather stages, for our plants, should be of slate, supported at proper intervals by iron columns. Underneath our stages should come our hot-water pipes, and these pipes should be laid in tanks, the tanks themselves containing water an inch or more over the pipes, and having also covers that we can place upon them or remove at pleasure for the purpose either of excluding or admitting steam, a luxuriant, damp, and hot atmosphere being that in which orchids of a certain class, and in their natural state, flourish best.

It will, however, be hardly necessary for us to enter elaborately into the details of the fittings necessary for an orchid-house. A mignonette-box, or even a cucumber-frame, our own ingenuity can very often supply, and a very pleasant occupation is it to be, where we can, our own carpenter, but hot-water fittings will certainly necessitate professional aid.

Next a word should be said as to the soil, &c., best adapted for orchids that we are rearing, whether in pots or baskets: some growers supply the uppermost sods from a turf-bog, mixing with this pieces of broken charcoal; others advocate a mixture of sphagnum—that is, bog-moss—chopped small, mixed with some little lumps of decayed willow or poplar wood, having at the bottom of all some more sphagnum. And we should add that although nearly every species of orchid delights in plenty of warm moisture, more particularly at certain periods of the year, still they will never thrive unless properly drained, or if water be allowed to remain or grow stagnant about the roots. Have, then, a good supply of potsherds or charcoal in your pots, and for a few days previous to re-potting withhold water from your plant. Shallow and wide pots are best adapted for orchids.

When you are potting, do not place your plant deep in the pot, but keep it above the rim, and indeed upon the surface of the material it is growing upon. To secure your plant in its position you can either tie it to a stick made fast in the pot, or have a few pegs all around to prevent it slipping about: some orchids, indeed, are grown on mere blocks of wood, and these, when suspended by wire from the top of your greenhouse, have a very pretty effect, only take care that when so suspended they do not drip on to any other plant below. In order, therefore, to avoid this, hang them so as to be immediately over your head as you walk through your house; the best blocks to use are blocks from the cork-tree with the bark attached.

As your plants make growth they will require syringing perhaps twice a day, but not with any violence, and, of course, with water that is of the same temperature as the house.

Nor must we, before leaving the subject of the orchid, forget that the possession of ever so small a house in which we can maintain a great heat enables us also to rear or force on many other plants which we can afterwards transfer to our greenhouse.

April, however, must not pass by without our noting a few general but important operations. A good gardener should never show favouritism in his garden, but impart his care and attention equally to all the flowers he is growing. By the end of the month we should try and relieve our greenhouse of some of the hardiest of its stock, by way, that is, of hardening off such plants as the calceolaria previous to bedding out in May. Bulbs, too, that have done blooming may be lifted, but it is safest to let their foliage die down first of all, while, of course, to cut it off is fatal to your bulb forthwith.

Very busy also are we this month in the kitchen garden, continuing our hoeing among the young crops, sowing our beetroot and our fortnightly peas, while the strawberry runners must most certainly be removed if we would have a good and large crop of fruit.

WHY LINGERS HE?

TWO SONNETS.

I.

SHE stands within the doorway of Love's bower
Inviting Love to enter. The wind blows
The wilding coils of clematis and rose
About her neck—with every sudden shower
She dreams of kisses. Jewel nor yet flower
Adorns her dress. Calm her expression shows,
Yet if her watchful eyes an instant close,
In her impatient heart flies past an hour.
Hark! 'tis a footfall: lo, the crimson dye
Hath left the sunset, mounting to her cheek;
She cannot hide her joy, she cannot speak.—
'Tis but some wandering pedlar trudging by.
The footfall dies. Again more wistfully
Her longing eyes the far horizon seek.

II.

"Why lingers he? The hour of tryst is past;
What can delay his steps when love doth wait?
O love, my love, to-day thou comest late!
Already down the field the tall firs cast
Their twice-tall shadows, and the clouds are massed
Around the dying sun; to seek his mate
The lark has dropped, and thro' the eastern gate
The pale moon enters: hither, love, hie fast."
The watch she holds beside her heart all day
Hath lain and timed its beat thereto: wherefore
She deems him late who cometh as of yore.
'Gainst terrors strange she seems at times to pray;
Anon she smiles the foolish fears away,
And gazes down the garden as before.

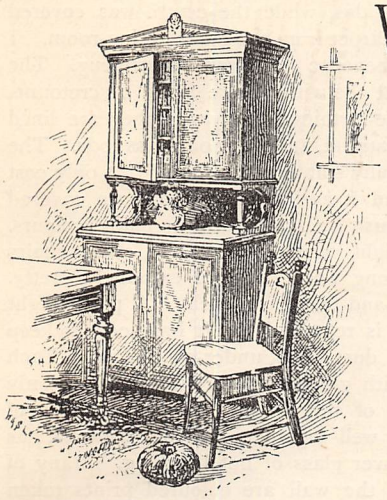
WILL FOSTER.

"'WHY LINGERS HE? THE HOUR OF TRYST IS PAST.'"

(*See p.* 274.)

OUR NEW HOUSE AND ITS PLENISHINGS.

THE SCHOOL-ROOM AND BED-ROOMS.



SCHOOL-ROOM CHAIR AND BOOKCASE.

WE have put the curtains that came with the dining-room set in the night nursery, where they are warm and comfortable. They will be replaced in the summer by white dimity. The floor is of polished deal, unstained, and no carpet of any kind is allowed under the beds, though a large Kalmuc rug, six feet by six, is spread in front of the fireplace. The paint and paper are like those of the day nursery, and there is nothing remarkable in the furniture except, perhaps, the jugs and the quilts. I worked the quilts, and made them of Bolton sheeting, two yards and a half wide, at two shillings the yard, the width making the length. I outlined, in tapestry wool, a large pattern of scarlet poppies, with seedpods and leaves, and simply hemmed the edge. For quilts in the other rooms, I bought the new Art Blankets, which are made in nearly every shade of colour, and which are very inexpensive, the smallest size only costing two-and-elevenpence. If chosen to suit the colour of the room, these make very pretty quilts. For one of the rooms I bought a "Battenberg" quilt, in peacock-blue and gold, which was very warm and thick. I put these away in the summer, and use others made of thin cretonne or drawn linen, edged with lace.

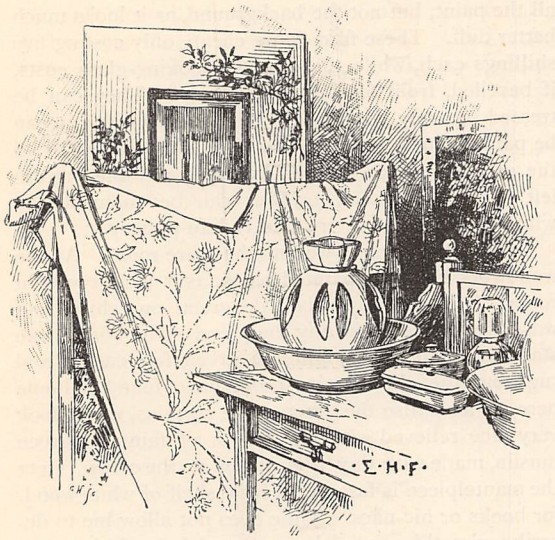
Our nursery jugs are of rather a new kind. They have four handles, but nothing jutting out which can be knocked or broken off. They also have four lips, and are very strong. The baby's high chair is lovely; it is made of the white maple of Italy, and cost about eleven francs at the recent Italian Exhibition in London.

Over the mantelpiece hangs a very pretty mirror, made after my own design. The glass is fourteen inches by twelve, and is framed in a wide deal frame stained with oak staining, with a black rim close to the glass. I painted upon it heavy branches of apples in different stages of shades of green and yellow, but not red. I then varnished all the paint, but not the background, as it looks much better dull. These frames are cheap, only costing five shillings each, while the piece of looking-glass costs, if bevelled, from four to six shillings. They can be treated in many ways. Left unstained, a pattern can be painted in sepia, and then French polished, or all the ground can be painted in sepia and the pattern left light and shaded, or they can be enamelled in white with a blue pattern like Indian pottery.

Next to the nursery we find the spare room. All the woodwork has been painted black, as it is a very light room. The wall-paper is pale green on white, and was sevenpence-halfpenny the piece. The boards are stained and polished, and the green felt carpet and rug from the old drawing-room have found a home here, as have also the green serge curtains, which look very nice relieved with inner ones of faint sea-green muslin, made with tiny frills, put on on the cross. Over the mantelpiece is fastened a little shelf of white wood, for books or nic-nacs. Time does not allow me to describe everything in each room, and I should bore my readers if I did so, therefore I will only mention the new things, among which was a home-made hanging cupboard, made to fit a corner. A wood top painted white was made the shape of a large bracket to fit the corner, from which came a thin wooden frame, which was covered with a curtain that hung from the bracket,

BED-ROOM WARDROBE AND WASH-STAND.

and could be drawn back at pleasure. Inside, fastened to the wall, were rows of hooks for dresses. The French bedstead, three feet by six feet six inches, cost two pounds, and we fixed a rod over it, from



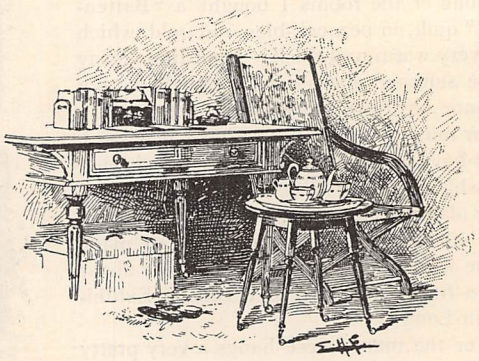
NIGHT NURSERY.

which we draped curtains in the French way. We used the old couch, and a lovely little writing-table covered in gold embossed leather, for which we gave one pound fifteen. We bought two folding-chairs with high backs at three-and-sixpence, and stained the wood black and covered the canvas with cretonne. The curtains and covers were all made of a lovely cretonne, faded pink roses and pale green leaves on a grey ground. It was one-and-elevenpence-halfpenny the yard, and was nearly a shilling dearer than that in the drawing-room ; but it made the room exquisite, and was the only expensive thing in it. Beside the bed was a little black table, upon which stood a tray with a white china tea-pot, cream-jug, and cup and saucer, for early morning tea. The bed and window curtains were lined with olive-green cambric.

The dressing-room was papered in the same manner, but I bought all its furniture in a set, and think I was wise in doing so. I found I could have any colour of paint I liked, so I chose a pale green enamel. I sent my money and my order to London, and two days afterwards everything arrived. I got a chest of drawers, a toilet-table, and looking-glass, a marble-topped tiled-backed washing-stand, toilet set, water-bottle and tumbler, towel-horse, chair, iron bedstead, palliasse, mattress, bolster, pillow, a carpet nine feet by six, and a pretty hearth-rug, with a fender and fireirons. This only cost five guineas. I have since bought several more of these sets for the small rooms, as I find that the furniture in them is well-made and durable. Of course I put two more chairs into this room, and a bath. We have a good bath-room in this house, and have had all the lower part of its walls tiled.

The school-room paper was exactly the same pattern as that in the nursery, but it was on thicker paper, and was in two shades of terra-cotta, dark on light. It was one shilling the piece. The woodwork and floor were of unstained oak, so the boards were left bare at the sides, while the centre was covered by the Brussels carpet from the other dining-room. I gave five-and-ninepence for a yarn hearth-rug. The pretty curtains at the window are made of cretonne, at sixpence-three-farthings the yard ; they are lined with the same material, and hang on brass rods. The couch is delightfully soft and "springy." It only cost four pounds, and it and the arm-chair are covered with the new rush mats, made in plain colours. These are in light terra-cotta. The other chairs are made in strong wood, but are extremely pretty. They were four-and-twopence each. A pretty light wood bookshelf is remarkable. It has doors to keep the books from dust, also under-cupboards. Each door is filled with green rushwork, there being only an outside edge of the wood. The two shades of colour look very well together, and the rushwork has the advantage over glass of not breaking. Many of the pictures on the wall are coloured prints taken from the illustrated papers. Instead of going to the expense of framing these in glass, they have been varnished and mounted on thick cardboard or Willesden paper.

My bed-room is a mixture of pale green and yellow. The paper, which was one shilling the piece, is pale green, with field flowers in a darker shade. It is beautifully drawn. The paint is white, and the furniture covers and curtains are made of a reversible cretonne, in two shades of pale yellow. It cost me ninepence-halfpenny a yard. The curtains are not lined, as the cretonne is thick, and is the same pattern both sides. It washes for ever, and does not fade. We bought a lovely set of furniture for this room, enamelled in white. It consists of a wardrobe, with plate-glass door ; a dressing-table, with a chest of drawers



SPARE ROOM TABLE AND CHAIR.

beneath it, and a looking-glass fastened on the top ; a washing-stand with three shelves and a cupboard, a tiled back and a marble top ; a towel-horse, and three chairs. I gave eleven pounds fifteen for these things.

I like the wardrobe especially, because it combines so much; it includes a bookshelf, two drawers, and a shoe cupboard. The floor is covered with Indian matting a yard wide at one-and-twopence, and a Madagascan mat, weighted with shot at each end, is used in front of the fireplace. The grate is a fixture and is made of Doulton pottery to match the dark green tiles of the fireplace. The mantel-covering is made after an old fashion. A plain piece of cretonne is cut to fit the top of the mantelpiece, to the edge of which is sewn a deep frill made with box-pleats. These coverings have the advantage of being washed without being unpicked, and are very neat. In the window stand an Italian maple chair and footstool for which I gave thirteen shillings.

And now I think I have described the greater part of our new furniture, though I am perfectly aware that I have not mentioned many of the necessaries of a household, because space has forbidden a detailed account of each article.

Since I spoke of the library, I have "picked up" some old Chippendale chairs for it, which I have had covered with hog's-skin in the natural colour, nailed with two close rows of silver nails. I hope in time to furnish that room entirely in mahogany. I have also had a wooden fender made to match the mantelpiece, and during this summer I have added a lovely inlaid chair to the drawing-room, of the same style as some I saw at the Italian Exhibition. It was too beautiful to leave! It is inlaid with ivory, while the back and seat are painted after an antique copy of rough leather. The tables of the same work were perfect, but I say my chair furnishes the room!

I must not forget to chronicle a new kind of Brussels carpet, called the "Broché," dark red with a raised pattern in velvet pile. It is very lovely. I have a rug of it in one room in which the floor is covered with red China matting. The only important room that I have not described is my painting-room, and that description must wait for another time. At present the room beats my powers. I can find no words for it! Some day it will settle down and be tidy. Now it is a studio, a play-room, and a workshop combined! I have such good times in that little room; such pleasant hours fly by there! But turpentine, enamel, and copal varnish forbid the introduction of visitors just now.

HOW TO CURE DESPONDENCY.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

"CHEER up, my friend, cheer up. Do not give way thus. It isn't particularly manly. Indeed, I'm not sure it isn't sinful."

But my friend did not cheer up. And I knew he would not, or rather could not, at that particular moment. As well might I have asked old Betsy Fliggins, who has been bedridden for twenty-three years, to get up and trip it on the light fantastic toe. Betsy has not got one single light fantastic toe left, and my friend Fraser did not appear to have half an inch of solid heart in him to cheer up.

It was summer time, and early for that. It was a perfect pleasure to be out of doors in garden or on lawn, or away among the wild woods. The trees had just received their new coats of soft green leaves, and were so glad that they seemed to wave time to the music of the balmy wind that went whispering through their silken foliage like a lullaby—not too thickly foliaged yet, however, to prevent the sunlight from filtering through, and falling in ever-shifting patches on the sward beneath, giving many a little wild flower a chance to bathe and bask in it, and many a curious beetle as well, and tiny shivering *aphis* that had just fallen heir to a pair of wings, and did not know what to do with them—not too thickly foliaged to prevent the birds from seeing each other, though all invisible to eye of man. And how those birds sang! What an exuberance of joy was theirs, what perfection of delight! Earlier in spring, though they had sung as loudly and as long, a kind of hysterical note would mingle now and then with their melodies, as if they could not quite forget they had recently come through rather a hard time, as if they could not all at once shake off the shadows of winter from their hearts, and so were still a trifle nervous. Now all that was gone, and singing was the only safety-valve for the well-spring of joy within them.

It was indeed a hopeful season.

But for all that friend Fraser was not happy. All the world to him wore a jaundiced, gloomy sort of look, the very flowers lacked clearness of colour, softness of outline and beauty, and the spring-green foliage was tinted with lemon.

Had Fraser been bereft of some dear relative, or had he failed in business? No, neither calamity had overtaken him. And yet he had temporarily lost all taste in life. There was not, he would have told you, a stake in it worth trying for. All was worthless, and he never meant doing anything any more. And so on, and even worse, for Despondency is really twin sister to Despair.

Now, I shall tell you presently what really was the matter with Fraser; but first let us finish our consultation.

"Fraser," I said, "you ought to go abroad."

"Pshaw!"

"Abroad," I continued, unheedful of his ungrateful interjection. "Italy, Algiers, or still further afield and afloat. O Fraser! what say you to the Bahamas?—the long, delightful sea-voyage, the glorious sense of

freedom from all care and worry, the sound and refreshful sleep at night, 'rocked in the cradle of the deep,' rising from your cot in the morning, bursting, I might say, like a butterfly from its chrysalis, to revel in the delights of another day; perhaps early enough to see the sun rise like a disc of molten steel over the blue-grey waves; treading the deck like some rover of old, drinking in health and heart at every step, wondering why or how you had ever been ill, ever been sad, or sighed one stupid sigh. Then the isles themselves, laved by warm soft seas that lisp and sing on coral sands, bathed in eternal sunshine, glorious in flowers of shapes and tints without a name——"

"Glorious in garlic."

"Fraser, you are positively unfeeling."

"Perhaps, doctor; but I can't help it. And I tell you that is where you medical men err: you send some poor solitary patient off to the seaside to be out of the way—out of your way, perhaps. But what is he to do when he gets there? Why, mope. That's what I should do. All the change, all the sunshine, glitter and gaiety, would do me no good if I had no one to talk and converse with that I cared a pin's head about—probably at table to assume your company airs and try not to look like an invalid, though in your inmost soul you felt you were one. Why, all this hypocrisy would kill me in my present state of health, and I'm not sure I could stand it even if strong. If you weren't a countryman of my own——"

"There, there, don't get excited, and for once in a way I'll confess something."

"What?"

"That you are right: that it is the height of folly for a patient suffering from low spirits to go anywhere all by himself. To the seaside certainly not, nor abroad. But country patients of mine suffering from despondency—if I really am justified in calling it an ailment at all—I have often cured by sending off to London for a spell."

Well, reader, of course my friend got all right after a time, because in reality there was not a very great deal the matter with him. As I have already said, he had not failed in business. Indeed, one sudden blow or reverse of fortune is usually better borne and more easily recovered from than a whole series of little worries, especially if they come from different and unexpected quarters, as his had. In fact, these worries constitute just so many successive shocks to the brain and nervous system. But the brain has more even than shock to bear, for it suffers from an almost continual strain of blood upon its smaller vessels, amounting, I might safely say, to turgidity or congestion. When this is kept up for a long time, mischief in some form or other is certain to follow, and the amount of that mischief will depend upon the length of time the cause has been in force, and of course upon the constitution of the sufferer, some being far more sensitive than others.

I have called despondency an ailment of the age—I might have said modern times—for it was far less frequent a hundred years ago, when there was not such a hand-to-hand and day-by-day struggle for existence, when there was more contentment and, consequently, more solid comfort and happiness: when, mark this, there was less ambition, because ambition leads to a species of gambling in the great market of life. You or I want to have a mansion in the West End, and drive a noble turn-out in Hyde Park. We think we see our way to attain this end, so we go heartily into the battle of speculation, or business, or something; we keep constantly on the alert; we watch for every chance we see to slip in and make a hit; we pore over our papers and ledgers, and we do not let even sleep stand in the way of our advancement. Well, all this is stimulating to the brain, it keeps artery, vein, and nerve on the stretch; but one of two things eventually occurs: either the nerves get worn out even while the stimulus lasts, or some reverse kicks the stool on which we stood from under our feet. In either case down we come and sink into a state of nervousness, irritability, and despondency. That seems to me to be the physiology of the whole affair, for it is a law of nature that depression follows excitement.

There are all degrees of despondency, from the case of a person who is "up one day and down the next," as the saying is, to that of him who suffers for months or years.

It would take me a long time to describe all the symptoms that despondency may give rise to. It is unnecessary to do so, because such a relation would not interest those who do not suffer therefrom; and those who do, know them only too well already. Yet, this one symptom is present in all, and may be considered diagnostic: namely, a darkened, chastened feeling of life and soul. There is, moreover, a disposition on the part of the sufferer to exaggerate not only little bodily ailments but outward grievances; he is easily offended himself, and too often thinks himself slighted by others; his appetite may be indifferent, or more likely it is capricious; his sleep is not what it should be, there are seldom frightful dreams, but there is uneasy slumber. In a word, both by night and day, if not exactly miserable, he is not happy—far from it. He or she may live and move in the very best society for all that, though everything palls on the senses.

Now about the *treatment*—and let me try to be as practical and common-sensical as possible. Bear this in mind, to begin with:—First, the cure must be slow, systematic, regulated. Secondly, the sufferer *must* try to do something for himself, and must not expect too much sympathy from friends. The treatment then should be directed to easing the vessels of the brain—I am using plain language—which are inclined to be congested under the slightest excitement, to giving tone to the nervous system, and strength to the muscular. It will be seen from what I say that I do not for a moment admit that despondency is simply or wholly a mental complaint. Neither the sufferer himself nor his friends should look upon it in that light; if they did, they would have less hope. But there is no need to be downhearted about the matter in most cases; only as misery of mind is even more painful than misery of body, no one should nurse despondency if by an effort of will he can shake it off. But

in shaking it off he must creep before he walks. I used the words "slow, systematic, regulated." Let them be borne in mind. So long as a patient has the desire to get well, he usually can. Now, exercise, daily and judicious, will, in most cases, tend to relieve the brain, and conduce to sleep at night, but sea-bathing and the salt-water matutinal tub greatly aid this. As regards exercise, I have to remark that the sufferer from the species of nerve ailment to which I have given the name "despondency," is seldom inclined to go out much at all, either for driving or walking. He may be most averse to muscular movements of any sort ; exercise is a penance. Nevertheless, seeing the good it does, not only in relieving brain tension, but strengthening nerve and muscle, we cannot afford to leave it out of count in our treatment. What I generally advise is about fifteen minutes of dumb-bell exercise just after the bath and before completing the toilet, half an hour or more of the same in the afternoon, and two hours at least of good hard walking every day, in spite of the weather.

In the Turkish bath, taken once a week, we have an excellent accessory also. If there is a tendency to acidity, Vichy water should be used with meals.

Something more aids, and must come in : he must find some congenial employment, something to interest and absorb without fatiguing. Next comes recreation : choose what is the most pleasant, but do not neglect it.

Sleep must be had by honest and fair means. A warm bath greatly conduces to this, but stimulants and narcotics are poison.

The skin must be kept in good order by the bath, the rough towel, and massage, when it can be procured. The digestion must be seen to, and the appetite improved by the bitter tonics.

If the food is but slowly digested, pepsin will be required. When constipation is present, an occasional simple vegetable aperient may be needed, but trust more to diet, and do not forget oatmeal in the morning, and fruit and green vegetables in plenty. I feel confident that obedience to these directions will restore nine cases out of ten to health and cheerfulness.

BLAZING GULCH.

A YARN IN TWO LENGTHS.

FIRST LENGTH.

WANT the story of Blazing Gulch, do you, stranger? Well, I don't know that it's much to tell, but here goes.

Bill Macey and I were partners down in Desolation Camp—they called it that because of the big flood that washed out half of the cabins one night, and left the banks down below strewn with pots and pans, and dead men too, till we went down and buried them. How we took up with each other, goodness only knows. He was as great a scamp as ever wore boots, and though I didn't know it then, I guessed at it. As for me, my folks down East thought I was dead years back—a good job, too—or there'd have been worse grief than there was, perhaps, in the little old parsonage under the New Hampshire hills. I'd been rather a bad lot as a youngster—nothing so bad, after all, as boys go—but a little wild, and full of larks ; but they thought me a gone case down in those quiet parts, and the place got so hot, that at last I left it and went off to sea.

That ship got wrecked off the Californian coast one fine day, and most of the crew went to the bottom. Why I didn't go too, I can't say ; but as it was generally supposed at home that I had, I dare say it answered the purpose about as well. How I drifted about for the next few years doesn't matter just now ; anyhow, I turned up at last at Blazing Gulch, with a pretty firm purpose not to let the old folks know I wasn't dead after all, until I could do something to make them pleased to hear it.

So Bill Macey and I fell together, and somehow we froze. He was the sort of chap who could tell a story or sing a song with anybody, and he was popular for that; and with the women for his long legs, and his yellow hair, and a certain way he had of making any one of them he happened to be with think he thought her the only woman in the world—the scoundrel !

Up at the head of the valley, just where the big rocks hang together till they almost touch, and you can only see a thin slip of sky, like a ribbon, as you stand under and look up, there's a store—*the* store, in fact—there isn't another nearer than Tomkinsville, fifteen miles off. The old storekeeper got shot one night, when the boys were foolin' round, a little gay over a find some of them had had, and news came that a new chap had taken the place, and was coming out from down East somewhere, with his wife and one girl. You bet that made the boys look up ! There wasn't an unmarried woman nearer than Tomkinsville, and she was fifty-five, and squinted ! There was a run on bright-coloured handkerchiefs about the time the new storekeeper was expected ; and hair-oil went up to a premium !

Well, they came.

Did you ever see a white lily floating on a black

pool, and wonder how it got there? That's just the feeling I had when I first set eyes on May Pinnick, down there in Desolation Camp, among all that rough gang. She was just like a white feather dropped from the clouds on to a heap of roadside mud, only she didn't get smirched. I should have thought her father would have known better than to bring her to a place like that, but he was a born fool, if ever there was one; and her old mother wasn't much better.

Not that there was a chap there that would have lifted a finger to hurt her; there was that about her that they wouldn't dare, if they wanted; but somehow they didn't want. They'd have lain down for her to wipe her little shoes on them; but somehow most of them felt more comfortable out of her sight than in it; it's kind of restraining, you know, to have to pick and choose your words, and swear soft, if you swear at all.

I suppose there was nothing queer in the fact that I fell head over ears in love with her the first time I saw more than the hem of her little pink calico frock, but it *did* seem queer that she should take to me! There's nothing like being in love to make a man sing small about himself and his own merits. I thought I had never had such a poor show to offer as that night when I met her on the rock at the top of the valley, standing alone to watch the moonlight, and I offered to see her home. It was just under the big withered pine-tree that I got up courage to blurt it all out, somehow; and when her little white arms were round my neck, and her little fluttering heart beating hard against my own, I guess I wasn't certain just then that it wasn't all a dream, and that I shouldn't wake to find it so.

Well, well! No doubt you've been there yourself, stranger; and there's no use trying to describe it! I never felt shy in all my life before, till I tried to say something about it to Bill Macey the next morning, and found the words stick in my throat. He looked at me with a kind of stare, and then his face went yellow, and I remembered all at once that he was supposed to be sweet on May himself; not that that was anything out of the way; every chap in the camp was that, more or less. But at all events I was sorry I spoke, and I shut up pretty quick.

We were working on an old half-used-up lode, and Bill had all along said it wasn't any use. He began on it again this morning, and I was pretty nearly ready to cave in and leave it, as he wanted, when all at once the bit of earth I was picking at came down with a run, and there rolled out with it the biggest nugget I or anybody else had ever seen in that camp. I felt my breath go at the sight, and I just sat down, weak-like, for I knew that my fortune was made at last.

Bill heard me call out, and came running up, his face yellower than ever.

"Look out!" I managed to say. "What's that? There's a fortune, or I'll never swing a pick again."

Bill threw a black look at me which rather took me aback.

"Just remember we're partners!" he said, in an ugly voice. "I go halves!"

"You don't need to tell me that!" I said, rather short, for my back felt up. "You must think me a mean skunk that you have to say a thing like that, Bill Macey! Haven't I treated you square ever since we chummed?"

Well, he seemed sorry to have spoken like that, and we shook hands. Then we took measurements, and tried to lift the nugget, and only grew surer each minute that it *was* a find, and no mistake. I couldn't help noticing that Bill's face didn't get more sweet, but I couldn't tell the reason; and even though it struck me his eyes had grown very shifty, I was too mad with excitement to care much for anything.

Finally we agreed to cover it over till we could bring help out from the camp to carry it in—we were working a good bit away—and this done we started to walk back over the ridge, by a short cut, I talking like one half mad over all we should do with our new wealth.

Bill strode on, strangely sulky; his hands deep in his pockets.

"'Tain't so much to brag of after all," he said, "when there's two of us to share it. You must be sorry you ever went partners with me; if it wasn't for that you'd be the richest chap in the valley!"

"I don't mind going shares," I said. We were up on the top of the ridge by now, just where the path was narrowest, and I was walking on the outside—"Bless you, I don't mind."

"Then I do!" shouted Bill, bringing his shoulder against mine, with a sudden unexpected force which threw me off my balance, and in a second I was flying through space.

I threw out both arms, convulsively, as I fell, in the blind instinct of catching at something. They grasped the branches of a great tree, which hung out over the gulf below, and for a moment my downward course was arrested. I had not even had time to realise by what agency I had been flung over; and I shouted up to Bill Macey with my whole strength—

"Help, Bill—help—help!"

As I lay my agonised glance just rested on the edge of the cliff, a few yards above. Over the top came Bill's yellow face, distorted with a passion that made it like a devil's. I thought he was coming down to my help, but the next minute I knew better. He held a great chunk of rock with both hands, which he had rolled to the edge, and he was taking a careful aim at me. The cold sweat burst from every pore of my body as I saw him, but there was not time for much anticipation. The next second the big boulder crashed down into the tree that was my only hope of salvation, just escaping me, but shaking me off with the shock as one shakes a caterpillar from a blade of grass—and I dropped into the abyss.

Why I was not killed, goodness knows—and perhaps the folks in the old brown parsonage, who used to pray for "our dear prodigal" night and morning till they thought me gone where prayers wouldn't matter. I was nearer it this time than ever before, but it was the miss that's as good as a mile. There was a black blank time—it's gone out of my life, as if it had never been—that two years. First, I know now. I was found by a half-breed, who took me off to his own hut in

the woods, and there I was nursed by his wife till my broken arm set, and I was right again, all except my head. I was clean off that ; and no sooner was I well than I slipped off, to try and get back to the camp I guess, and turned up a week or two later at 'Frisco, and then I thought that would grieve her, maybe : women have a queer way of getting fond of their husbands, whatever they're like. And after all it wasn't her fault ; most likely she thought I was dead.

So I just threw it all up, and went off mining again,

"'DADDY!' SHE SAID ; 'MY DADDY!'" (*p.* 282).

where somebody found me fooling about, and clapped me in the asylum. ———

SECOND LENGTH.

IT was two years before I came out, a sane man once more, but broken-hearted. The first news that met me as I came out into the free world again was that Bill Macey was the richest man in Blazing Gulch, and was married to little May Pinnick, and living in a big new house. I only just said one word, that was enough. First, I thought I'd go back and shoot him; out Denver way. This time I was pretty lucky—you always are, I notice, when you don't much care about it—and made a pile, not a big one, but enough to go on with. It was just six years from the time I left Devastation Camp, that I found myself on the way that led straight through it, going down to 'Frisco to take ship for home—a pretty roundabout way, but I meant to go by Europe and see the world.

Well, somehow, I couldn't pass the old place for the last time without just turning aside to look at it. I dropped off the coach a mile or two off, and reckoned

to come on the next day. I walked up the cliff at the top of the valley, and sat down on a bit of rock, thinking over all that had happened since I saw the place last.

All at once there was a rustle in the wood close by, and out there jumped the prettiest baby girl I ever saw. Her eyes were like big blue violets, and her hair was like spun silk—so yellow, and fine, and soft. Her little apron was held up, full of flowers; and I was afraid the sight of me would frighten her—but not it! She looked at me for a minute with a roguish little smile, and then she ran at me as fast as her little round legs could carry her, and buried her face in my shirt.

"Daddy!" she said; "my daddy!"

Well, you bet, that made me feel queer!

I lifted her up and set her on my knee, and it seemed to me, as far as I could reckon, she was just about the age my own little girl might have been, if I'd married May, and we'd had one. I stroked her pretty hair with my big hand, and she looked up at me, and laughed, and tried to stick flowers in my beard; and then she held up her mouth for a kiss. I had never kissed any lips since I kissed those that belonged to May, and somehow my heart seemed to stir within me.

Well, at last I thought I ought to take her back home, and I began to lead her down the steep path that led to the village—it had grown to be a village now. But just as we came in sight of the first houses she broke away from my hand, and ran away, laughing, down the hill. I watched her go, with a strange thrill of sadness; and then I went back into the wood, and sat down to smoke a pipe, and there I fell asleep, I suppose, for it was well on towards afternoon when I started up.

I must go down into the valley, if I meant to do it at all. So down I went; and then stood rubbing my eyes, and wondering if I was asleep still; for there stood a big village—church, school-house, and all—below in the valley where the camp used to be; even the fine new villas had crept up to the top of the ravine, near where I stood. I was looking hard at one of them in the low meadows just this side of the river, when I heard a distant faint roar which filled the air behind me like a far-off peal of thunder.

I knew well enough what that roar was! I had heard it when the great flood came, and half the camp was swept away in the raging torrent—the lake up in the mountain had broken loose again, and the waters were coming down. I cast a quick glance down the valley. Ah! people had grown wiser since those days! most of the village lay too high to be hurt, only the big new villa close to my feet was in peril—it stood quite close to the water's edge.

As I looked, and wondered if the people inside knew of the danger, a woman ran out of a cottage close by and seized me by the arm, her face white with terror.

"For pity's sake," she cried, "get the boat that's moored just above there—run! Don't you hear the waters coming down? My man's away—there's no one home but me—and I'm no use. That house'll go, as sure as fate! Everybody told Bill Macey he was mad, when he built it there."

My arms fell to my sides like lead.

"Bill Macey!" I repeated. "Bill Macey! is that house *his* then?"

"Yes, to be sure. Whose else should it be? Make haste—hurry up—don't lose a minute! Mrs. Macey ain't there, I reckon; but all the rest is, and they'll be drowned like rats if you don't run."

But I stood still, as if turned to stone. At that moment I was a devil. All my old wrongs rose up before me like an army of urging fiends. I saw myself robbed of my sweetheart—my fortune—nearly my life. I saw my trust betrayed, and my last call for human help turned to mockery. I saw Bill Macey's face as he peered at me over the cliff s edge; and I set my teeth.

"It's my turn now," I said, half to myself, half aloud. "Let his all go, as mine went. I'll not raise a finger to stop it—perhaps he's there himself—so much the better."

But even as the words were on my lips, I saw a baby-face suddenly appear at an open upper window, and a baby's laughing voice shout out with delight at the great cloud of spray that rose high above the rocks. That baby-face had pressed its lips to mine only that morning; that baby-voice had called me "Daddy!" It was the little girl of the woods.

Like one awakened from a bad dream, I started violently, and caught my breath, Then I set out to run as if for my dear life. The waters were already at the valley's mouth, coming in, in a great rushing wall. As for that boat, there was neither time nor use for it—I dashed down like a madman into the meadow.

Up the broad steps of the piazza, and through the open door, shouting as I went. Not a soul seemed in the lower rooms, and I took the stairs, with their velvet carpet, in two flying leaps, and made for the room where I had seen the face. There she was, bless her! standing on a high chair by the window, and waving her little hands at the water; and there beside her, face downwards on the floor, in a dead faint, lay my old sweetheart—her mother—my May!

One on my shoulder, the other in my arms—it was not a minute too soon. The rushing water met me as I ran from the open doorway, and almost swept me from my feet. It swirled up, breast-high, and short as the struggle was, I had hard work to reach the upper ground, and land them both. I was panting with the effort, but I thrust my burden into the arms of the woman who stood there, and turned to strike out into the raging torrent again, for I heard the foundations of the house crack, and I knew it was doomed. Something seemed to melt within me as I held Bill Macey's wife and child to my breast, and I felt that I must save him too, if it cost me my own life.

The woman seized my arm as I turned.

"The land's sake!" she said. "Are you crazy? don't you hear the house is a-goin'? There's nobody else there; the women-folk have just come runnin' back from the village."

"I don't care!" I said, "I'll bring Bill Macey out, if I die for it!"

"Then you'll have to go down to the graveyard to do it," she said sarcastically, "for he's been there for the last three years!"

And with another crack, a shudder, and a forward plunge, the framework house fell, and vanished beneath the foaming flood.

I don't think life will ever hold a much better moment for me than when I put May's baby girl into her outstretched arms. May knew me at once—and could only cry, "Oh, Jack, Jack! and I thought you were dead!"

Yes, and so did everybody, and so I should have been if her husband's kind intentions had been carried out; but that's a story she don't know, and never will know, either.

Well, happiness is worth waiting for, they say. I only know when I held May close against me once more, and felt her warm breath upon my cheek, that all the past six years seemed as nothing, and I think I'd have lived them all over again for that minute.

That was more than a year ago. Yes, that's my house, that new big one away up the valley; not far off where the other stood, but on a little higher ground, you bet! That's my wife, bless her, standing in the doorway with the little girl clinging to her skirts—that's my friend of the woods—and that little white bundle asleep on her mother's arm, is the brother she is already proudly teaching to say "Daddy!"

TRAVELS IN THE AIR.

BY KARL BLIND.

"IT SHOT UP WITH THE VELOCITY OF A CANNON-BALL" (*p.* 285).

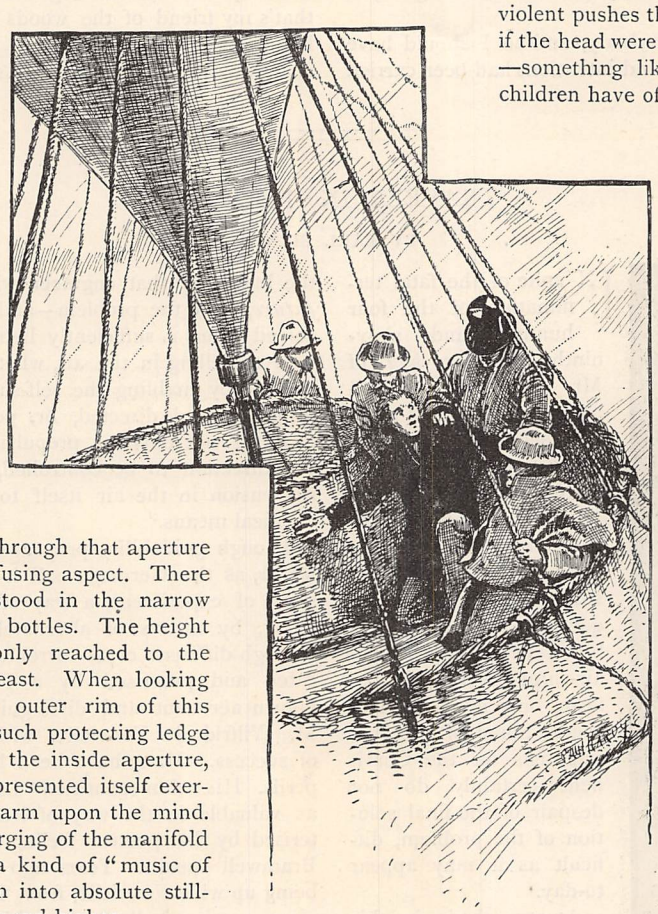
IN spite of the fatal termination of the four hundred and sixty-ninth aërial voyage of Mr. Simmonds, it would be a great mistake to lose heart as to the future of ballooning science. The mere fact of so many Icarian flights having been achieved by him successfully goes far to sustain our hopes. The question of the navigability, or guidability, of air-ships is, I truly believe, only a question of time. Some of the best scientists on the Continent certainly do not despair of the final solution of the problem, difficult as it may appear to-day.

Among those in this country who are entitled to speak with no mean authority, Sir Frederick Bramwell strongly inclines to the conviction of the ultimate realisation of this dream of ages. As President of the British Association, at Bath, he expressed himself very hopefully indeed. There he referred to "the poetical feeling which would be excited in the breast of that engineer who would, *in the near future*, solve the problem—and it certainly *would* be solved when a sufficiently light motor was obtained—of travelling in the air, whether this solution were effected by enabling the self-suspended balloon to be propelled and directed, or, perhaps better still, by enabling not only the propulsion to be effected and the direction to be controlled, but by enabling the suspension in the air itself to be attained, by mechanical means."

Though guidability proper—*Lenkbarkeit der Luftschiffe*, as the Germans call it—is still in the crude stage of experiment, a way of tacking and moving along, by means of alternately rising and sinking through different cross-currents of air, has been indicated and practised by a French friend, a well-known aëronaut and distinguished scientific writer, M. Wilfrid de Fonvielle, with at least a degree of success. Many have been his aërial voyages and perils. His volume, entitled "La Science en Ballon," is as valuable in the way of learning as it is characterised by that poetical feeling of which Sir Frederick Bramwell speaks. Years ago I had the pleasure of being up with Fonvielle, from London, in the famous giant captive balloon, in which Mr. Glaisher, the eminent meteorologist, had the direction, and in which Messrs. Godard, Yon, Mangin, Chavantier, Tissandier, and other well-known aëronauts, who had brought it over, occupied places in the car. This immense balloon, the volume of which was no less than 424,000 cubic feet, and its height 121 feet, was located in a circular enclosure extending to the height of a five-storeyed house. The cable was 2,132 feet long, and weighed 59 cwt.

The ascent was made during a great storm. So tempestuous was the weather that Mr. Glaisher at first thought the enterprise should be given up on that day. Finally, it was decided that the attempt should be made, and I confess I was right glad of it. We had a glorious spectacle before us

over the Thames, though we were bumped about so badly, and at such suddenly changing and precipitous angles, that one of the party was seized with that insane kind of giddiness which all at once gave him an irresistible impulse to throw himself out of the car. Fortunately he was quickly held back by those near him. My first notion was, when seeing his jerky movement, that he had become sea-sick in the "Air-Ocean," as the Greeks called the earth's atmosphere. Being near him, I therefore covered my face with my Inverness cape, lest what I imagined was his preaching to the birds should reach me through the gusty wind. A moment afterwards, however, I felt hands pulling him down, whereupon he sank sideways on his knees, so that his vision might be shut in as by blinkers.



"FORTUNATELY HE WAS QUICKLY HELD BACK."

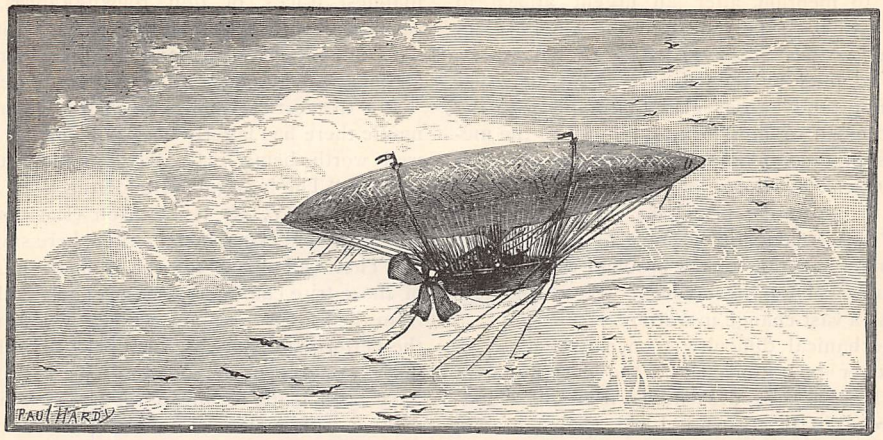
Properly speaking, the car was a mere ring-shaped wicker basket, hollowed out in the middle. The landscape below could be seen through that aperture in its shifting, eye-confusing aspect. There were no seats. We stood in the narrow enclosure like so many bottles. The height of the car, or ring, only reached to the lower part of one's breast. When looking earthwards from the outer rim of this basket, which had no such protecting ledge as there was towards the inside aperture, the panorama which presented itself exercised a wonderful charm upon the mind. So did the gradual merging of the manifold sounds beneath into a kind of "music of the spheres," and then into absolute stillness, as we rose higher and higher.

"The strong wind," it is said in the work edited by Mr. Glaisher, "blew at the rate of sixty miles an hour. It whistled through the ropes —the balloon lay over, and the car oscillated violently. We were blown about 660 feet beyond the boundary of the enclosure below. . . . The sky presented an admirable aspect. The sun appeared in the midst of mountains of cloud, and its brilliant rays transformed the Thames into a river of fire. Houses, trees, and streets appeared no larger than children's toys, and the general aspect of things was the same as we experience in ordinary balloon ascents. In some of our aërial excursions we have risen to a height of 9,843 feet, and the landscape seen from this altitude is not more striking than from the car of the captive balloon."

Mr. Glaisher seemed to pay no attention to the force of the wind, or to the jerky oscillations of the air-ship. His eyes remained fixed either upon his instruments or the dynamometer, which indicated a tension of three tons. However, at last, the danger signal was hung out, and we were wound back—not without much risk of striking against the stockade, and thus coming to grief. The French working men below anxiously and noisily discussed this possibility. For all that, we had greatly enjoyed the trip. But the coming down, frankly to avow, was the hideous part of it. It was effected in such short but violent pushes that I felt repeatedly as if the head were thrust into the stomach —something like the cruel way some children have of driving a beetle's head into its body. We all landed, in consequence of this unpleasant descent, rather greenish in the face.

The balloon in question was the same as that in which afterwards a meteorological investigation, with the aid of electrical light, was to be made at night. Only the Duke of Sutherland and three others—I myself and my son again among them—had this time accepted the invitation to a "seat," or standing-place, in the car. Ledru-Rollin and Louis Blanc had politely and thankfully declined already in the first instance, when asked by Wilfrid Fonvielle. Mr. Yon, the director of the balloon, it is true, himself afterwards refused to allow of our joining in the proposed nocturnal venture, as he considered it altogether too dangerous. Still, I entertained a hope that this impediment would finally be removed, and therefore hastened to return from a lecturing tour in North England so as to be yet in time. The first news I heard at Euston Square was:—"The balloon has broken loose!"

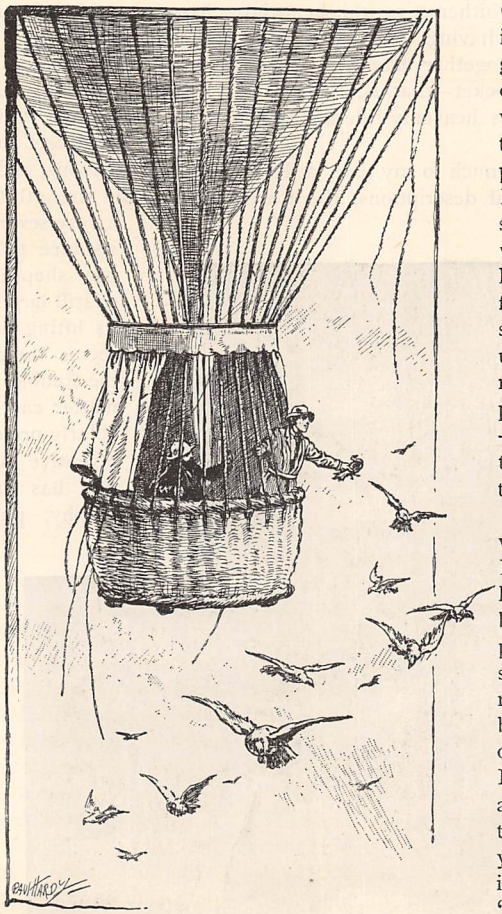
In fact, shortly before the ascent at night was intended to be made, the air-ship escaped from its cable. Rising to an immense height—probably some 12.000



"A CLUMSY CIGAR-SHAPED BALLOON" (*p.* 287).

feet—it at last collapsed, and fell down in Buckinghamshire. Had it broken away from its moorings after the beginning of the proposed second ascent, those in the car would have been stifled in a moment, for it shot up with the velocity of a cannon-ball. A shred of the skin of that unfortunate balloon is still in my possession, as a memento which was near becoming a memento of death.

The French aëronaut alluded to, Wilfrid de Fonvielle, is a man who has displayed heroism also in fighting for freedom and in undergoing prison and exile. As much distinguished by courage as by frankness of character, he in no way undervalues the difficulties, or what seem to be impossibilities, in regard to the steering of balloons, but is equally persistent in efforts towards overcoming them. His view as to the merely accidental cause of Mr. Simmonds' misfortune is no doubt the correct one. Altogether, Frenchmen have for years been in the vanguard of the aëronautical movement. The Government of Paris, with an eye to strategic purposes, has given its pecuniary aid to it with no stinting hand: at least, when we compare its action with that of the Governments of other countries.



THROWING PIGEONS FROM A BALLOON (*p.* 287).

Gambetta, it will be remembered, left besieged Paris, in 1870, by the aërial way. So did Fonvielle later on, as the bearer of a message. At that time he came over to England, trying to enlist the sympathy of this country in favour of France, whose attack upon Germany, to his honour be it said, he had, in the beginning, disapproved of and condemned. But though the views he afterwards held, in the autumn of 1870, could not possibly be mine, and though I had to tell him so in presence of the Positivist leader with whom he came to my house, I have never ceased following with interest his scientific labours, or keeping up with him relations in matters concerning the peaceful progress of France — so often, unfortunately, threatened by would-be Dictators.

The Germans, in 1870-71, were still far behind the French as regards aërial locomotion; but they have been busy for many years past with improving themselves in it. Plans for the navigability of air-ships have been frequently elaborated, of late years, at Vienna and Berlin, as well as at Paris and in this country. For the practical result we have yet to wait; but it will come in due time. There is a "Society of German Aëronauts" now—formed, I may

be allowed to mention, after an urgent appeal to that effect had been published in the chief Berlin journal (the *Vossische Zeitung*) by the present writer. The name adopted by the Society is the one suggested by him; and he was glad to comply with the request addressed to him from Berlin to be the medium of its first communications with the English "Balloon Society." Though only an outside observer as regards the scientific principles involved in the question of aërial navigation, I have always felt that the forthcoming solution of the problem will not only effect a great revolution in the means of communication, but also a vast change in warfare.

If the mechanical difficulty is once overcome, we shall no longer be astonished at the description of an ancient Hindoo ruler descending from his cloud-car, as we read in that beautiful old Indian drama, *Sakuntala*, or "The Story of the Golden Ring." Skidbladnir, the "Winged Vessel of Wood," on which Freyr, the Norse sun-god, rode, when he did not use his boar Gullinbursti (Golden-bristle, *i.e.*, the sun), will have become a reality with the invention in question. In the Edda, the Teutonic Scripture, Skidbladnir is described as a remarkably good ship, so large that all the gods had place on board with their weapons, and always in possession of a fair wind as soon as its sails were set, whithersoever this celestial air-ship was steered. After having been used, Skidbladnir "could be folded together like a piece of cloth," and carried in a pocket—that is, in such a capacious or magic pocket as heavenly rulers may be expected to have.

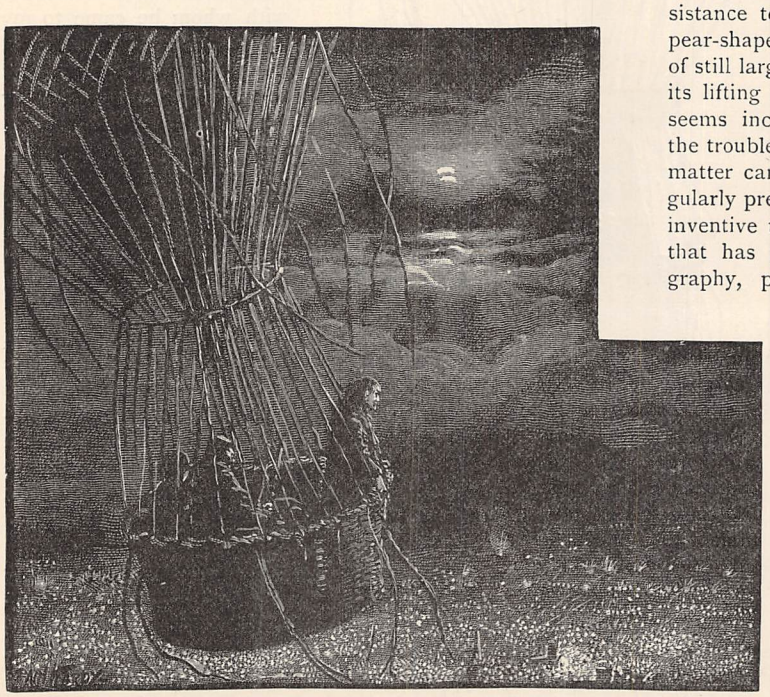
Myths apart, it is not too much to say that, at least in some of these old poetical descriptions, there are manifest traces, or dim remembrances, of a lost science or attempted solution of a scientific problem. The tale of Daidalos and Ikaros clearly refers to aëronautical attempts in pre-historic Greece.

But to return to sober science. On matters aëronautic there has latterly been published a new treatise well worth being read and pondered upon. It is entitled "The Navigable Balloon in War and Peace," by General W. N. Hutchinson (Eastbourne, 1888). The aged and experienced writer there says:—

"That ballooning science is in its infancy, is one of those trite commonplaces which run glibly enough from the tongues of many who know nothing of either the performances or the promise of the infant science. That valuable useful observations in high altitudes have been made by means of free balloons, and that captive balloons are of immense service in moderate weather in spying out an enemy's strength and weakness, is the utmost the general reader will expect to be called on to credit; and it will probably be a surprise to most of those who use the aforesaid phrase to hear that *more than once a small 'Navigable' has been steered against a breeze, returning after a voyage of several miles to the original starting-point.*"

And again:—"It is undeniable that immense balloons, capable of carrying great weight, have been successfully floated—at a time, too, when no skin was procurable nearly as efficient and light as could now be manufactured. Giffard's captive balloon, seen by thousands at the Paris Exhibition in 1878, had nearly 883,000 cubic feet capacity, with accommodation for fifty-two persons, and supported a cable of sufficient weight and strength to enable it to ride safely through a very severe storm, notwithstanding the resistance to the wind presented by the wide pear-shape; and there have been balloons of still larger capacity. With hydrogen gas, its lifting power was twenty-seven tons. It seems incredible that those who will take the trouble to reflect upon this all-important matter can continue to entertain, unless singularly prejudiced, so poor an opinion of the inventive talent of the present age—the age that has produced such marvels as telegraphy, phonography, and the wonderful spectroscope, &c.—as to maintain that with the aid of the light, compact, economically burning steam-engines that can now be manufactured, rapid motion with guidance cannot be given to any floating passive mass, however large, on its receiving a suitable form of progress."

In developing his idea, General Hutchinson, with good reason, remarks that, from the balloon being in the air, impulsive influence



ESCAPING FROM PARIS (*p.* 285).

imparted to it has been too hastily compared with the flying of birds, which, by the exercise of great muscular force, have to sustain their weight while in flight. "A comparison with the movements of fish, which, like balloons, have no weight to sustain, would be more appropriate. At any depth they rise by expanding the swimming bladder, sink by contracting it — the very principle suggested for adoption in altering a balloon's altitude. On watching the graceful actions of the gold and silver inmates of a glass bowl, it will be seen that merely the gentle movement of a *small* fin effects a complete change of position. Similarly, speaking mathematically, the abstraction or addition of a pigeon changes the position of the balloon."

Here a few facts tending in the same direction may be given. It is difficult, says General Hutchinson, to realise that in an ordinary free balloon the difference of weight of only ten pounds would make such a change of altitude as 1,400 feet. Yet we have a well-known aëronaut's assurance of the fact. Mr. Simmonds, in the interesting account of his attempt, in March, 1881, to cross the Channel, tells us that when over Shakespeare's Cliff, at an elevation of 500 feet, he rose to 1,900 on throwing overboard merely that weight of fine sand. Even the trifling diminution of weight caused by the release of a pigeon slightly, yet undeniably, increases the altitude, as has been tested by scattering small shreds of paper too thin to be soon affected by gravity.

In the thrilling description given by Tissandier of his first aërial voyage, made in the *Neptune* from Calais with the aëronauts Duruof and Barret, in August, 1868, he writes :—"We were now hungry ; so opening one of the boxes in the car, I took out a bottle of wine and a chicken, which we ate with a good appetite, whilst enveloped in the mist. I threw one of the bones overboard, but Duruof remarked that this was an act of imprudence, for no ballast should be thrown out without orders. I believed he was joking ; but on consulting the barometer, I was bound to admit the fact upon the clearest evidence. The bone had actually caused us to rise from twenty to thirty yards, so delicately is the balloon equipoised in the air."

This, again, supports the "fish" theory of coming aërial locomotion under guidance, as indicated in the valuable treatise of General Hutchinson. After all, as before stated, even the ancients already looked upon the atmosphere surrounding this globe as an "Ocean of the Air." So the air-ships of the future may well be likened to fishes.

As to the principles of construction at present in use, no change, the author remarks, has been made since the talented engineer, M. Henri Giffard, in 1852, built and successfully steered, in a slanting direction to the wind's eye, a clumsy cigar-shaped balloon, inflated with coal-gas. But much, General Hutchinson continues, has been done since in Germany and elsewhere, and attempted in Russia. In France, the brothers Tissandier, M. de Lôme, and recently Captain Renard, with M. Krebs, liberally assisted by their Government, have scientifically and energetically taken up the task so admirably entered upon by Giffard. In September and November, last year, Renard and Krebs made highly successful trips from Chalais Meudon in a fish-shaped balloon. "On one occasion, a nine-mile breeze blowing, they travelled at the rate of fourteen miles an hour, head to the wind, thus gaining on the wind, when it was dead ahead, at the rate of five miles an hour. After sundry evolutions to convince the most sceptical of the perfect obedience of their little vessel to its helm, *they returned to the exact spot they had quitted.* Electricity was their motive-power. Such unquestionable feats stimulated the heads of the military departments in other countries to strenuous exertions towards yet further improvements."

After having referred to experiments which are being made in Germany, that will lead, it is expected, to economically-worked steam generators being employed to propel torpedo boats, ships, railway locomotives, and navigable balloons, General Hutchinson speaks of the crowning invention of the past memorable year, due to the mechanical genius of an English clergyman, Dr. T. Jones, incumbent of Curdworth. "To his wish, last autumn, to propel by steam the tricycle on which he often rode when visiting distant parishioners, we owe what is probably the greatest invention of the present age, if it be regarded in a utilitarian point of view." At least, such was the opinion formed by most of the engineers and scientific men who witnessed the trial at the Vicarage in January last.

But the details of this, and of all other technical suggestions, those who are more deeply interested in the matter must peruse in the pages of General Hutchinson's treatise. The last news from Paris is that Commandant Renard, to whom the writer of "The Navigable Balloon in War and Peace" refers, professes to "have at last discovered a method of steering balloons." The air-ship now in course of construction at Meudon is said to be "navigable in any direction and in any weather, except when it is actually blowing a gale." Curiosity is much excited as to whether this expectation will be fulfilled.

Meanwhile we conclude by wishing the aëronautical science "good speed" under proper guidance, in the firm belief that its aim will not remain a mere poetical dream, but be realised one day like those other inventions of our age, which but a short time ago would have been considered perfect miracles, or rather, downright impossibilities. Did not Napoleon I. treat the idea of a steamboat as a sheer absurdity on which he "wanted never to be spoken to again"? On his part, Franklin, who "tore the lightning from the clouds," made the significant remark, after having been present at the first aëronautical attempt :—"This is the birth of the child!" Now we are at the point of seeing the child developing into a strong man.

THE WILFUL HEIR.

"SINCE you bid my will defiance,
Go," the angry baron said,
"Wander westward, wander eastward,
Come not here till I am dead."
Then the wild heir sprang up laughing—
"Past the castle doorway lies
All the world, where I may wander,
Blithe of heart, in minstrel guise."
So the castle gates closed on him,
To the father echoing long
With a sound of dreary sorrow,
But the heir went forth with song.

Fearless birds around the castle
Fluttered o'er a moss-grown track,
Death had long called hence the baron,
When the spendthrift heir came back.
Bent, and grey, and lonely, came he,
And he dwells, thus some have said,
In those silent rooms, grief-haunted
For the wrong he did the dead.
Even, they say, in summer sunshine,
With the birds and flowers around,
If he plays his minstrel music,
'Tis some strain of mournful sound.

KATE T. SIZER.

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

MARIAN LEARNS THE SECRET.

MR. CONEYBEARE.

MARIAN knew all. Now, what was to be done?—Lestrange looked hopeless.

"Where is the old man now?" I asked.

"Oh, he's asleep. You can understand the effect of these attacks upon a man of his age; and this has been worse than usual—because I was not there to check it. He seems to have run on until he stopped from sheer physical exhaustion. Enough to kill him." He said these latter words in an injured tone, as if he felt it very hard on himself that the attack had not killed the old man.

"From the look of the servants," he went on, "I should say that they all know. If the *worst* should happen, Mr. Keene, what would become of the old man's property?"

"It would go to the Crown—every penny," I replied without hesitation, though I was not very certain on this point. "But the worst must not happen. You must get the old man away before the servants can spread the report. You must take him out of the country to-morrow—your own interests are concerned, remember."

He nodded. I did not care twopence for his interests: my sole purpose was to avoid the terrible consequences of publicity upon poor Marian.

"It's not such an easy job," said Lestrange, drawing his finger and thumb down his long nose reflectively. "He is as obstinate and hard to move as a mule in some things, and this last affair looks as if he were absolutely resolved on putting an end to the torment of remorse by an open confession. While he feared the consequences of such a confession I had a hold on him, but if he defies them I'm powerless. I dare not use force—or I would—for, you see, he might at any moment throw the will he has made in my favour into the fire, and then where should I be?"

"Could you get him away *anyhow* to-morrow if I make it worth your while?"

"How are you going to make it worth my while? That's the question."

"You demanded fifty thousand pounds; if it is necessary you shall have it."

"By to-morrow?"

"By to-morrow." It was no time to make bargains; anything must be sacrificed rather than old Sylvester should be put to trial for that crime.

"You said it would take you a week at least to realise on the estate. I don't doubt your honesty, of course. But you are a lawyer, and may think I deserve no better than a little sharp practice. I can't jeopardise my fortune by setting myself against the old man's will without assurance that the money will be paid up."

I told him that Redlands was prepared to sell his estate to save Miss Sylvester from shame.

"Oh, I can't believe that," said he, with a knowing leer.

Then I showed him the letter addressed to Coneybeare, and explained who he was, and all about him. That was a false move. I ought not to have done it; but I thought only of getting the old man away, and shielding my dear little friend Marian.

"Well," said he, giving me back the letter which he had been turning over and regarding while I spoke. "I'll go in and see what I can do. I should like to get over it in the way you suggest, but I see the difficulties I have to steer through. I must make Miss Sylvester believe the old man is out of his mind on this subject—and for that reason you must keep clear of the place, that she may not suspect collusion. Then I'll try and work the old man. But I warn you, Mr. Keene, that I'm doubtful of success; and so you had better not deliver that letter until you hear from me. I'll run over to-night, and let you know how it is to be decided. It's no use Redlands selling his estate for less than it's worth, if I can't accept the money when it is realised. You see, I'm perfectly straightforward, and deal honestly with you."

As he said this he held up his head and nodded a "good-bye," looking up into my face almost for the first time. It is difficult to assume an expression on suddenly lifting the head at an unusual angle, I think; at any rate, the look I saw in his eyes misgave me, for it belied his assertion of straightforward and honest dealing.

I turned round, and walked my nag slowly down the hill; at the foot I met Redlands, no longer in his stained working clothes, but neat, spick and span, from top to toe. I pulled up and told him all that had taken place.

"Poor girl! poor girl!" he said, with a tender inflexion of voice; then quietly and more hopefully, "I will go up and see if I can do any good. I said I would be there at five, and it is now," looking at his watch, "a quarter to, so that she will suspect nothing by my visit. You would do well, Keene, to prepare Coneybeare, though you do not give him that letter till you have heard from Lestrange, that he may have the money ready if it is likely to be needed."

I promised him this, and we separated. Arrived at Coneyford, I went straight to Coneybeare's office and found him there, alone—his clerks having struck work before their master. I told him that my client, Lord

Redlands, might be prepared to make terms with him the very next morning if he could depend upon receiving fifty thousand pounds down on the spot.

He thought a moment, and then said—

"By twelve o'clock to-morrow morning I shall be prepared to put down on this desk a cheque or notes for that amount."

I told him notes would be preferable, and then went home, feeling I could do no more for the present.

Meanwhile Redlands had gone on to the Court. Miss Sylvester was in her room; he was shown into the little living-room. Presently Marian came down as white as a ghost. Redlands could see that as plainly as he could feel the icy coldness of her little hand as he took it—albeit, foreseeing how she would dread the light falling on her face, he had thoughtfully lowered the shade over the lamp and turned down the wick. Still holding her cold little hand, he led her to a seat before the fire, saying how chill the evenings were now, and then he stirred the fire, and began to rattle on about his works as if he was so engrossed in his own efforts that he did not perceive her unusual silence, though it struck him with pity and fear. Poor Marian heard his pleasant voice without distinguishing his words, as one may hear music whilst the attention is fixed upon a book. She was wondering how she could get through what lay before her. Other women would have excused themselves on some pretext, but she was not one to shirk a duty because it was unpleasant. For her there was but one way of doing a thing, and that was the straightforward way.

"George," she said, when he paused, laying down the poker, "I am going away."

"Going away, love?" he said, his voice dropping to a lower pitch and faltering more than hers—"going away?"

"Yes—I—I have packed up my little belongings, and I am going away to-night."

"Then I will go with you, dear," he said, "wherever you go."

"No, George, you must stay here. Our paths no longer run side by side. A great misfortune has happened to me. Loecliff is no longer mine; I have nothing in the world."

"Why, that's as much as I thought you possessed when I fell in love with you, darling," said he, taking her hand gently. "It was but a little schoolmistress I sought to make my wife, and you are still that—and all the world to me."

He spoke with such infinite tenderness that her heart rose above all its grief in joy to have the love of such a gentle man. Rising as he spoke, he half rested himself on the arm of her chair, and putting his hand round her waist, drew her towards his bent head. She looked up with a little murmur of passionate delight, and yielded her cheeks to his lips — feeling only, thinking not at all. But in a moment her clear reason asserted itself, and she knew she was wrong to yield to her heart—that she must break the gentle bond between herself and him, and separate for ever. She drew herself away.

"Sit there," she said softly, pointing to his chair.

He obeyed.

"That is our farewell, George," she said. "When I said I was going away, I meant from you. I was not thinking of Loecliff; that is a loss that I cannot feel yet awhile."

Could she more plainly tell him how she loved him—how he had absorbed her whole heart?

"And when I tell you that," she continued, feeling the admission she had made of her great love for him, "you will understand that in bidding you farewell my motive is not caprice, not trivial, not of a nature that may be overcome by argument, by persuasion, or any influence whatever that could be brought to bear upon it. Do you understand me?"

"Yes," said he, "I know you too well to think you would break my heart for nothing."

"Oh, George!" she cried, "don't tell me it will break your heart; or how shall I, a girl, keep mine whole to meet my trouble bravely?"

He got up and walked across the room, that she might not see how he was unmanned—biting his quivering lip and gulping down the sob that rose in his throat, as he thought of losing for ever this dear girl, whose beauty, and sweetness, and goodness had never yet seemed so divinely perfect.

And she, keeping her moist and quivering hands close-clenched in her lap, bowed her head, while the tears dropped one by one upon her knees.

He thought of her in the midst of his own selfish passion—he gauged her woe by that in his own breast—he must put an end to her terrible ordeal, and tear himself quickly away to give repose to that poor stricken heart.

He went up to the side of her chair and laid his hand gently on her head—thinking that his fingers were never again to feel that soft, cool, waving hair.

"I will not ask you to tell me why we must part, love; you have said we must. It is now for me to say, 'I am going away; farewell.'"

He took his hand from the dear head, and yet paused an instant, hoping to catch one last sound of that voice which was the heavenliest music to his ear. But she could not speak. "Farewell," died upon her lips. But oh! her generous soul rose in reproach against letting him go away thus, without a farewell, though reason might have whispered, "It is best so." She was wise and good, obedient to the teaching of her conscience, but with all that she was intensely human. So with the swift impulse of love she sprang to her feet, dashing the tears from her cheeks with the palms of her hands, and with an inarticulate cry of mingled love, and joy, and sorrow, she threw herself in his arms, and swallowing her grief, she murmured in a sentence broken with the kisses she pressed upon his lips—

"Good-bye—dear, dear love—I cannot ask you to forget me. I cannot wish that you should; but all through life, dear, I'll pray for your happiness—to the end." And then she unclasped her hands from his neck and ran away, sobbing, into the darker end of the room.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

MARIAN GOES AWAY.

IT was about eight o'clock when I heard a carriage pull up before my door, followed by a ring at the bell.

"Now, is that Lestrange or Redlands?" I asked myself, as I hurried to the door. It was neither. Marian stood before me. Her face was white, her poor eyes swollen and red, but she was quite calm.

"I want to speak to you, Mr. Keene," said she, "and there is but little time. I am going away by the train that leaves at nine o'clock."

I led her into my sitting-room, where there was a good cheerful fire, and closed the door.

"Don't say a word, my dear," said I, going to the little corner cupboard in which I keep my creature comforts. "Not a word till we've had something to strengthen you. I see that something extraordinary has happened to decide you upon making a journey at this time of the night, and your face tells me that you are in distress. There, drink that, and then I'll listen to all you have to tell me, and help you to the utmost of my ability."

Poor soul! she had no heart to touch the cordial, but I insisted, and I do believe it gave her a little strength; for, after a shuddering sigh, like that of a child who has been crying, and bending her head in silence for a moment over her tightly-clasped hands, she looked up at me with an expression in her thin pale face of determination to go through her task bravely.

"Now, my dear," said I, "let me know why you have left the Court at this hour?"

"I cannot stay another hour under that roof with my grandfather—" Where I have put a dash, she paused, as if she could not bring herself to speak of him.

"I am not surprised—not a bit," said I. "I wonder you have stood it so long. I couldn't. A more appalling spectacle of human ruin—of a wrecked body and a wrecked mind, I never saw—outside of a lunatic asylum."

She looked at me eagerly as she asked if I believed he was insane.

"I should not like to say so unless I saw good reason," said I. "But the slight interview I had with him confirmed the suspicion I had previously formed from his strange mode of living during the past fifty years, and the nature of his communications with me and your father. There is the strongest evidence that he is suffering from some form of mental hallucination: that he is, in fact, a monomaniac."

She reflected some moments, and then shaking her head, said—

"All that may be accounted for in another way. I have seen"——she paused, and covered her face with her hands, as if to shut out some hideous sight.

I drew my chair nearer, and putting my hand on her arm, and then taking her hand, which I kept in mine, I said, "Tell me what you have seen, and trust to my impartial judgment."

"When Mr. Lestrange left the house this morning," she said in a low voice, and with effort, "he locked my grandfather in his room, and took away the key. His room is the first one on the east side of the house over the drawing-room. About an hour after Mr. Lestrange had left, Mary, the housemaid, came to me, trembling and speechless with fright, and sank down in a chair in the library where I was sitting, while Lydia, the cook, stood in the doorway clutching the door, and looking over her shoulder up the great stairs, with a face as ashy-pale as Mary's.

"'There it is again,' she cried, and coming into the room, shut the door. With the greatest difficulty I got them to tell me what it was that alarmed them. They told me that there was somebody in the old rooms in the west side of the house, which, as you know, is shut up, and has not been opened within my remembrance. Mary, who had been dusting the stairs, was the first to hear sounds there, and she fetched her fellow-servants. They both now declared they had heard a voice moaning and furniture moving in the room where, long ago, Lord Redlands"—she stopped.

"Died," said I, supplying a word for that she could not speak. "Yes; go on."

"To satisfy them that there was nothing to fear, rather than to convince myself, I went on to the stairs, and there I stopped, for unmistakable sounds were coming from the old room. I heard the window shutters thrown back and the sash lifted. The terrified girls, with a scream, ran downstairs and slammed the kitchen door, as if they expected to have their lives taken.

"The old room, as perhaps you know, adjoins the great room occupied by Mr. Sylvester; both look on to the lawn. I saw what had happened; my grandfather had found some means of getting from his room into the next. That explained all; but as Mr. Lestrange has always taken the precaution to fasten him in whenever he left the house, there was good reason to suppose that it was unsafe to give him liberty; the raising of the window-sash increased my alarm for his safety. I saw that it was my duty to go at once to him, and stop with him until Mr. Lestrange's return.

"The keys of the old room were in a box in the library: I got them, and as bravely as I could went up and unfastened the door. The light was streaming through the open window. At first I saw no one. I had time to glance round the great ghostly room. It was just as it had been left; a ewer stood by the wash-stand, a towel lay on the floor, there was a comb and brush upon the toilet-table. The bed was half stripped; the heavy hangings were drawn back; a pillow lay on the floor. The room looked as if it might have been occupied last night, but for the drab coating of dust that lay upon everything.

"It was so still, that I was scared when a voice from beyond the bed whispered 'Marian.'

"I looked intently, and saw a hideous head peeping out from the dark hangings. It was my grandfather. His face was painted as I had seen it at lunch, but his wig was removed, and the look of that perfectly bare skull, with the made-up face below, was indescribably horrible. I shrank back, with difficulty suppressing a

cry. He held up his ringed finger warningly, and creeping stealthily from beyond the hangings, came towards me. He wore his great fur dressing-gown, but it was open at the throat, and his stiff white collar was loose, as though he had torn it away to get breath. I was terribly frightened—partly by his stealthy movement; I had a silly fear that he might do me some injury—it was a stupid dread, but I could not resist it.

"'Where is Lestrange?' he whispered, turning his eyes towards the door beside me.

"'He is gone out,' said I.

"'Then, now is my opportunity. I will tell you all while I may. Let him do what he will when he finds it out. He has silenced me with threats, he has used drugs, he has locked me up, that I might not speak. But I am more cunning than he. I have planned this return to England that I might rid my conscience of its load, and now is my time. Oh, I have watched and waited for this opportunity. Look! I came through there from the room he locked me in'—he pointed beyond the bedstead, and I saw an opening not more than a foot in width, and five in height. 'I knew the trick of it after fifty years—fifty years! I put my finger on the spring as surely as if I had used it every day of those fifty years—as I have in my memory—in my head here!' and he covered his bare head with his hands. 'Redlands showed me the way to open the door as we shook hands and said "good night"—fifty years ago. He slept in this room—fifty years ago: I slept in the next—fifty years ago. "Slept!" that is a *façon de parler*. I never closed my eyes, but walked to and fro in that room thinking of him and his, and how easily I might get rid of one, and obtain the other.

"'It was past midnight—fifty years ago—when I softly opened that door, as I opened it just now. The wax candle you see on the table behind you was alight—fifty years ago—I saw *my friend*—he lay on the bed—there—there!' he whispered hoarsely, stretching his arm out with extended hand towards the bed. 'Sleeping heavily—his first sleep. There was water in that basin, where now there is only dust; that towel on the floor there lay on the chair—fifty years ago. I dipped it softly in the water; feel it, it is not rough like those we use now, but soft and limp. When it was heavy with water I took it over to the bed, and laid it over my friend's face without awaking him. You do not start. You see no harm in laying a wet towel over a sleeping man's face. Who would? But I had learnt the effect of it from Defoe in his "History of the Plague."

"'I took the money I had lent him, and for which I held his receipt, and put it up in the pocket-book in which I had brought it, but the box in which he had kept it I carried out of the house, weighted it with a stone, and dropped it in the well out there by the stables. There was a ladder there that I had observed the day before; I set it against the window. I crept back into the house, shutting the door as I had found it, and came back to this room. I set the window open—fifty years ago—as I have set it open now, to mislead suspicion. The pulley squeaked as I raised the sash. It awoke Redlands: I saw him dragging the towel from his face: in another moment he would have discovered me. I snatched up the pillow and threw it upon his face to blind him while I dashed across the room and extinguished the light. As I passed through the door I heard him call upon me—*me his friend*—to help him. When the door was closed I stood trembling in the next room. I heard him call me again. This is the truth. No one can say that I took his life. Yet the shock was fatal in its after-effect, and I am morally, though not actually, guilty.

"'The next morning they found him dead; they believed, as I intended them to believe, that thieves had broken in and stifled him. No one suspected me. No one knows but you, and Lestrange, and I, that *I* was the thief—I the'"——Poor Marian could go no further, but hid her face once more in her quivering hands.

"My dear," said I soothingly, "why should you distress yourself in this way?"

"He is my grandfather," she said, shuddering.

"What of that?" said I; "there is nothing in this story but the perverted imagination of a madman. Whoever heard such a story? Every day one reads in the papers of men accusing themselves of crimes they never committed. It is a most common form of insanity. Dr. Awdrey will tell you so."

But she would not accept this explanation. The thing had been put before her in such vivid reality, supported by such strong circumstantial evidence, that it was impossible for her to believe it merely the result of mental disorder.

"Come, come," I said; "you think I have no right, upon such slight knowledge, to conclude that this terrible old man is insane; but you are not more justified in thinking him sane upon the same superficial ground. It rests upon some one who has known him for a considerable time to decide whether this is or is not the mere result of association: the effect of being shut up in a room so close to that in which the tragedy took place. And, happily, we have such a person to refer to; there is Lestrange, who has waited upon him, been with him night and day so long—he can give us the truth if any one can." I said this, remembering that Lestrange had promised to support the theory of old Sylvester's insanity.

"You believe," she said slowly, "that we may take his opinion as final and conclusive?"

"Undoubtedly," said I. "We will ask him about it to-morrow."

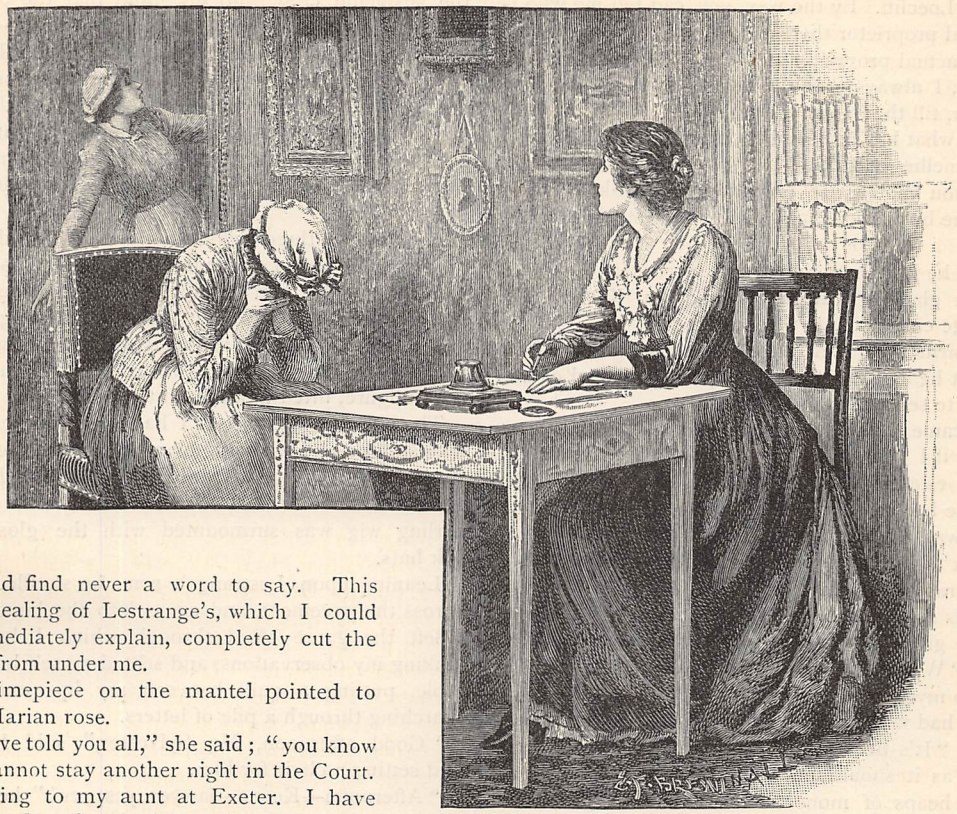
"I have asked him already," said she calmly.

"Well, and what does he say?" I asked hopefully.

"He says," said she, "that there is not the slightest ground for supposing him insane."

I was thunderstruck!

"He himself," she continued, "has not the slightest doubt of his guilt, and my grandfather has never swerved from the same story, and for years has been meditating a full confession, which he, Lestrange, has only been able to prevent by such means as my grandfather revealed to me."



"'THERE IT IS AGAIN,' SHE CRIED" (*p.* 291).

I could find never a word to say. This double-dealing of Lestrange's, which I could not immediately explain, completely cut the ground from under me.

The timepiece on the mantel pointed to 8.40. Marian rose.

"I have told you all," she said; "you know why I cannot stay another night in the Court. I am going to my aunt at Exeter. I have telegraphed to her, and she will meet me at the station. I wanted to tell you all, because I know you love me well enough to do all in your power to shield him and me from public shame. *I* can do nothing; I have left all behind but my clothes, and a few shillings to take me away."

I could no longer dissuade the poor girl from her purpose.

With a sorrowful heart I put her in a comfortable carriage, and watched the train glide away; albeit I made pretence to be mighty knowing and hopeful, as it I already saw a way out of the trouble, but did not like to disclose it prematurely. To tell the honest truth, I never felt so hopelessly helpless in all my life.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

CONEYBEARE IS OUTBIDDEN.

WHAT that precious Lestrange was driving at with this lying and hypocrisy I could not divine, and I waited up till past midnight, in the vain hope that he would come over to explain matters, and let me know that he would accept my offer, and get old Sylvester out of the country. I waited in vain the next morning till it struck twelve, and then I thought I ought to go round to Coneybeare and ask him to stay a little longer.

I met the speculator in the High Street. Nodding towards the Town Hall clock, he said—

"I waited in my office till the last stroke, Keene. I'm a man of punctuality, and never went from my word yet, either one way or the other; now I am taking the money back to the bank. That's business."

"Yes," said I; "but you can draw it out at a moment's notice, if necessary. My client has not come yet, but I expect him every minute."

"Business is business, Keene, and you know that as well as I. We said twelve o'clock, and at twelve I was prepared to fulfil our agreement, and now twelve is gone I shall hold myself free to refuse your offer if I can dispose of my money to greater advantage."

"Oh, certainly," said I, looking on this as mere bounce on his part, for these sharp men of business never wish you to think they are eager to make a bargain.

"To be plain with you, Keene," he said, after rubbing his chin thoughtfully, his lips bunched up, and his brows knit in thought, "I think your client had better look elsewhere for his money, if he is in much of a hurry; for since we met yesterday I have received a proposal that, if it comes to anything, will employ pretty well all my capital."

"I thought you seemed sweet on the Redlands estate yesterday."

"So I was; but I've been sweet on the adjoining estate for a much longer time."

"The adjoining estate?" I gasped.

"Yes, Loecliff. By the way, you can tell me who is the actual proprietor there?"

"The actual proprietor is Robert Sylvester."

"Well, I always thought that it belonged to Miss Sylvester, till this morning."

"And what has occurred to change that belief?" I asked, smelling mischief.

"Do you know a Mr. Lestrange?" he asked, taking me by the button-hole, and looking me straight in the face.

"Yes, he is Robert Sylvester's secretary."

"Very glad to hear it. Thank you, Keene. Mr. Lestrange called on me this morning."

My spirits fell. Lestrange had come to Coneyford, then, but he had called on Coneybeare instead of me. I began to see what was coming.

"He came on the part of his master, Robert Sylvester, to know if I was prepared to make an offer for the Loecliff estate. He explained the application by saying he had heard of me through you."

This was enough to mortify the pride of Lucifer! To think that I, a lawyer, should play into the hands of that rascally valet, that he should twist me thus round his finger, and turn the information I had unwittingly given him to his own advantage, made me mad! "What a fool I was to show him that letter!" said I to myself.

"I've had my eye on that estate for years," he continued. "It's been my dream to get hold of it, and work it as it should be worked. I see my way to making heaps of money out of it. I've got it all planned out, cut and dried, here"—he tapped his forehead. "I shall lay down a line of rails there; I shall build a big hotel where you get that wonderful view. The main street I shall leave as it is, to keep up the quaint character of the place; but I'll double the rents all round, and those who don't like it can leave it. All the rest of the village I shall pull down, stock and block, sweep 'em all away, and run up neat pretty villas in the Old English style. Then I shall cut up the park, and dot gentlemen's houses about — Oh!" he exclaimed, rubbing his hands "you won't know the place in a couple of years. Well, I must be off; thank you, Keene. I couldn't give Lestrange a definite answer, because I was not quite sure whether old Sylvester had the right to sell, and I didn't quite like the look of his agent—looks a little bit too knowing, that Lestrange. However, now you assure me he can sell, I shall let him know at once that I'll buy. And so, as I said, you must tell Redlands that he had better look about for his money elsewhere."

And with that, off he went at a brisk pace, and I saw him turn into the post-office, doubtless to telegraph to old Sylvester.

It was now clear enough why Lestrange had broken his promise to me, and instead of trying to convince Marian that her grandfather's confession was the result of insanity, had done precisely the contrary, confirming her belief in his sanity. It was to get rid of her, and avoid that settlement of the estate upon her which I had demanded of her grandfather. Indeed, the suspicion crept into my mind that the old man might himself be party to this mean scheme—that he had purposely played out that scene in the old room to annul her engagement to young Redlands, and escape plausibly from paying the reward she deserved for faithful stewardship, and the improvement of the estate under her father's judicious management. Any lingering doubts on this point were soon to be dissipated.

A little after three o'clock, a close carriage drove up to my door, and Lestrange, stepping out, asked my clerk, who was then coming from the office on his way to the post, if I were at home. Receiving a reply in the affirmative, he returned to the carriage, and, taking old Sylvester under the arms as if he had been a wax figure, lifted him out on to the footway.

The old man was just as I had seen him before, his face shining and stiff with enamel, his dyed moustache worked into rigid points, only instead of a fur dressing-gown he now wore a still fuller fur coat, and his curling wig was surmounted with the glossiest of silk hats.

Leaning upon Lestrange's arm, he shuffled slowly across the pavement, and came into the house; then I left the gauze blind through which I had been making my observations, and seated myself before the table, putting a quill between my lips and busily searching through a pile of letters.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Sylvester," said I, rising, and setting a chair for him.

"Afternoon—Keene—lawyer, yes, yes!" he replied in his thin, reedy voice, and seeing that I extended my hand, he laid one finger on it, while Lestrange lowered him into the chair.

"Keene—lawyer," he replied vaguely; then turning petulantly to Lestrange—"What is it?—what is it?—what have I come for?"

"You want to know where your granddaughter, Miss Sylvester, is," said Lestrange.

"Yes—yes. Went away last night. Very annoying; servants went away also—not one left in the house to do what is necessary. I want attention—I want comfort—I must have them. Do you understand? I must have them!" he cried, almost whimpering with the returning recollection of his condition.

I suggested that if the servants would not stay in the house, he would do well to shut it up and go away. I was heartily glad to hear of his being left in this way.

"What does he say?—what does he say?" asked he, turning to Lestrange.

"Mr. Keene thinks you had better go away," said Lestrange.

"I didn't ask him for his advice, did I?" he said.

"No, sir, you didn't."

"Then be good enough," turning to me with a fierce look in his wicked old eyes—"good enough to confine yourself to matters that concern you."

This is the sort of thing a lawyer has to put up with at times, so I bowed and said nothing. But that

last effort had quite thrown him off his purpose, and, after staring at me as if he still had the will to take my life if he could, his eyes wandered, and he turned in vexation on Lestrange.

"What have I come for?—why am I here?" he squealed.

"You want to know where Miss Sylvester has gone."

"Yes, yes—I can't be left like this. Servants gone—nothing in order. She must come back and bring the servants. Where is she, Keene?—lawyer, where is she?"

"I am not at liberty to answer that question."

"She must come back. I can't be left. She must come back. Do you hear, lawyer Keene?"—it seemed as if he had to repeat facts to keep them in his feeble memory—"you must find her and bring her back."

"That is beyond the range of my professional capacity," said I stiffly.

"What does he say?—what does he say?"

Lestrange repeated what I said, but in a tone calculated to make the irascible old man still more irate. Turning upon me with those sharp little eyes glistening with fury, he said—

"Not within the range of your capacity—Keene, lawyer! Very good, then. I shall henceforth employ a lawyer with less limited range. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly."

"I am no longer your client. We have no further relations one with the other. That is understood?"

"Certainly."

The old man's eyes here began to wander again. Lestrange nudged him; he turned an inquiring glance, whereupon Lestrange spoke a few words in Italian, or some other language which I couldn't understand. The old man nodded, and turned again to me.

"As we have no further relations, you will please to give me all title-deeds and papers relating to my property which have been lodged in your hands."

"They shall be sent to you," said I.

"I do not choose to wait your convenience. I must have them now—immediately!"

I was shrewd enough to see through them. They had come here purposely to quarrel with me and get the deeds into their hands, that they might take them at once to Coneybeare. I saw also that in this the old man was acting under the direction of Lestrange, and I resolved to keep the deeds as long as I could, if only to pay off my score against the rascal.

"It is impossible to let you have them at a moment's warning," said I. "There are papers amongst them exclusively belonging to Miss Sylvester."

"When can I have them?"

"In a reasonable space of time."

The old man's temper would not brook this. "You have no right to detain them a moment after I demand their restitution," he said. "I can force you to give them up."

"Yes, sir," said I, "and I can keep them until you legally compel me to give them up; and what's more," I added—for my temper is not always under command—"what's more, sir, I will!"

"What does he say?"

Lestrange told him that I would let him have them as soon as it was possible to get them, and then lifting up the old man, led him out to the carriage.

When he had packed his charge in a corner, he closed the door and ran lightly back to me.

"Mr. Keene," said he, "one word. We understand each other. We are doing the best we can for ourselves—*Chacun pour soi*. We are going to sell the estate for ourselves instead of through you, and shall get twice as much by it. We should be fools if we threw away the chance. We must bolt. The servants have gone, and are spreading the secret far and wide. It's to your interest to get rid of us before a warrant is issued for the apprehension of that old fossil. But I won't go before I've got the money. I run no more risk by staying than by going. If you have any regard for Miss Sylvester, you'll give up those papers, that the business with Coneybeare may be settled at once. I promise we shall not stay a moment when the money is safe in my keeping. Don't let irritation overcome your judgment and your kindly feeling towards poor Miss Sylvester. Let me have the deeds now."

This was plausible enough; indeed, there was nothing in this rascal's actions that passed ordinary sharp practice. There was even some advisability in acceding to his request; indeed, I could see no just reason for refusing. Nevertheless, my instinct (for I know not what else to call it) revolted against such a course. It is possible that my repugnance to dealing with this fellow arose from an innate consciousness that he was a rascal. Certainly there was no necessity to decide immediately in either case, for I should be the first to hear of an application for a warrant, and then there would be yet time for escape, and saying as much to Lestrange, I nodded him out of my office.

One thing about this delay pleased me, and that was the reflection that it kept the poor creatures at Loecliff a little longer out of the clutches of that ruthless destroyer, Coneybeare.

Towards the evening—it may have been about five—as I expected, Redlands came to see me. He looked as though he had gone through months of misfortune. I never saw a man so suddenly aged and worn. But he bore himself manfully, for all his trouble. There was no theatrical display of grief such as some people indulge in when they are overtaken by a calamity. He was as scrupulously dressed as though he were about to meet his sweetheart, he kept his head erect, and a calm face, and there was no whining tone in his voice when he spoke. "That's how a man should meet misfortune," said I to myself.

"You know she is gone?" said he.

"Yes," I replied, "she is gone to a relative at Exeter." I knew that would keep him from going there. Then I told him all that had taken place since we separated, winding up with a full description of the visit paid me by old Sylvester and Lestrange.

"It will break her heart," said he, "to know that her tenants have been turned out. It will be ruin for

them. Only think of a railway station in her park, and a great vulgar hotel at the top of her picturesque little village, with all sorts of abominations in the shape of genteel residences cropping up like vulgar *parvenus* patronisingly over the dear honest old street."

"To say nothing of cutting up the grand old park into parcels," I added, "with a jerry-built villa in the middle of each, christened with all the crackjaw names to be raked out of a London suburb: 'Belle Vue,' 'Montpelier,' and all the rest of it! Coneybeare is just the man for the work; all that vulgar ostentation can desire he'll supply."

"What is to become of all these poor villagers?"

"I don't know. Best part of them are women who depend upon letting their little houses for a living. Coneybeare will have no more feeling for them than if they were bricks and mortar. They'll drift into the poor-house, I suppose; and he won't mind that, for they won't be in his parish, you may depend."

"It will break her heart," he said tenderly.

"And she'll take the blame to herself: that's the worst of it. I know how clear-sighted she is. She'll see that she ought not to have raised them to this position without securing them against the caprice of an old—— *I* ought to have looked after that, but she will never believe any one is to blame but herself."

"'AS BRAVELY AS I COULD I WENT UP AND UNFASTENED THE DOOR'" (*p.* 291).

"Keene!" cried my young lord, starting to his feet, "I know what I'll do."

"Out with it, my lord," said I, seeing by his manner that he saw a way of overcoming the difficulty.

"I'll outbid Coneybeare. Loecliff shall not fall into his hands."

"That sounds pleasant," said I; "but how's it to be done?"

"The men want to get off," he said, speaking sharply and emphatically. "You jeopardise their safety by holding back the deeds. Coneybeare, if

he's wise, will not part with the money till he sees the deeds."

"I'll take care of that," said I in parenthesis.

"We must scrape together all the money we can. I will offer it to them, with my bond for the remainder, upon old Sylvester's written order for the title-deeds to be delivered up to me, and without seeing them."

"Bravo!" I cried. "We shall beat Coneybeare there, for his lawyer wouldn't let him buy a pig in a poke like that."

"I will go and see them about it at once."

"Do, my lord; they'll accept, I'll warrant. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, at any time, to such sportsmen as they are. They'll accept a thousand pounds down, and your bond for the rest, and glad to get off with that; and don't you offer too much."

Redlands smiled. I knew what he was thinking: that no price was too high to pay for the happiness of the woman he loved.

So off he went on his mare, that stood outside, at a gallop, as if his life depended on bringing this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

"Meanwhile," thought I, "it will be as well to drop in on Coneybeare, and put a spoke in his wheel if I can." But first of all I thought I might as well have tea; so I sat down, and poured myself out a cup, all the while thinking out all the probable results of Redlands' present attempt. But the probable results, I have noticed, seldom occur in real life, and in this case the result was outside of anything that had ever entered my head.

END OF CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

MORE ABOUT PUDDINGS.

WE will ask those who are desirous of learning "more about puddings" to read over the paper on "Every-day Puddings" which appeared recently in this Magazine.* As we here assume that the directions given, and rules laid down therein, will be followed by all who attempt to carry out these recipes, we shall thus save much repetition in the present paper.

We are mindful of our promise to give some further hints on puddings suitable for the nursery. Perhaps one of the best is *Albany Pudding;* this is a mixture of coarse oatmeal, crushed wheat, brown bread-crumbs, brown flour, and suet, two ounces of each; four ounces of treacle, and four ounces each of figs and prunes (stoned) cut up finely; one egg and enough milk (*about* a quarter of a pint) to make a stiff mixture are added to the above. This pudding should be steamed for three or four hours, or boiled a proportionate time, and served with hot treacle poured round it. Many mothers have proved the difficulty of inducing their children to eat porridge of any kind; they will do well to serve the ingredients in the form of a pudding such as the foregoing, the combination of cereals and fruit furnishing a most wholesome diet.

It is to be regretted that comparatively few people (vegetarians excepted) are acquainted with crushed wheat, for it is excellent for a variety of purposes, and suits many people better than oatmeal, being less heating to the blood.

Prunes and figs, as well as dates, may be introduced into many kinds of puddings with good results (being equal to raisins, and far superior to currants, which—we will repeat—should never be given to children); they are also excellent stewed and served with farinaceous puddings, or with boiled rice or macaroni; for it should be borne in mind that if starchy foods are partaken of frequently, fruit is necessary to counteract their constipating tendency. A favourite remedy for this complaint with a surgeon who is well versed in hygienic diet is a dish of stewed raisins; these should be stoned, and left to soak for some hours in a little water previous to stewing, until they are well swollen and soft; no sugar is to be added, but lemon-juice is recommended, and, to derive full benefit, stale wholemeal or malt bread should be eaten with them.

To return, however, to puddings: another, suitable alike for children and adults who cannot indulge in heavier varieties, is thus made:—Spread some thin slices of brown or white bread, or stale sponge-cake, with jam; make them into sandwiches, and then cut into small dice—there should be enough to fill a half-pint measure; put them lightly into a buttered basin, then pour over an egg and half a pint of warm milk beaten well together. Steam this for an hour (see previous directions for steaming). Marmalade may be used instead of jam, and any flavouring added to the milk.

A passing word about spice: this should never be added to puddings for invalids suffering from a cough, sore-throat, or allied ailments, as the smallest quantity often proves very irritating.

Empress Pudding is old-fashioned, but popular. Four ounces of well-washed rice are first to be simmered in a quart of milk, until the grain is soft and the milk absorbed; when cooled a little, a couple of eggs, with sugar and flavouring to taste, are beaten in, and the mixture put into a greased pie-dish, in layers, with jam between each, and baked a pale brown in a moderate oven. The substitution of other cereals for the rice, as well as of stewed fruit (apples are suitable), suggests

* See CASSELL'S MAGAZINE for September, 1888, page 594.

itself; and those who do not possess that convenient utensil a "double sauecpan" will be glad to know of a simple way of cooking rice and other grain, which obviates the frequent stirring required when it is "steeped" in an open saucepan. Just put the rice and milk in a tin canister, with a tight-fitting lid; set it in a saucepan with boiling water three-fourths up the tin; cover, and keep the water boiling fast until the grain is cooked. If no canister is handy, a mould or cake-tin will do, covered with a plate or a greased paper twisted tightly round. Our reason for preferring tin to crock is due to the fact that tin is a good conductor of heat. In either case, room must be left for the grain to swell, and a little butter will hasten the cooking.

Carrots form a valuable addition to many puddings, raw ones being superior in point of flavour to boiled ones, but they should be grated to pulp. *Devonshire Cheesecakes* owe their basis to grated carrots, to which an egg or two, currants, spice, and cream, with enough grated sponge-cake to give sufficient "body," are added; the mixture is baked in shallow pie-dishes lined with pastry. With richer varieties of these cheesecakes, some butter and other accessories are added, but the plainest are excellent, and have the merit of being cheap.

To plain plum-puddings, such as are known as "vegetable plum-puddings," carrots can always be added: they impart lightness as well as flavour, but as they yield moisture during the cooking, the mixture should be rather stiffer than usual, otherwise the pudding, if a boiled one, may break in the turning out. A small quantity of caramel (burnt sugar) improves the colour and appearance of this class of puddings.

Turning our attention to apples, we are confronted by a host of dishes sufficient to fill a volume, this wholesome fruit being justly and equally popular in all counties.

Apple Charlotte is made by stewing some apples, peeled, cored, and quartered, to a pulp, with sugar sufficient to sweeten pleasantly; the juice and grated rind of a lemon, and an ounce of butter, should then be added to each pound of apples; this must be well boiled, as the *marmalade* should be rather stiff; the tin or dish should be well buttered, and lined with thin slices of bread, buttered on both sides; then the apple mixture and more bread and butter alternately added until full, bread and butter forming the top layer. In lining the tin, the slices should overlap each other somewhat; sometimes they are cut into fingers, if they will more readily fit the tin. The *Charlotte* should be baked to a nice brown. A still more homely one is made of bread and butter as before, but with uncooked apples, over each layer of which, sugar, with spice or lemon-rind and juice, is sprinkled. There is yet another way of making it, if a good share of apples is desired: that is, to put a slice of bread at the bottom of a tin mould, and to line the sides, then fill up with the apple mixture; another slice of bread to cover the top finishes it. Bake as before.

Apple Amber owes its excellence chiefly to long cooking: the ingredients are a pound of apples chopped finely as for mincemeat, half a pound of bread-crumbs, one ounce of flour, three ounces of suet, the grated peel of a lemon, and a dash of nutmeg or cinnamon, two eggs, and three ounces of sugar. It is better to have this pudding *under* rather than *over* sweet, as sweet sauce or castor sugar can be served with it. It needs four hours to boil, or six to steam; the appearance and flavour are totally different if cooked for a matter of a couple of hours only. This resembles the pudding of olden times known as *Paradise* or *Mother Eve's Pudding*, only that currants are added thereto. In superior cookery, apples, after being stewed to pulp for puddings, sauce, &c., are passed through a hair sieve, and when this is omitted, care should be taken that no lumps are left in, and the mass should be well beaten.

Another pudding which can hardly be cooked too much is *Fig Puading;* one of the undermentioned weight needs six hours to steam, or four to boil, *at the very least*, and the nicest we ever tasted, made from this recipe, was cooked for eight hours. First, slice and cut up ten ounces of *good* figs—poor ones are quite useless; mix them, on a board, with six ounces each of well-chopped suet and bread-crumbs, four ounces of brown sugar, and three ounces of flour; mix with the hand, then, with a sharp knife, chop the whole mass, turn it into a basin, add the grated half of a small nutmeg and two eggs, beaten with four table-spoonfuls of milk, and mix *thoroughly;* then put it into a well-buttered basin or mould, which it will quite fill, if it is to be boiled. A very suitable sauce to serve with this is thus made:—Dissolve an ounce and a half of butter in a stewpan, and stir in an ounce of flour until smooth; add, by degrees, half a pint of milk, stirring all the time; boil up well, and put in a table-spoonful of castor sugar and the grated rind of a lemon, or a few drops of essence of lemons. This sauce can also be served with batter, marmalade, and lemon, as well as many other kinds of puddings. Water can be used instead of milk, in which case more butter is required; the addition of lemon-juice is a pleasant one, and if a clearer sauce is liked, corn-flour or arrowroot can take the place of flour, but either should be mixed with a little cold water before adding it to the dissolved butter.

An authority on culinary matters recommends, for good plum-puddings, the outer fat of roast beef to be chopped and mixed with the suet; he says it is excellent. If for plum-puddings, why not for others to which suet is added? And if the outer fat of cooked meat, why not the inner? Those whose families are averse to fat meat may be glad to take the hint, and use up some of it in this way.

Here is a cheap, but excellent, pudding for the juveniles. Rub three ounces of clarified dripping (or shred it in cold weather) into half a pound of flour until as fine as bread-crumbs, add half a tea-spoonful of mixed spice and a good pinch of carbonate of soda; mix with an egg, half a tea-cupful of milk, and half a pound of golden syrup, all previously beaten up together. Steam for three hours, and turn out carefully.

Treacle Roly-poly is generally a failure, owing to the boiling out of the syrup; plenty of bread-crumbs

mixed with the treacle are needed to obviate this, but it is better to make the pudding in a basin, lining it with the crust, and filling up with treacle and crust alternately, having crust at the top, just as for a fruit pudding. The syrup may be spiced or flavoured with lemon-rind. A very superior golden syrup (clear and of nice colour) is now sold in tins: a great improvement on the dark-coloured—often far from clean—treacle of years ago.

We have previously spoken of the use of sago as a substitute for eggs in plain puddings; here is a case in point: viz., a homely variety of *Snowdon Pudding*. Line a greased basin with stoned raisins, the cut side to be pressed to the basin, and fill up with the following mixture:—three ounces of bread-crumbs, an ounce each of flour and small sago, two ounces each of moist sugar and suet, a table-spoonful of jam, and a quarter of a pint of milk. Boil for two hours. In *Snowdon Pudding* proper less sago is used, because eggs are added.

There are many other puddings we would refer to if space allowed, but we trust that those already treated will prove useful. On a future occasion we hope to mention some of the richer kinds in a chapter devoted to "Superior Sweets."

LIZZIE HERITAGE.

ON PEDIGREES.

BY JAMES DALLAS, F.L.S., CURATOR OF THE ALBERT MEMORIAL MUSEUM, ETC.

PERHAPS one of the most striking developments of modern democracy is the wide-spread ambition amongst ordinary folks to ascertain their pedigrees. It would be hard to say what generally induces the mania, but probably it is in the first instance attributable to some trifling accident or to some traditional descent, which it is supposed will confer honour upon the family, if fairly established.

Of course there are persons who have risen suddenly to opulence, and who, like Thackeray's pompous Sir Brian Newcome, apply at once to the Heralds' College for a ready-made pedigree, which may or may not be essentially accurate, and which they accept with the blind and trusting faith of children. Or they apply, if economically inclined, to one of the many pedigree-hunters, whose researches seldom extend beyond the ordinary printed registers of pedigrees of one kind or another, and whose elaborate genealogical trees are for the most part absolutely unreliable. Obtaining from the applicant for genealogical honours on the one hand the names of a few of the latest ancestors with which he knows himself to have been blessed, and on the other hand gaining from some such work as Burke's "Landed Gentry," or printed copies of sundry Heralds' Visitations, the more or less authentic pedigree of some family bearing the same name, the pedigree-maker fills in with a free hand and an easy conscience such trifling blanks as interrupt the course of descent in later times.

There is, however, another class of pedigree-searchers, more conscientious, if less rational than the purchasers of pedigrees ready-made. These persons devote the best part of their lives to researches into their family history, and so far from drawing up complete and detailed pedigrees of their descent, generally come to the end of their existence before having brought to a conclusion even their preliminary researches. In the first place, probably, they will be anxious to trace their paternal descent, and starting upon a knowledge of the name of grandfather or great-grandfather, and with a traditional account that the family "came out of" Yorkshire, or Cumberland, or Devonshire, or Scotland, or what-not, they will, in the first instance, probably, ransack such printed copies of the Heralds' Visitations as bear upon the locality of reputed origin. And then it is, after having obtained a sort of skeleton-genealogy, that the really ardent pedigree-hunter comes to the more serious part of his labours. Having obtained what he can from these printed records, he will next betake himself to a search of the unprinted records of the Heralds' College, or of the Lyon Office, or of the Record Office in Dublin, and then to an inspection of the parish registers and the wills contained in one or another of the probate or record offices of the country. Here it is that his labour becomes prodigious: probably no single life is long enough to go through all the wills and registers of a single family-name, unless it be some of the very rarest in the country. It is melancholy to contemplate the futile efforts of a Smith, or a Brown, or a Robinson, searching amid unnumbered namesakes for some record of a long-lost grandfather. But with other less favoured and less wide-spread patronymics, the struggle is much less severe, and if once a family can be traced to some definite settlement, with property in land, the subsequent labours of the genealogist become comparatively light, unless, of course, the parish registers happen to be missing, in which by no means uncommon case he may give up his pedigree as wellnigh hopeless.

Sometimes, at least, pedigrees certainly are amongst the most remarkable of inventions. Those carefully-wrought genealogies, derived from authentic records, are not now to be considered, but those more pretentious and far-reaching trees, the deepest roots of which are "lost in the dim mists of antiquity." It is hardly fair, perhaps, to doubt the accuracy of some of these ancient and elaborate genealogies, yet it is hard to imagine whence the evidence of their accuracy is derived.

For instance, the fine old family of Courtenay, Earls of Devon in England and at one time Emperors of Constantinople abroad, claim their descent from a famous Frenchman, Pharamond, who founded the French monarchy in 420—unless, as has been supposed, he was a purely mythical personage.

It would be easy to give a tolerably long list of old English families claiming descent from some royal or princely house, though it might be very difficult to prove the pedigree. The Fieldings of Denbigh, for instance, derive their origin from the famous Counts of Hapsburg, who gave "twenty-two Sovereigns to Austria, sixteen Emperors to Germany, eleven Kings to Hungary and Bohemia, and six to Spain;" and may we not say one of the greatest novelists of any country to England? Then we have a very humble family of Dering claiming to be of "undoubted Saxon origin," and to descend from a certain Ethelwald, King of Deira, who himself is of no great celebrity.

Perhaps, however, one of the most remarkable Sovereign houses is that of Normandy, which has given, or is said to have given rise to a great number of our distinguished families. The Cliffords —amongst whom perhaps the Fair Rosamond was the most celebrated character, are said to be descended from an uncle of William the Conqueror, and the family of Drew also claims descent from the Ducal house of Normandy. Reminiscences of Hume and Russell remind us of a certain Rollo the Ganger, first Duke of Normandy, but the pedigree-seekers have discovered, even for this remote individual, a great-grandfather in Thebotaw, Duke of Schleswick and Stumarce, who flourished (for all these antiques are said to flourish) in the year of grace 721. And from this same Thebotaw were descended all sorts of notorious people, besides that arch-notoriety, William the Conqueror. The ancient Earls of Orkney were his descendants; so were the De Töenys, who, of course, "came into England with William the Conqueror," and subsequently gave rise to the Gresleys and the Staffords. The Lindsays, too, are said to be descended from one of these early Norse chieftains, and finally there is an elaborate pedigree deriving the Bruces from Sigurt, Earl of Orkney, of this family. It is a very interesting pedigree, this one of Bruce—if it be true! First settled in the far north of Scotland (though the Orkneys were not Scotch in those days), we suddenly come upon a full-fledged De Bruce as Lord of Skelton in Lancashire, and then again, as suddenly, we find another Bruce setting up as a Scotch patriot, though, if his pedigree is to be trusted, he was rather a renegade Englishman.

All sorts of strange anomalies meet us in our search after pedigrees, and even the Stuarts, who we might have hoped to find were indigenous to the Land of Cakes, were discovered to be of Norman origin, and to be descended from a brother of the first Fitzalan, while the Boyds—bless the mark!—come from yet another brother. There was once in the Institution in Edinburgh a pedigree (perhaps it is there still) showing the descent of the "noble family of Campbell" from Adam! through a long line of apocryphal Scotch chieftains, while other genealogists have sought out in a certain Norman *De Campo Bello* the real progenitor of the MacCallum More; of one thing, however, we may be certain, that had Adam but had a father *he* would have been the first MacCallum More with the Scotch genealogists.

There seems to be one peculiar weakness in the average pedigree-hunter of modern days; it is to trace his descent from the blood-royal. As a writer in *Notes and Queries* once pointed out, there are few families of average respectability who cannot somehow or other prove their descent from one of the royal families of England or Scotland. Every descendant, for instance, of the first Howard of Norfolk can claim this distinction, and in the course of nearly five hundred years the number of these happy beings must be great indeed. Nevertheless, people pride themselves not a little if they can show a descent from the Plantagenets or Stuarts or Bruces, and even the baton-sinister is no longer regarded as dishonourable when it debruises the Royal Lions of England and the Lilies of France. People often, indeed, go out of their way to point out a left-handed descent of this kind from a real live King, while the esteem in which a true and legitimate descent is held is sufficiently attested by Sir Bernard Burke's "Royal Descents," and by a still more recent work of the kind edited by the indefatigable genealogist, Mr. Joseph Foster. This particular weakness is not so easy to comprehend; as the one which prompts a man to seek out his paternal ancestors, for in the first place our Kings have not, generally speaking, been such estimable characters that it is any honour to be akin to them as individuals; and secondly, as Pope very justly observes—

> "What can ennoble sots, or knaves, or cowards?
> Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards."

Nevertheless, there are few people who have not some sort of respect for ancient birth, particularly if it chances also to be in some more or less remote fashion what is called noble, and even scoffers at heraldry and genealogy and all such antiquated rubbish have a "sneaking affection" for families of "long descent." For all, both for scoffers and believers, the following lines from an old pedigree of the family of De la Wey, or Davie, may find an excuse or palliation for the faith that is in them:—

> "What profit pedigree or long descent,
> From farre-fetcht blood, or painted monuments
> Of our great grandsire's visage? 'Tis most sad
> To trust unto the worth another had
> For keeping up our fame; which else would fall
> If, besides birth, there be no worth at all.
> For who counts him a gentleman whose grace
> Is all in name, but otherwise is base?
> Or who will honour him that's honour's shame,
> Noble in nothing but a noble name?
> 'Tis better to be meanly born and good,
> Than one unworthy of his noble blood:
> Though all thy walls shine with thy pedigree,
> Yet virtue only makes nobility.
> Then, that your pedigree may useful be,
> Search out the virtues of your family:
> And, to be worthy of your fathers' name,
> Learn out the good they did, and do the same;
> For, if you bear their arms, and not their fame,
> Those ensigns of their worth will be your shame."

MR. BAH POOT'S MANIFESTATIONS.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. BY KATE EYRE, AUTHOR OF "A STEP IN THE DARK," "FOR THE GOOD OF THE FAMILY," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

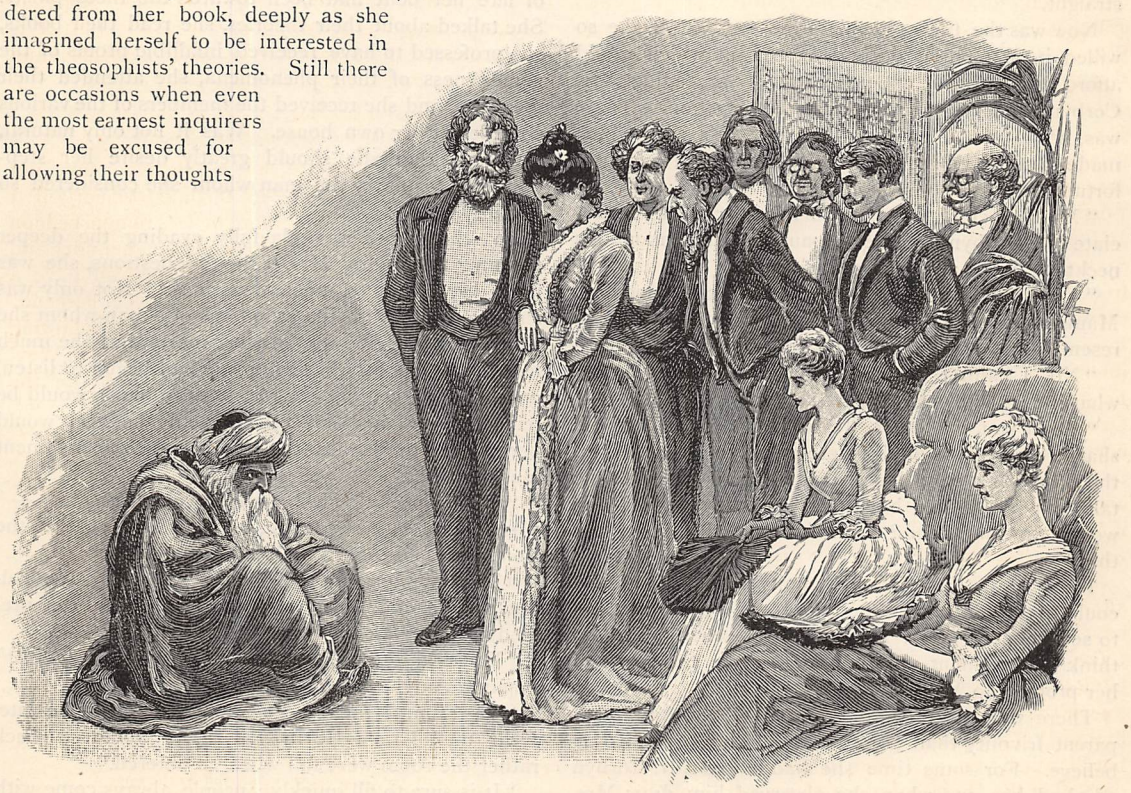
ABOUT eight o'clock one winter's evening, two ladies were sitting alone in an elegant drawing-room in Mayfair.

The room was furnished in the latest and most approved æsthetic style. Picture-frames and mirrors were draped with soft scarves in delicate shades of coral-pink and sage-green; windows, door, and fireplace were curtained with richly-embroidered plush; old china, bric-à-brac, Japanese cabinets, screens, and fans were displayed in lavish profusion; chairs, no two of which matched, were built low and cushioned luxuriously; while each of the several little tables scattered about in studied disorder, had its own tastefully shaded lamp, the light from which fell on a strange assortment of papers and periodicals.

The elder of the two ladies, a fashionably-dressed and still handsome woman of about forty, was reading a book on theosophy; whilst her companion, a fresh and winsome girl of twenty, was engaged upon a beautiful piece of art-needlework.

The elder lady's mind had, however, wandered from her book, deeply as she imagined herself to be interested in the theosophists' theories. Still there are occasions when even the most earnest inquirers may be excused for allowing their thoughts to become temporarily engrossed with domestic concerns, and the subject which was now engaging Mrs. Talbot's attention might very well come under this category.

Only that very afternoon a Mr. Corbyn had expressed his admiration for her step-daughter, Amy—the girl who was making so bright a picture on the other side of the Queen Anne fireplace—and had succeeded in securing Mrs. Talbot as an ally. Certainly he had conveyed his approval of the young lady in very guarded terms. He had also looked a little awkward when introducing the subject, but that was no more than was to be expected from a philosopher; while his eligibility as a suitor was beyond question. He was not much over forty, was well connected, had sufficient landed property to render him respectable, while the bulk of his handsome income was derived from the safest of investments. Moreover, he was in the estimation of his intellectual admirers—and they were many—the man of the future. Perhaps, to the careless glance of girlhood, he might appear a little plain; and his bearing towards women lacked that



"HE DID NOT SEEM SO MUCH TO BE LOOKING *AT* THE PEOPLE AS *THROUGH* THEM" (*p.* 303).

easy gallantry so popular with the sex. Still, no girl of sense—and Amy was sensible, if a trifle thoughtless—could fail to feel honoured by his offer. It was very possible it might come as a surprise to her, for Mrs. Talbot had herself been quite unprepared for it, having hitherto believed Mr. Corbyn impervious to feminine charms; still, when once Amy should have got reconciled to the idea, she would surely rejoice at her good fortune.

Heartily as Mrs. Talbot approved of the philosopher as a lover, she felt that in order to further his wishes it would be necessary to proceed with great caution. Amy was so full of fun—if she should chance to laugh at Mr. Corbyn and his offer! Mrs. Talbot shuddered at the thought, even while she was constrained to admit such a catastrophe to be well within the range of possibility. There was also another difficulty in the way, although Mrs. Talbot shrank from giving it definite shape; but *if* Amy should have a preference for Horace Kingsford! So commonplace as he was, too; a young man whose mind never soared beyond good drainage and sound roofing for his tenantry!

"Amy, Mr. Corbyn is going to bring his sister here this evening," remarked Mrs. Talbot, endeavouring to introduce the philosopher's name in a natural manner.

"Do you think, mamma, she will tie Mr. Corbyn's necktie for him before they start? It is always so dreadfully awry that I quite long to put it straight."

Now was the time to explain to Amy that, if she so willed it, she might occupy a position which would afford her endless opportunities of arranging Mr. Corbyn's necktie to her entire satisfaction. There was, however, a merry light in the girl's eyes which made Mrs. Talbot hesitate to inform her of her good fortune.

"My dear child, no one who has learned to appreciate Mr. Corbyn would ever pause to think about his necktie. He is a man in a thousand!"

"Yes; he certainly is rather peculiar-looking. Mamma, did it ever strike you how much his face resembles an apple tart with a very thin crust?"

"No, I cannot say it has; nor do I now see in what the resemblance consists."

"Don't you, mamma? It looks to me just as if the sharp edges of the apples were going to poke through the skin. If I were his sister, I should insist on his taking porridge for breakfast. Don't you think it would do him good? He is so really dreadfully thin!"

Here again was an opportunity to tell Amy she could herself introduce the reform she was so anxious to see effected. Mrs. Talbot had, however, begun to think the moment unpropitious for the fulfilment of her promise to Mr. Corbyn.

There was, in truth, more method in Amy's apparent frivolity than her step-mother was inclined to believe. For some time she had feared Mr. Corbyn admired her, and when she observed him draw Mrs. Talbot aside, she had guessed his object in doing so. Of course she knew it was only a preliminary measure. Had the philosopher contemplated making a formal offer for her hand, he would have applied to her father. Not that it would have made any practical difference, because Mr. Talbot would never have moved in the matter without consulting his wife, as Mr. Corbyn was probably well aware.

Early in life Mr. Talbot had married an exceptionally gentle girl, and had made the not uncommon mistake of imagining that the only woman he knew intimately must necessarily be a typical one. His second marriage, however, undeceived him. Slowly, and with the utmost reluctance, he awoke to the fact that his second wife had a will of her own. Not that she was unkind to her husband; she was only exceedingly firm in her treatment of the poor little man. As soon as he began to recover from the surprise into which this discovery had plunged him, he reflected that it was always open to him, by asserting his authority, to force his wife into her proper place. Fortunately, however, for his confidence in that authority, he never did attempt to assert it.

Amy, too, although she was independent, inasmuch as she had inherited a comfortable little income and some really valuable jewellery from her own mother, meekly submitted to her step-mother's rule. Hitherto the restraint had not been very irksome, for the two women were sincerely attached to each other. Now, however, Amy began to tremble. Mrs. Talbot had always been ambitious of intellectual pre-eminence, and of late her bent had been towards the theosophists. She talked about their theories, she read their books, she professed to have received infallible proofs of the genuineness of their phenomena, she attended their meetings, and she received the members of the various societies at her own house. Was it not only natural, therefore, that she should greatly desire her step-daughter to marry the man whom she considered so shining a light?

So while Amy was playfully evading the deeper meaning underlying Mrs. Talbot's questions, she was in reality a prey to much uneasiness. Not only was she threatened with the attentions of a man whom she was determined she would never marry, but she much feared that one for whose step she had begun to listen, and at whose coming she was wont to blush, would be banished from her side ere maidenly modesty would permit her to let him see all that such banishment must cost her.

"Dear Amy, I don't like to hear you speak like——" Mrs. Talbot was beginning, when a loud peal at the front-door bell caused both ladies to start.

"That surely cannot be he!" exclaimed Mrs. Talbot, as she laid down the volume she had been pretending to read.

"You told him eight o'clock, did you not, mamma?" inquired Amy, folding up her art-needlework.

"Yes; but I thought he would be sure to be late. Dear me! I do hope it isn't he. I would so much rather the room were full when he entered."

"It is sure to fill quickly; people always come with a rush," replied Amy consolingly.

The object of these agitated remarks was one whom Mrs. Talbot had hardly dared to hope it might ever be her proud lot to welcome beneath her roof. Hitherto she had been favoured only in so far that she had been permitted to witness some inexplicable phenomena at the houses of two or three theosophists deeply versed in occult science. Never had her own drawing-room been the scene of the slightest display of occult power. Now, however, she trusted that her unwearying patience was about to be rewarded. Nor was this hope without a sure foundation, for was not Lo Sang Bah Poot — the "celebrated sage"—about to visit her? Not long since he had left his Himalayan retreat, having, at his own earnest request, been permitted by the Brothers in Thibet to wander forth, bent on kindling, if so it might be, some faint spark of intelligence in the impenetrable dulness of the Western mind. Soon mystic London would be at the feet of the Esoteric Buddhist. Mrs. Talbot could hardly realise the extent of her good fortune as she remembered that hers was the *first* private house the great teacher had deigned to visit. In anticipation she saw her drawing-room acting ever after as a magnet to the intellectually great. What were the bygone glories of Holland House in comparison to those she pictured looming in the distance, with herself as the central figure?

Eager as she was to welcome the great teacher, it was with intense relief she discovered the first arrival to be that of only a commonplace member of the society. The evening was, in fact, far advanced before the Oriental appeared.

Every voice was hushed, even respiration seemed temporarily suspended, as Lo Sang Bah Poot entered.

A tall, bent, thin figure advanced noiselessly, with snowy beard and flowing locks. Dressed in a turban and caftan of sombre hue, he lacked that brilliancy of attire with which the Western mind is accustomed to associate Orientals.

He made a profound obeisance to the assembled company, without appearing to notice that his hostess was hastening towards him. Then, in unbroken silence, he seated himself, cross-legged, on a cushion which had been placed for him in the middle of the room. There was something almost uncanny in his air of perfect repose.

Slowly he let his gaze wander round. He did not seem so much to be looking *at* the people as *through* them. His eyes were strikingly dark and piercing, while even the olive tint of his skin did not detract from his death-like pallor.

Amy declared afterwards that if the silence had lasted another moment she must have screamed.

The adept—or chela, as he preferred being called, disclaiming the distinction of full adeptship—saved her this mortification by passing his hand slowly across his eyes, murmuring as he did so, "It distresses me." Evidently he was alluding to the light.

The lamps were immediately lowered.

He motioned the company to their seats; and they ranged themselves round him without a word, the dim, flickering light intensifying the weirdness of the tableau.

"What would you have of me?" he inquired at length, and, although his accent was almost faultless, he spoke as if he were more accustomed to write English than to use it orally.

"A sign by which we may know that the adepts do indeed possess those occult powers to which they lay claim," replied Mrs. Talbot boldly.

"You know not what you ask, O woman! Those of whom you speak have ever worked in secret, handing down their knowledge from age to age to initiates who vow to guard it jealously. In the Western world the scientists seek to proclaim their discoveries with a blast of trumpets; the adepts are wiser, and will reveal their powers only to those who are qualified to profit by such revelation."

Mrs. Talbot did not much like being thus addressed, but thinking it was only the chela's way, she let it pass.

"But surely the Brothers do occasionally give some proof of the powers with which their transcendental knowledge of natural laws invests them, in order to strengthen the basis on which their philosophical system rests?" she persisted falteringly. Her heart was too firmly fixed on a manifestation of abnormal phenomena to relinquish so cherished a desire without a struggle.

"The display of occult phenomena for the purpose of exciting wonder is *never* permitted; but to those who earnestly seek truth for its own sake, a sign is occasionally vouchsafed." Then, turning to Mr. Corbyn, Lo Sang continued: "No; the manifestations which have heretofore called forth so much controversy have not taxed to the utmost limits the powers of those who have produced them; rather have they been but faint indications of faculties, the full scope of which it is not permitted to any to know, save those who, having withdrawn from the world, are prepared to devote their lives to the unremitting study of metaphysical inquiry."

Mr. Corbyn had not spoken since the chela entered. He was, however, at that moment mentally engaged in framing the question to which Lo Sang so unexpectedly volunteered a reply. Struck with the strangeness of this coincidence, he was about to expatiate on it when, with a wave of the hand, the great teacher continued—

"My clairvoyant faculties have, during my chelaship, been so far brought to perfection that I never fail to become conscious of the presence of an earnest inquirer into truth."

Presumably even philosophers have their vulnerable points, and Mr. Corbyn certainly did seem gratified by Lo Sang's discernment. "Would it be possible for you to enumerate any of the forms in which these more highly developed faculties are wont to find expression?" he asked, emboldened by the chela's appreciation.

"Time would not permit me to touch on so vast a subject now. Possibly the future may furnish us with

opportunities of discussing it together. In passing, I will merely allude to the power which all adepts possess of deciphering the actions, as they appear photographed in astral light, which constitute the past life of each individual: a power which never fails to supply them with an exhaustive knowledge of the moral character of all with whom they come in contact."

Every one seemed uneasy. Even Amy, who had probably less cause than any present to dread so unexpected a revelation, looked quite scared.

Mrs. Talbot, who felt that the discourse was taking an unpleasant turn, leant across and whispered to Mr. Corbyn—"Do assure him we are all thoroughly earnest inquirers; and ask him if he won't do some little thing."

She did not altogether relish playing second fiddle in her own drawing-room, still she was ready to pay any price for the display of phenomena.

He rose, made a low obeisance, and quitted the room as noiselessly as he had entered it.

"We have had a very instructive evening, have we not, Miss Talbot?" asked Mr. Corbyn later on.

"Personally, I think I might have profited more by Lo Sang's discourse had it been better adapted to my understanding," replied Amy rather sharply. Truth to tell, she had half expected Horace Kingsford, and now that the evening had passed without his coming, she was disappointed.

"Esoteric doctrines are not easily grasped," and Mr. Corbyn smiled indulgently, as he allowed his almost colourless eyes to dwell approvingly on the sweet girlish figure beside him.

"SHE AWOKE TO FIND MRS. TALBOT STANDING BY THE SIDE OF HER BED" (*p.* 307).

"I will communicate with the Arhats—or Brothers, as you have doubtless been accustomed to hear the fraternity called. It may be, O woman, they will accede to your request," said Lo Sang, although Mrs. Talbot was positive he could not have overheard her whisper.

The sage buried his face in his hands, and remained perfectly motionless for some time. Then all present distinctly heard the faint sound of a silvery bell. Instantly the chela assumed a listening attitude, which he maintained for several minutes, while his lips moved now and again as if he were sending, as well as receiving, messages by psychological telegraphy. Gradually the far-off look faded from his face, and, turning to Mr. Corbyn, he said—

"The Arhats have hearkened to your supplication. In this place, at the full moon, they will produce such evidence as shall confirm your faith in their powers. Till then, farewell."

"I hope you try to master the subject by a progressive course of reading. So many err by attempting to study the deeper mysteries before they have qualified themselves for their reception," remarked Miss Corbyn austerely. *She* was not befooled by the girl's beauty.

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CHAPTER THE SECOND.

TRUE to his appointment, Lo Sang Bah Poot appeared the following Thursday soon after the full moon had risen.

Mrs. Talbot's mind had been so occupied with the chela's promised visit that she had hardly said a word to Amy about Mr. Corbyn's offer. She had just mentioned that gentleman's name in a rather insinuating tone, but when Amy did not respond, she let the matter drop.

Now, as the chela entered, Amy was standing in the

conservatory, and Horace Kingsford was by her side.

Horace had been explaining his absence on the occasion of Lo Sang's previous visit, and had then gone on to ask Amy what had occurred that evening.

"The old gentleman must be rather like Father Christmas, with a turban instead of a holly wreath, I should think," remarked Horace, as Amy brought her narrative to an end, having, in her attempt to repeat the chela's observations, unconsciously made several blunders, calculated to have caused Mr. Corbyn's lank hair to stand on end could he have overheard them.

The girl laughed softly; Horace's voice was music in her ear.

"But really, Mr. Kingsford, he seemed to know what we were all thinking about."

"What an enviable gift! If I could only reverse the process, and make you know all that is in my mind at the present moment!"

Amy blushed rosy-red. There was an eagerness in Horace's eyes as they sought hers which she could not misread.

"Lo Sang has come; we had better go in," she said hurriedly, with a girl's natural impulse to escape from listening to the declaration she is really longing to hear.

"Stop—stop, Amy; I'm not going to let you escape like that. Look here, you know I love you, don't you, dear? I can't express myself in high-sounding phrases; but I'm always thinking of you, and I'm never so happy as when I'm with you; and if you'll love me a little too, and be my wife, I shall be the proudest and happiest fellow alive. Do say 'Yes,' there's a darling; we might be so awfully jolly together!"

"I don't know what mamma *would* say, I am sure," answered Amy weakly.

"Oh, never mind 'mamma!'" replied Horace, with a recklessness attributable to inexperience of Mrs. Talbot's firmness. "Look here, my darling, I shall come and see Mr. Talbot to-morrow morning; I may, mayn't I? Yes; just one. See! I'm going to take it as my right."

"Now we really *must* go in," said Amy, feeling terribly dismayed at her own temerity, and yet withal very happy.

"Mind, to-morrow morning, darling," whispered Horace, as they made their way to the drawing-room.

They found Lo Sang busily engaged in issuing commands. He was even more peremptory than he had been on the previous occasion, ordering Mrs. Talbot about in a manner of which that lady strongly disapproved. Still, she did not dare to show her resentment.

The chela insisted that every one in the house—the servants included—should assemble in the one room, saying that the magnetic current would thereby be strengthened.

It required the exercise of all Amy's powers of persuasion to induce Mr. Talbot to comply with this condition. At last, however, he appeared, looking hopelessly mystified. He was wont to describe himself as a plain man, and he made no secret of having but little real sympathy with his wife's intellectual ambition.

Then Lo Sang ordered all present to arange themselves in a three-quarter circle, with their faces towards the fireplace, and their chairs sufficiently far from the walls to allow of a person passing round at the back. This, he explained, was to insure the uninterrupted passage of the magnetic current. He also insisted on the door being left open.

Again he had complained of the light distressing him, and had suggested the lamps being turned quite out, as the room was sufficiently lit by the glow from the fire. This had accordingly been done.

Having enjoined absolute silence, he seated himself on his cushion in the middle of the circle, and remained perfectly motionless for some minutes.

Again the little silvery bell was heard—this time even more distinctly than before. Then Lo Sang rose, and the fitful firelight revealed an expression of rapt intensity upon his face. Making his way through the circle with his noiseless tread, he glided round at the back of the chairs several times, pausing now and again to make a few mesmeric passes over the heads of two or three of those seated. Amy was one whom he thus singled out.

Suddenly the girl gave a little scream; she was not a woman of iron nerve.

"What is it?" asked Horace in much concern. He would have liked to have had it out with Lo Sang for frightening his darling.

"Something has fallen on my lap. Oh, it is a flower!"

At that moment several of the guests made similar exclamations.

On examination, the flowers proved to be wild, and of rather rare species, such as could certainly not have grown in English woods at that season. Nevertheless, they were perfectly fresh, with the dew still clinging to them, while to one or two, which had apparently been pulled up by the roots, particles of damp earth adhered.

"Remarkably like the tricks they do at the Egyptian Hall," murmured Mr. Talbot to himself.

"To the uninitiated, the manifestation of occult power, which I have just been instrumental in producing, may perhaps wear some slight resemblance to the deceptions practised by a charlatan, but those capable of bringing earnest thought to bear on the subject will see this is attributable to the fact that all conjuring tricks aim at achieving a superficial likeness to occult phenomena," said Lo Sang severely.

"Well, his ears are sharp enough, at any rate," was Mr. Talbot's mental criticism.

"I presume the true explanation of the phenomenon we have just witnessed is connected with the method in which thought-power can be employed to affect material objects?" remarked Mr. Corbyn, with the air of a man who knows of what he is talking.

The chela bowed his head in acquiescence. "The

process is one of which Western scientists have not, as yet, the most elementary conception. At present it is only permitted to a few Western minds gifted, like your own, with a rare intelligence, to dimly comprehend the direction in which the adepts seek their inspiration."

Although Mrs. Talbot was secretly exasperated at being so completely put on one side in her own house, she still felt gratified at the chela's appreciation of Mr. Corbyn's intellect. If only her stepdaughter were sensible, this man, "gifted with a rare intelligence," might ere long be her son-in-law!

"Would it be possible to produce a phenomenon of such a nature that all present, however little really earnest thought they may have devoted to the subject, should at once recognise it as a display of supernatural power, or, more correctly speaking, a manifestation of faculties not rightly comprehended?" asked Mr. Corbyn.

"You ask of me, O brother, a severe test. To avoid failure, several sittings are always advisable, in order to establish the necessary *rapport*, before any effort is made to produce the kind of phenomenon you suggest. Nevertheless, I will make the attempt."

Mr. Corbyn was about to express his gratitude, when Lo Sang said, addressing Amy—

"I will select you, O daughter, as a medium."

"May I ask, sir, why your choice has fallen on Miss Talbot?" asked Horace hastily.

"Of all present, she is the most sceptical; hence, in convincing her of the genuineness of the phenomenon which is about to be produced, I shall have attained my object in a higher degree than if I were merely to succeed in confirming the faith of one who is already prepared to admit the truth of Esoteric teaching."

"It won't upset you, Amy, will it?" whispered Horace anxiously.

"There will be nothing in the part I shall require the young lady to perform to disturb the most sensitive nerves. I will ask you, O daughter, merely to select some trinket you may be wearing at this moment, and to deposit it in a locked receptacle in a room other than this, handing me the key of the receptacle. It would add to the conclusiveness of the test if you could place the trinket with others of a like nature."

Running up to her dressing-room, Amy removed from her neck a small locket containing her mother's portrait, which she wore *under* her dress. Placing it in the top tray of her jewel-case, which was standing on the dressing-table, she locked the case, and brought the key to Lo Sang.

The conditions were such as to admit of the most convincing proof. Lo Sang could not possibly have seen the locket, as Amy had worn it under her dress. Moreover, the tray where she had placed it was filled with various trinkets of no very great value, many of which might well be mistaken for the one last deposited. Her more costly jewels Amy kept in the bottom of the case.

Lo Sang took the key, wrapped it in a handkerchief, and placed it in his bosom. He then motioned Amy to her former seat, enjoined her to keep her mind firmly fixed on the trinket she had secreted, and took up a position at the back of her chair. Ten minutes passed in unbroken and oppressive silence.

"Now, O daughter, feel in the pocket of your apron."

Amy felt. *The locket was there!*

Slowly Lo Sang took from his bosom the handkerchief he had previously placed there, and unwrapping it, returned Amy the key of her jewel-case.

"Bothered if I can make it out," muttered Mr. Talbot. "Yet it *must* be trickery," he added, in such a tone that if Amy *was* the most sceptical person present, her scepticism must indeed have been abnormal.

All had been straining their ears in vain for the least sound; they had also kept the outline of Lo Sang's form well in view, as discernible by the glow from the fire; and all were unanimous in asserting that the chela had not so much as shifted his position. Amy, too, declared she had not been conscious of the slightest movement, and that she was quite unaware how the locket found its way into the pocket of her apron.

"Is not the marvellous phenomenon we have witnessed susceptible of an explanation which would be intelligible to those present?" asked Mr. Corbyn.

"Occult phenomena are not, as you have already implied, in any degree attributable to magic. They are merely the product of a transcendental knowledge of natural laws. It is, however, of the utmost importance that the methods by which the adepts work should be concealed. The world is not yet righteous enough to be entrusted with the exercise of such stupendous powers. But it is permitted me to offer you a partial explanation of the manner in which the transmission of material objects by occult agency becomes possible, although the explanation will try your faith to the utmost. Modern science, as you are probably aware, now admits that *all* bodies are composed of molecules separated from each other by distances greater than their supposed dimensions. Now, in order to transmit objects, as both the flowers and the locket were transmitted this evening, it is necessary to propel matter through matter, a feat which to the Western mind is an impossibility. It is equally an impossibility to an adept, as long as the object to be propelled remains intact. The adepts can, however, disintegrate the object, and when the atoms are thus scattered, he can convey them on a magnetic current to their destination through any intervening matter, restoring them to their original form as soon as their journey is completed."

The company received this explanation with expressions of interest or obstinate incredulity, according to their various temperaments.

"But as it is possible to propel matter through matter, why did you need the key of the jewel-case? Surely it would have been equally possible to have conveyed the locket, when disintegrated, through the locked case?"

"Such was the method adopted. The key never left my person. Having been in Miss Talbot's possession, it had become impregnated with her magnetism, and it was necessary I should have either that or something else which she was accustomed to carry about with her, on my person, in order to establish an uninterrupted occult trail, without which the accomplishment of my purpose would have been an impossibility."

"And the methods by which the adepts produce these marvellous results must ever remain a mystery?" asked Mr. Corbyn, feeling he had not much to live for.

"For many ages, I fear they must. At present they are used merely as credentials of the truth of the philosophical system the adepts are endeavouring to establish."

"Are you permitted to speak at length and openly of the system itself?"

"Assuredly. That is my mission."

"And will you do so?" asked Mr. Corbyn eagerly.

"The hour is late. I will, however, seize the earliest opportunity of speaking with you on the subject, although I cannot now say when or where our next meeting may be. Till then, farewell."

The other guests stayed late discussing the incidents of the evening, and it was past midnight before Amy retired.

What with Lo Sang's phenomena and Horace's offer, she was terribly excited. "To-morrow, darling, remember," Horace had whispered as he wished her good night; and she was determined nothing should induce her to give her lover up. But, oh, how she dreaded the scene with her stepmother!

It seemed to Amy that she had only just fallen into a restless sleep when she awoke to find Mrs. Talbot standing by the side of her bed.

"Here is a cup of tea for you, Amy dear; I brought it in, fearing you might have a headache after all the excitement of last evening."

Mrs. Talbot was looking pale, subdued: in short, quite unlike herself. Could she have heard in some mysterious way of Horace's offer? and was her present graciousness only the prelude to a terrible outburst?

"Mamma dear," faltered Amy, "Horace Kingsford is coming to see papa this morning." It was better to get it over at once. Now for the storm.

But Mrs. Talbot did not seem to hear what her stepdaughter said.

"Amy, where did you leave your diamonds last night?" she asked in an agitated whisper, and her teeth fairly chattered.

"In the bottom of my jewel-case, where I always keep them."

"*They are not there now!*"

"What can you mean, mamma?"

"Oh, Amy, that wretched old impostor!" and Mrs. Talbot buried her face in her hands and sobbed aloud.

"Dear mamma, do tell me what is the matter."

"He has taken all the best of the plate, and your diamonds as well. I shall never forgive myself; never."

Mrs. Talbot was far too penitent to raise any objection to Horace as a lover, so that Amy felt the loss of her diamonds had its compensation. Mr. Talbot, too, seized the much-longed-for opportunity to assert his authority, and his wife never again succeeded in altogether quelling him.

"After all, it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good," remarked Amy to Horace, immediately after Mrs. Talbot had warmly welcomed him as a future son-in-law.

"Yes, dear, so it is. Of course I'm glad, for your sake, that there's been no fuss about our engagement, although I think, under any circumstances, we should ultimately have come off victorious."

Amy listened to this little speech with becoming attention, appearing much impressed thereby, after the manner of newly-engaged young ladies.

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

SECTION V.—(HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTS).

KEEPING household accounts is not believed to be a strong point with British housekeepers. Large numbers of them boldly say that they cannot keep accounts; others do not see the use of doing so; others consider the business too much trouble. Of those who professedly have mastered the difficulties connected with the duty, it is probable that five-sixths do not keep their books accurately; the only result they arrive at being that the amount set down in the account never will balance with the cash in hand, and that the discrepancy is sure to be a deficiency, and is scarcely ever a surplus. On discovering the deficiency domestic accountants usually adopt a quick and simple method of making the accounts balance. They add up the items of expenditure, compare what they ought to have in hand with what they really have, and set down the difference on the side of payments, under the convenient term "sundries." Accounts kept in this fashion undoubtedly balance delightfully; they are also not altogether valueless; but they are not nearly so helpful as they might be if they were kept truthfully.

Notwithstanding all that can be said against them, it is a very good thing for housekeepers to keep accounts. The chief benefit to be derived therefrom is that to do so acts as a check upon the individual who has household expenditure in hand.

It is not right for any one, no matter how wealthy she may be, to spend money lavishly, without knowing

what return she gets for her money. Lavishness is the one extreme of which meanness is the other, and it would be hard to say which of the two is the more contemptible vice. To avoid both, however, it is necessary to know how much we ought to spend, and to spend the amount wisely. Keeping accounts makes us realise upon what our money has been laid out.

Keeping accounts helps us also to keep within our income, that great achievement, the accomplishment of which means to so many of us the difference between happiness and misery, between ease of mind and anxiety, between independence and slavery. It is hard for people to keep within their income when they have a great many claims upon it, yet do not realise how their money goes, and have no means of checking the leakages. Accurately-kept accounts do not add to the income, of course, but they undoubtedly help us to make it cover our expenditure.

There are in these days household account books to be bought of various kinds and of varying excellence. Most of these err, however, on the side of being too elaborate. Only those housekeepers can manage them who have clear heads for arithmetic, and plenty of time to give to the balancing and checking of accounts. What the majority of housekeepers want is a quick and ready method of keeping accounts, which will involve very little trouble, but which yet will show at a glance how much money has been spent, upon what money has been spent, and where retrenchment must be made, if retrenchment there must be. To housekeepers who desire aid in these directions the following suggestions are offered :— The method recommended does not claim to be by any means perfect; indeed, it is probable that skilled accountants would regard it with the utmost scorn. Nevertheless, it is exceedingly simple, it can be carried out by any one who can utilise the first four rules of arithmetic in dealing with pounds, shillings, and pence ; and it has stood the test of experience.

LEFT-HAND SHEET.

First Week. RECEIPTS.

(*Date.*)		£	s.	d.
	Cash in hand	0	0	6
	INCOME	2	10	0

Model of Expenditure.—Milk, 4/6. Butcher, 15/- Grocer, 8/- Baker, 3/- Greengrocer, 5/- Laundry, 5/- Butterman, 7/- Sundries, 2/6.

Before beginning to keep accounts in this way the housekeeper must ascertain exactly how much she has to spend per week. This knowledge is indispensable. It may not be close at hand, but it must be obtained somehow, if the accounts are to be a help to thrift. When the income is variable an average should be taken, and the amount allowed should be under rather than over the mark. Some housekeepers have a liking for a monthly balancing of accounts. A weekly balancing is, however, much the easier of the two.

Having ascertained how much she may spend per week, let the housekeeper get an ordinary account book, open it at the second page, allow a double page for each week, and rule it to suit herself. The left-hand page is for receipts, the right-hand page for payments. On the left-hand page, therefore, she must set down the weekly income, with any cash in hand there may be left from last week. A little below this she should write down a "Model of Expenditure." This model will furnish a theoretical plan for the laying out of the money. It would have to be drawn up from old bills ; from a calculation of actual needs ; and from experience. It would need to be corrected from time to time as circumstances changed, and as necessities increased or diminished. But every week it should be set down, and it should be made as near the fact as possible.

The right-hand page should be set apart for payments, and each detail should be placed under one of the headings found in the "Model of Expenditure." Illustration is, perhaps, the best form of description, and the idea of the plan will, therefore, be most readily understood if imaginary samples are given of the two sheets, "Receipts" and "Payments." These sheets shall be supposed to be drawn up by a housekeeper who has to provide for a family of four persons, one of whom is a servant, on an allowance of £2 10s. per week. It must be understood that the amounts named are not intended to be a model of what might reasonably be spent in such a case ; they are merely given in order to show the method of keeping account of the same. The amount spent in every household must necessarily be determined by circumstances.

RIGHT-HAND SHEET.

First Week. PAYMENTS.

(*Date.*)	Milk.	Butcher.	Baker.	Grocer.	Greengrocer.	Laundry.	Butterman.	Sundries.	£	s.	d.
Monday ...					1/-	5/-	10d.	Sweep, 1/- Dust, 2d.		8	0
Tuesday ...	4/6	3/6	3/-				1/2			12	2
Wednesday...					1/6					1	6
Thursday ...		4/6					2/-	Saucepan mend., 1/4		7	10
Friday		1/-								1	0
Saturday ...		6/-		8/-	2/6		3/-			19	6
TOTALS ...	4/6	15/-	3/-	8/-	5/-	5/-	7/-	2/6	2	10	0

It will be seen that in this account a specially wide space is allotted to "Sundries." This is done in order that there may be room for details, as it is most desirable that these should be plainly set down. It should be understood, also, that under the heading of "Butcher" all purchases of fish, bacon, and poultry are included, that the "Baker" furnishes flour as well as bread, and the "Butterman" supplies eggs and cheese as well as butter.

By keeping her account in this way the housekeeper can tell at a glance, first, how much she has spent

each day and each week; and secondly, what proportion she has spent on each item. If, at any time, she exceeds her income, she will, by comparing the items with the model, know at once in which department there has been excess; while if a saving has been effected she will know where the saving has been made. The entries can be made each day in a minute or two, and without any trouble, yet it will be impossible for any one to overstep the limits assigned, without at least knowing what she is about. House-accounts which are helpful to this extent are certainly worth keeping. PHYLLIS BROWNE.

*** Intending competitors in this section are reminded that, according to the regulations published in our December number, April 10, 1889, is the latest day for receiving entries.

CLASS LIST—SECTION IV.—COOKERY.

The Prize of ONE GUINEA, offered for the best Loaf of Home-made Bread, is awarded to Miss SANA NILSEN, 8, Victoria Park, Shipley, Yorkshire.

CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR.

Name.	*Address.*
Allen, S. A.	Walsall.
Andrews, Edith ...	Torquay.
Barrett, Eliza ...	Totteridge.
Bishop, Frances A....	Carlisle.
Briggs, Lucy H. ...	Manchester.
Butterworth, Ann ...	Stockport.
Cassels, C. M. ...	Darwen.
Clark, Agnes ...	Bradford.
Connon, Charlotte A.	Burton-on-Trent.
Cozens, Mary ...	Lewes.
Crossley, Jane ...	Bury.
Dawson, Henrietta H.	Huddersfield.
Dean, Alice	Liverpool.
Empson, Anne M. ...	King's Lynn.
Everton, Mary ...	Coventry.
Farrand, M. E. ...	Horbury.
Fitton, Kate... ...	Leeds.
Ford, Harriett ...	Manchester.
Forrest, Elizabeth ...	Hackney.
Foster, S.	Sydenham.
Foster, Sarah A. ...	Nottingham.
Garbutt, Mary ...	Leeds.
Gray, Elizabeth ...	Hornsea.
Hall, Frances G. ...	Bridlington Quay.
Halliday, Jane ...	Farnley.
Horsfall, Mrs. ...	Mytholmroyd, Yorks.
Hosking, Katie ...	Redruth.
Hood, Eleanor M....	Redcar.
Jobson, Emmie ...	Cullercoats.
Jones, Janet A. ...	Kendal.
Jongkin, Nancie ...	Hemel Hempstead.
King, Bertha ...	Ramsgate.
Lunn, Selina ...	Eckington.
Manley, Laura L. ...	Darlington.
McMillan, Pollie ...	Keighley.
Nettleship, Lucy ...	Sheffield.
Noble, Clara ...	Oldham.
Prestt, C.	Wigan.
Quad, Emily ...	Blackburn.
Ramsden, Eugénie B.	Leeds.
Scrambler, Margaret	Lancaster.
Smith, Louisa M. ...	London, E.C.
Snowball, Mary I. ...	Hexham.
Stretch, Ethel ...	Liverpool.
Thomson, Hannah J.	Kendal.
Thornham, Clara ...	Hull.
Tilly, E. Edith ...	Cardiff.
Turner, Annie M. ...	Hexham.
Walker, J.	Warrington.
Wickham, Marian P.	Ware.
Wilby, Ann	Ossett.

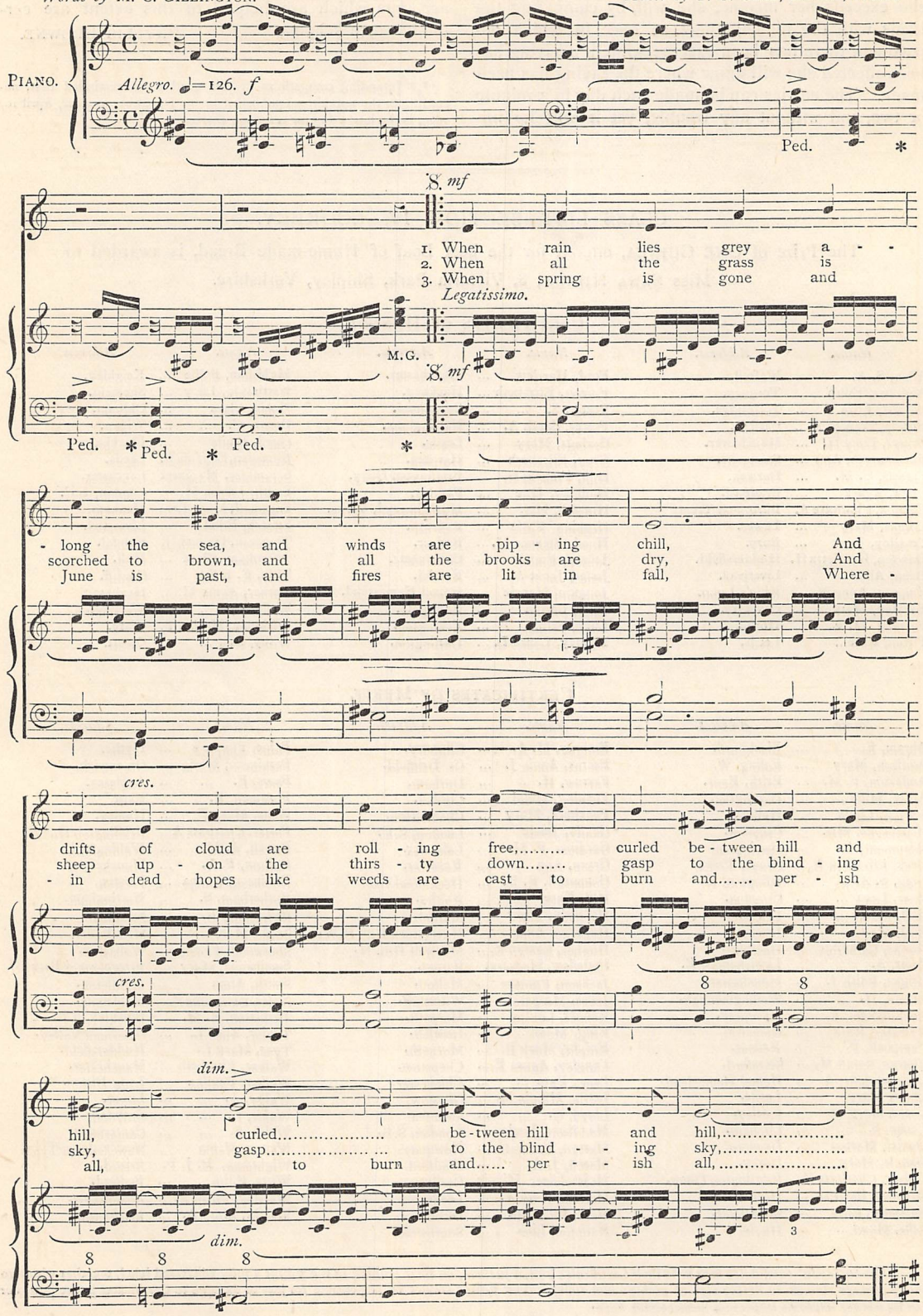
CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

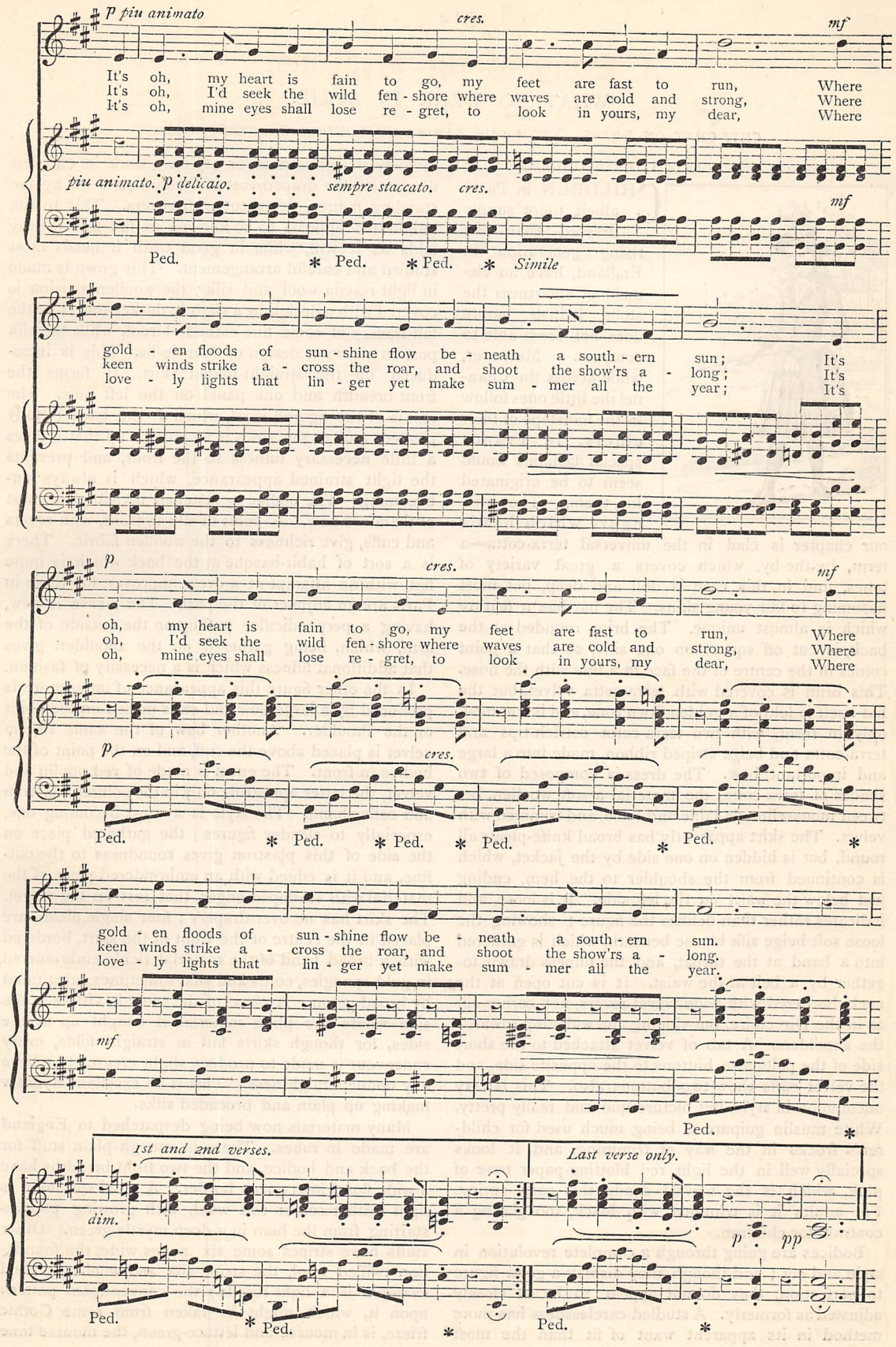
Name.	*Address.*
Abram, E.	Blackburn.
Addison, Mary ...	Ealing, W.
Anderson, F. M. ...	Erith, Kent.
Apter, Milly... ...	Darlington.
Ayrton, Lizzie ...	Halifax.
Ballantyne, Mrs. ...	Croydon.
Beaumont, F. ...	Carrington.
Beck, Elizabeth B....	Grays, Essex.
Bigg, S. A.	Islington, N.
Boar, Lena	Croydon.
Bott, Maud	Leicester.
Bott, May	Leicester.
Bowes, Catherine ...	Hastings.
Brett, A.	Lewisham, S.E.
Briggs, Edith J. ...	Manchester.
Brown, H.	Wellingborough.
Buckingham, E. ...	Newquay.
Bywater, Kate ...	Gomersal.
Campbell, F. ...	Redcar.
Charge, Sarah M. ...	Stamford.
Cheesewright, A. ...	Hemel Hempstead.
Child, Mary... ...	Leeds.
Coats, Mary W. ...	Paisley.
Cooke, S.	Litcham.
Daniel, Marion ...	Devoran.
Dennis, Mary ...	Derby.
Dosser, Charlotte A.	Bridlington Quay.
Drayton, Beatrice ...	High Barnet.
Eastbury, Eliza ...	St. Albans.
Ellis, Maud	Hayle.
Embrey, M. A. ...	Clinbury.
Escritt, Annie J. ...	Gt. Driffield.
Farrow, H.	Durham.
Fleming, Maud ...	Clifden.
Fouchard, Mary ...	Chadderton.
Gandy, Jessie ...	London, S.E.
Gardiner, F. M. ...	Leicester.
Green, Ann	Rocester.
Gomersall, E. E. ...	Heckmondwike.
Hill, Kate	Rugby.
Horsman, Mary ...	Malton.
Housego, Annie ...	Haverstock Hill, N.W.
Hughes, Evelyn E....	Muswell Hill, N.
Ingledew, Margaret	Barnet.
Jackson, Frances ...	Malton.
Jones, Margaret ...	Wilmslow.
Kenner, Louisa ...	Morpeth.
King, Maud... ...	Ipswich.
Knight, Mary B. ...	Morpeth.
Langley, Agnes E....	Chepstow.
Leng, Kate	Chichester.
Lettle, Minnie M. ...	Glasgow.
Lloyd, C.	Swansea.
Maddison, Jessie ...	London, S.E.
Martyn, Bessie G. ...	Newquay.
Mason, J. A. ...	Bradford.
McMonnies, Minnie	Garlieston.
Morrish, Kate A. ...	Leeds.
Nash, Elizabeth ...	Broadway.
Naunton, Lina ...	Southwold.
Paine, Florence ...	Hythe.
Parkinson, Maria ...	Greenwich.
Pears, E.	Anglesea.
Plowman, E. ...	Kent.
Poole, Mary E. ...	Hanley.
Porter, Charlotte A ..	Bridlington Quay.
Powell, A. M. ...	Wallingford.
Railton, F. A. ...	Manchester.
Robinson, Emma ...	Preston.
Rotherham, S. ...	Nottingham.
Ryl, Emily B. ...	Swindon.
Sever, Mary... ...	Manchester.
Sherwood, Florrie ...	Wollaston.
Smallwood, Mary ...	Brownswood Park, N.
Smith, Alma ...	Middleton.
Soder, Emmeline E...	Maidstone.
Tarbolton, A. M. ...	Brockley, S.E.
Taylor, Alice L. ...	Caterham Valley.
Tyas, Mary L. ...	Huddersfield.
Walker, Elizabeth ...	Manchester.
Walker, Paulina ...	Long Ditton.
Waller, A.	Luton.
Wallis, L.	Croydon.
Welsh, S.	Canterbury.
Welton, Nellie ...	Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Wightman, E. J. P.	Bristol.
Witts, Edith... ...	Bedford.
Worsley, Edith A....	Audenshaw.
Wright, Mary A. ...	Blackburn.

The successful candidates may have their Certificates posted to them, on their sending to the Editor a fully-addressed label, together with two penny postage stamps, to defray cost of postage and roller. The Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage to Certificates in the post, nor can he answer inquiries respecting unsuccessful work.

A Song of the Seasons.

Words by M. C. GILLINGTON. *Music by* F. G. COLE, L.Mus., T.C.L.




p piu animato
cres.
mf
It's oh, my heart is fain to go, my feet are fast to run, Where
It's oh, I'd seek the wild fen - shore where waves are cold and strong, Where
It's oh, mine eyes shall lose re - gret, to look in yours, my dear, Where
piu animato.
p delicato.
sempre staccato.
cres.
mf
Ped.
* Ped.
* Ped.
* Simile
gold - en floods of sun - shine flow be - neath a south - ern sun; It's
keen winds strike a - cross the roar, and shoot the show'rs a - long; It's
love - ly lights that lin - ger yet make sum - mer all the year; It's
p
cres.
mf
oh, my heart is fain to go, my feet are fast to run, Where
oh, I'd seek the wild fen - shore where waves are cold and strong, Where
oh, mine eyes shall lose re - gret, to look in yours, my dear, Where
p
cres.
Ped.
* Ped.
* Ped.
* Ped.
* Ped.
*
gold - en floods of sun - shine flow be - neath a south - ern sun.
keen winds strike a - cross the roar, and shoot the show'rs a - long.
love - ly lights that lin - ger yet make sum - mer all the year.
mf
Ped.
*
1st and 2nd verses.
Last verse only.
dim.
p
pp
Ped.
* Ped.
*
Ped.
*

WHAT TO WEAR IN APRIL.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

CHILDREN in Paris, albeit more simply dressed than the rising generation in England, have an element of smartness the stolid British nature does not seem able to compass. Moreover, while across the Channel the little ones follow in the footsteps of their elders, in France special fashions would seem to be originated for them. The little figure which heads our chapter is clad in the universal terra-cotta—a term, by-the-by, which covers a great variety of tones, and in this case is dull and deep, but most becoming to fair young skins. The hat has a feature which is almost unique. The brim, rounded at the back, is cut off square on one side, so that a point comes in the centre of the face in a line with the nose. This brim is covered with terra-cotta velvet, but the hat itself is felt, of a golden-fawn tone, and is trimmed, only in front, with two terra-cotta ostrich-tips and terra-cotta and beige striped ribbon, made into a large and important bow. The dress is composed of two shades of terra-cotta, the material a soft woollen, between mousseline-de-laine and foulé, and trimmed with velvet. The skirt apparently has broad knife-pleats all round, but is hidden on one side by the jacket, which is continued from the shoulder to the hem, ending just below the waist on the left side. It is loose, and indicates rather than defines the figure ; showing the loose soft beige silk blouse beneath, which is gathered into a band at the throat, and the fulness drawn together by a belt at the waist. It is cut open at the neck, bordered with wide velvet revers, not corner-cut as in the Directoire, but sloping and widening towards the shoulders. A tab of velvet attached to the short side of the polonaise buttons to the opposite side, and the velvet cuffs show two buttons also. This is very uncommon in style, but picturesque and really pretty. White muslin guipure is being much used for children's frocks in the way of trimming, and it looks specially well in the light red blotting-paper tone of pink, which is the newest shade this early spring. For adults it is trimmed with black, too glaring a contrast for children.

Bodices are going through a complete revolution in style and cut ; and though they display a good figure to perfection, they do not appear to be so closely adjusted as formerly. A studied carelessness has more method in its apparent want of fit than the most severely straight-cut tailor styles. Mark in our first illustration the draped vest of the bodice worn by the standing figure. It is cut with revers. This to the uninitiated appears to be allowed to fall in soft easy folds as it will, while in good truth it needs most studied and careful arrangement. This gown is made in light reseda wool and silk ; the woollen portion is covered with a design in a slightly darker tone, like the fan tracery of some fine cathedral roof, while the silk portion shows a design of fleur-de-lis. This is introduced on the straight-folded skirt. It forms the front breadth and one panel on the left side. The rest is of the figured wool, which at the back is fully pleated, and at the sides is so caught up that it gives a little necessary fulness to the front, and prevents the tight strained appearance, which is always unbecoming. The bodice is fastened invisibly, as most of them are now. A point of silk in front, with revers and cuffs, give richness to the woollen fabric. There is a sort of habit-basque at the back which is quite flat, with no attempt at a dress-improver, for these in Paris are an adjunct of the past. The sleeve is new, having a perpendicular puffing on the outside of the arm, which, being gathered on the shoulder, gives that additional fulness which is a necessity of fashion.

In the other figure this appearance of importance is produced by a large bow and ends poised on the point of the shoulder. Another bow of the same ribbon velvet is placed above the cuff, and on the point of the bodice in front. The gown is made of red poplin and velvet, the latter appearing only in the pointed plastron and collar-band. The style is a most becoming one, especially to slender figures ; the gathered piece on the side of this plastron gives roundness to the outline, and it is edged with an embroidered piece of the material with scalloped edges, that rest on the velvet. The skirt has no over-drapery ; four single pleats are placed in the centre of the front of the skirt, bordered with a broad band of the material, richly embroidered in gold spangles, cords and silk, sometimes substituted by broad galon. A piece of the same is visible at the side where the plain material is caught up at the sides, for though skirts fall in straight folds, every endeavour is made to produce slight creases to relieve any undue straightness. This is an excellent style for making up plain and brocaded silks.

Many materials now being despatched to England are made in robes. There is enough plain stuff for the back and bodice, and the two front breadths have a wide floral interwoven border. A good specimen is light leather-colour soft wool, with growing poppies starting from the hem in a deep myrtle-green. Other stuffs have stripes some six inches wide, the foundation twilled wool, the stripe silk and wool. A good example is a light reseda ; the conventional pattern upon it, which might be taken from some Gothic frieze, is in mousse and lettuce-green, the mousse tone

almost brown. Another Empire design recalls the woollen brocaded stuffs hitherto used for table-cloths, for the entire surface is covered with a conventional design in silk and wool.

These gowns are made up full, ending at the waist, showing no fastening, but crossing diagonally over a plain vest-piece. The skirt hangs full and plain, caught up on one side to show a distinctive petticoat. Others with horizontal striped borderings have a quite full plain skirt. The bodice is a jacket, with revers, having a vest and sash.

The wide borderings are arranged on the skirt to show as much as possible; the back is of plain material pleated; a sash at the side. The sleeves have a V-shaped piece cut out in front, on the top of the arm, and a contrasting stuff inserted, matching a small V-shaped panel which occasionally occurs on the skirt. There is a disposition to make the sleeves very short, but it is to be hoped that English people will not adopt this fashion. Our grandmothers were hardier, or our climate was milder. The sparse clothing, low necks, and short sleeves worn by them in the daytime, would give us bad bronchitis and other illnesses.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

OUR two friends preparing for a morning of hard shopping have already secured, and had made up, some of the new materials of the season. The skirt worn by the lady with the umbrella in hand is made in soft stone-coloured twill, striped with bands of blue and of multi-coloured Paisley design. It is a strong, durable stuff, which looks well to the last. The jacket she wears with it is made of stone-coloured lady's cloth, with cuffs and revers of green velvet, matching one of the dominant tones in the Paisley stripe. The cut of this jacket is quite new; it is, in fact, a double jacket, one over the other, the revers forming the upper part of the second jacket, which is absolutely distinct. A flap-pocket of velvet is placed at the back. A collar of fur encircles the neck. This may or may not be attached to the jacket. Such additions are frequently made on springs, and clasp the throat without any additional fastening. The toque worn with this jacket is made of the same cloth, and bordered with fur to match the collarette. It stands high over the face, and is arranged with some art, but quite simply. Those Frenchwomen who care for high headgear wear these toques; their bonnets are quite close and flat. But in England we have not as yet adopted this revised edition in headgear.

A fashionable bonnet is worn by the accompanying figure. It might almost be described as a sailor hat trimmed like a bonnet, the brim widening over the face, and lined with a satin pleating entirely white, while the edge is bound with velvet matching the crown. Over the face is an aigrette of ostrich-plumes intermixed with some of the new flat ribbon-grass to match the dress. This is made of a new woollen fabric in light reseda, having sets of shaded stripes, light and dark, alternating with the plain colour, on which is thrown sparsely a light silk brocade. The front is made of plain woollen stuff, with single pleats. It is trimmed with brown velvet. A favourite mixture is this shade of reseda and brown. The bonnet is brown, likewise the strings. The cuffs are a band of brown velvet, so is the all-round collar. The skirt opening over the front is bordered with brown velvet, and braces come from beneath the revers and end in a bow, falling at the side. The front of the bodice has a pleated vest of reseda, and a low brown waistcoat, cut on the principle of a gentleman's evening waistcoat, meets this. You will note that the back of the skirt is so cut that no dress-improver is needed.

This early spring is the season specially set apart for the wearing of wool, though those who know the tricks of trade announce that this is to be a silk year. A practical reason for believing there is some truth in this latter assertion is that the price of silk has gone up, which means that a good deal has been sold.

AN AWKWARD QUESTION.

At present I shall content myself with discussing the new departure in woollens. Reseda and terra-cotta are the two dominant colours. Nun's veiling has been brought out with a thick border of the same tone; and in this, parchment, which is to be a dominant tone this summer, and olive-green lead the fashion. Amazone cloth has been brought out in a thin summer make, and in light shades of very great variety. Cashmere has some varieties—such as chevron weaving, and flecks of lighter tones introduced all over, like snowflakes. Weaving has an important part to play in new woollen goods, and some show diaper weaving, which is cleverly formed into plaids. On these fancy weavings silk figures are thrown in lighter tones, generally taking the form of very light and very natural sprays, like those first introduced on to silk last year. In "Vigoureux Fantaisie," silk stripes appear on neutral grounds; while some are shaded—red and black stripes, for instance, on a bronze vivid green ground, for we are gradually emancipating ourselves from the lugubrious colourings which for so long a time have had such vigorous hold on English taste.

The great feature in the spring woollen materials is the silk brocade thrown on woollen grounds, but the variety is infinite. Some have a large conventional pattern all over; others have a broad stripe, while some have only a woollen brocade, but the designs borrowed from the Louis XV. period. The Jacquard borderings, multi-coloured, are a triumph in weaving, and usually have narrow stripes to be made up with them. Scotch tweeds are introduced with distinct pieces of checks and stripes to be made up together with plain. All the stuffs this year are double width, to adapt themselves to the draperies as they are worn at present, and many are sold at the same price as the narrower. Many of the new woollens have a bright satin face, but the borders are decidedly the greatest novelties. I do not mean by this, bands, but wide bordering in beautiful designs which come up from the foot to the knee, and are generally in floral patterns, so arranged that the flowers seem to be growing naturally.

Silk and wool are blended in most of the best fabrics, and this is a combination which improves both, but cotton and wool are sure to produce bad wear, and should be looked after carefully. Silk checks are often thrown on woollen materials, with a broché flower in the centre of the square. Occasionally stripes and brocaded blooms are thrown on speckled grounds. The stiff conventional daisy, without stem or foliage, is a favourite pattern, which appears on "cachemire rayé" and on decided checks. Paisley patterns, as well as stripes, are very well worn; and, of course, in these the distinctive pine patterns appear. Soft woollens of this nature are just adapted to tea-gowns, which are needed for comfort and not for show or home dinner wear; "tea-gown" now being such an elastic term, a mere dressing-gown is included in it, and a magnificent garment of plush silk or embroidery costing £80 or more. The Empire designs assert themselves in the bordered materials, as also in the stripes, which are often formed of interlaced wreaths in two tones of silk on a neutral ground.

DAFFODILS.

Those women who wish to be beforehand with the world should study the fashion of the end of the last and the beginning of the present century. If our grandmothers had kept a faithful account of what they wore, it would be valuable now. Plain full skirts, short in length to match the short waists, sleeves that taper towards the wrist, and bodices which are made with a fulness which crosses in the centre—all these are worn now.

Alpacas will be a great fashion as the season advances, also mousseline-de-laine, which is printed in charming designs. They will often be worn by people who find washing dresses too troublesome. The alpacas have silk stripes and silk brocades. Cottons look almost as pretty as silks. They have lace stripes, ordinary stripes, checks, and plaids, and are printed with designs like silks.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

APRIL—LARK.

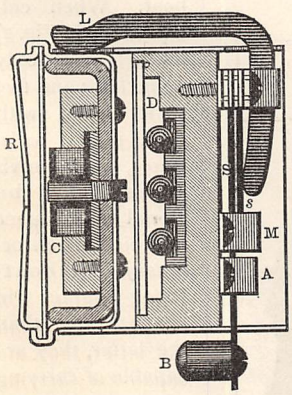
REJOICING bird! whose wings have cleft the blue,
And those far heights of morning sky have scaled!
Youth loves to watch thee, but with sighs watch those
Whose wings grow wearied, and whose hopes have failed.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

The Button Telephone.

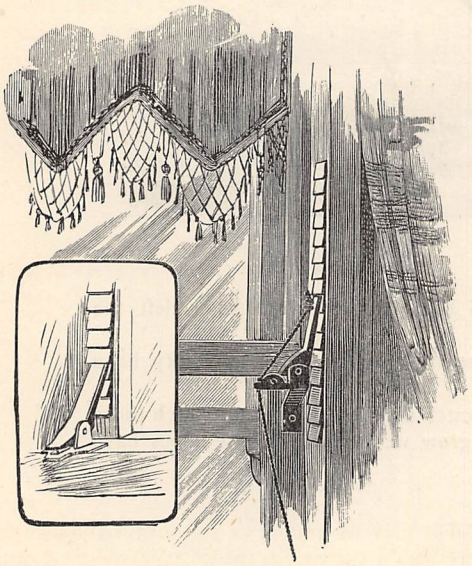


M. Clamond, the inventor of the well-known thermopile, has brought out a small household telephone, which has the merit of compactness. The entire apparatus for conversing, that is to say, the transmitter and receiver, are contained in a short tube, six centimètres (2¼ inches) in diameter. The figure represents a section through the tube, showing the receiver, R, closing the front of the case. This consists of a Bell telephone, with coil and magnet, C, behind an iron diaphragm, as usual. When the receiver is removed and held to the ear for listening, the transmitter is exposed for speaking to. It consists of a carbon diaphragm, D, with three carbon balls in carbon sockets, which touch it from behind. This forms a handy microphone. At the back of the case is a switch for sending the current through the call-bell or the microphone. It consists of two metal springs, S S, insulated from each other, and two copper pieces, M and A. A push-button, B, serves to ring the call-bell of the distant station; and a bell is connected beside the instrument for the home call. When the apparatus is at rest the receiver closes it like a cover, and the bent lever, L, presses the spring, *s*, into contact with the spring S, thus allowing the call-current from the distant station to ring the home call-bell. The operator then responds by pressing the button, B, thus making contact between the spring S and the piece A, and ringing the distant bell. He also removes the receiver, R, and holds it to his ear, thus allowing the upper part of the lever, L, to fall down; and the spring *s*, now released, makes contact with the piece M, putting the current through the microphone, and enabling the operator to reply to his correspondent. When the talk is finished, the

apparatus is again put in readiness for the next call by simply restoring the receiver to its old position as a cover to the instrument. Such an apparatus is likely to be useful for communicating between the different rooms of a house, or the offices and workshops of large premises.

A New Sash-Fastener.

Our illustration shows a new sash-fastener which has just been patented. As will be seen, its action



is very simple. The fastener consists of a cant-lever working automatically against a toothed rack. The lever is fixed to the top of the lower sash, and falls by its own weight upon the toothed rack, and if any attempt were made to open the window, the top of the lever would be pushed home in the rack, and the window remain immovable. When it is desired to open the window, all that it is necessary to do is to lift the lever by means of the thumb-spring attached to it for that purpose, and the window may then be opened to the extent required. When it is desirable to leave the bottom sash open for a little way, the lever may be allowed to fall against one of the upper teeth in the rack, and it will be found impossible to open the window further without lifting the lever, which can only be done from inside. For windows where the bottom sash is of such a height as to place the thumb-spring out of easy reach, its place is taken by a simple cord attachment, shown in our illustration.

The Electric Light in Ice.

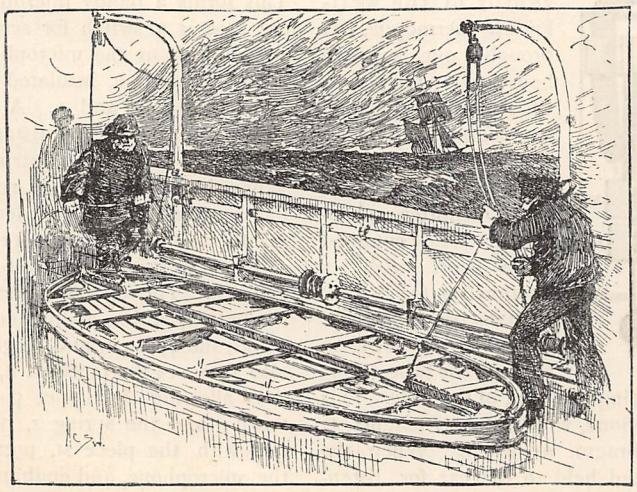
At the Cincinnati Centennial Exhibition there was an interesting exhibit of electric incandescent lamps frozen into blocks of ice. The ice was frozen round the bulbs by the Cincinnati Ice Company, and aniline dyes were infused into the water as it was freezing, so as to give the ice a variegated effect, which, when lit up by the lamps within, was exceedingly pretty. At the same exhibition artificial flowers made of incandescent lamps were, we understand, also exhibited.

A Collapsible Boat.

Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate a new collapsible boat, which attracted much attention at the recent Glasgow International Exhibition. The boat is so designed that by the simple operation of hoisting it by davit, in order to lower it, the true form (Fig. 1) is taken and made rigid for immediate use. A lifeboat of

FIG. 1.

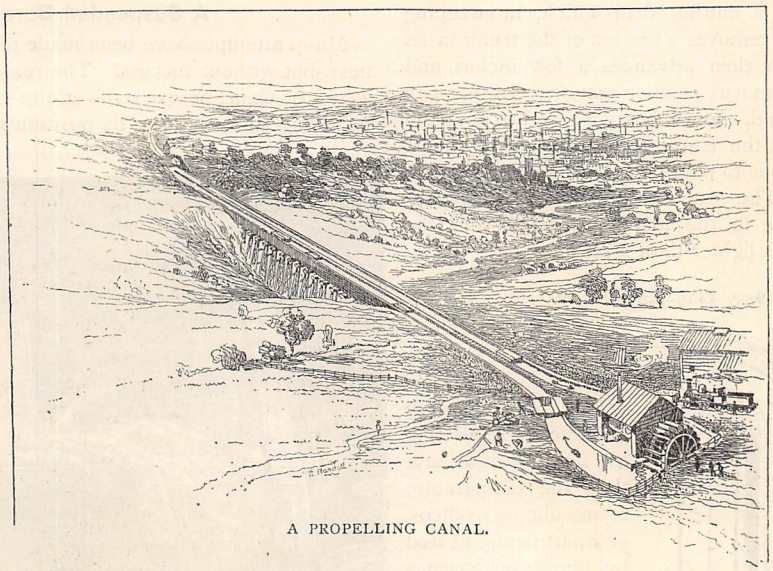
this description, made in accordance with the Board of Trade regulation as to size, weighs only 11 cwt., as against 45 to 50 cwt. in the case of an ordinary lifeboat. When collapsed (as in Fig. 2) its height is only 10 inches; and five such boats, with oars, masts, sails, water, and provisions, can be stored in the space occupied by an ordinary lifeboat. Being lighter in construction than the latter, they are capable of carrying more passengers. The skin is made of canvas, and the boat is seaworthy in a heavy sea.



A COLLAPSIBLE BOAT (FIG. 2).

A Propelling Canal.

A canal which not only floats a vessel, but propels it, has been designed by Mr. Pickard, and, if introduced, will effect something like a revolution in this branch of engineering. The idea is to split the water-way into two channels—one for going, and the other for returning vessels. By means of a screw-propeller fixed at one end of the canal or section of the canal between these channels, the water is set in motion, and a current flows up one channel and down the other, carrying as many vessels with it as there is room for. In this way a constant train of craft, laden with freight or passengers, can glide along without the use of horse or other haulage, and even without attendants. Proper sidings would permit them to be loaded and unloaded. In the case of a canal divided into sections at different levels, there would be no need for locks and the delay they occasion, for the vessels could be guided on to tramways, and hauled from one level to the other, where they would again be moved by the flowing tide. Our illustration shows a model of this ingenious canal, with its two channels, its common propeller, and the vessels floating on it. We may mention here that it is now proposed to turn the existing Forth and Clyde Canal into a ship canal, enabling vessels to sail between the two rivers.



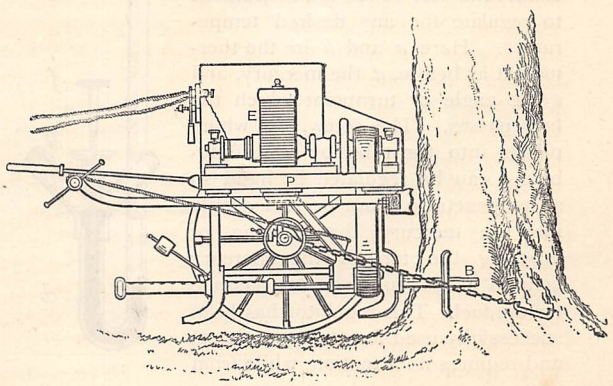
A PROPELLING CANAL.

Making Diamond Dust.

During the course of some experiments recently made by the Honourable C. A. Parsons for the purpose of discovering a mode of manufacturing hard carbons for electric lighting, a quantity of carbon dust, harder than emery, and capable of scratching diamond, was fabricated. It is thought that the dust is itself a form of diamond. The experiments consisted in enclosing a carbon rod or pencil in a steel cylinder capable of withstanding great pressures. A powerful current of electricity was sent through the rod to heat it up red-hot. Different substances such as hydrocarbon liquids, silica, and so on, were placed round the rod, and the whole subjected to a pressure of five to thirty tons on the square inch. The "diamond dust," if it may be called so, was formed under this pressure with a current of 200 to 300 ampères flowing through the rod, which was about a quarter-inch thick. Lime, silver-sand, and coke dust surrounded the rod within the cylinder. The dust in question was of a grey colour, so is the layer of dense hard carbon formed on the outside of a carbon filament for an electric incandescent lamp. The experiments of Mr. Parsons were communicated to the Royal Society.

Felling Trees by Electricity.

Machines for felling trees which are worked by steam have the disadvantage of not being capable of action in all circumstances, especially in thick woods. As electricity can be taken in wires through the thickest grove, the application of this power is more convenient. Hence the electric tree-feller, which we



illustrate, has been brought out by a well-known firm of electrical manufacturers of Buda-Pesth, Hungary, and is in use in the Galician forests. It consists of an electric motor, E, which is carried by a cart, P, and actuates, by means of suitable gearing, the cutting tool, B. The cart is brought up close to the tree, and the cutter is put in operation. The latter consists of a cutting drill which, in sweeping from side to side, removes a section of the trunk in its path. The cutter then advances a few inches, and the next stroke removes another section. In this way the trunk is severed, clamps being applied to keep the cut open. When the trunk is so far severed that it would be dangerous to make another sweep, the rest is cut by hand. The cart is kept in position by clamping it to the tree in the manner shown; and the whole apparatus is lighter than a steam-saw.

A New Gas-Regulator.

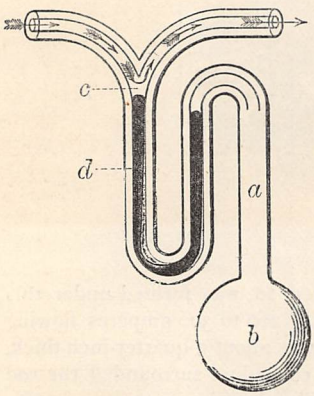


FIG. 1.

The figures illustrate a simple and ingenious apparatus, invented by Mr. George Rothnie, for regulating the supply of gas, and thus the temperature of greenhouses, offices, or apartments, heated by liquid or gaseous fuel. Fig. 1 explains the principle of the regulator, which consists of a thermometer or thermostat, formed of a bulb, *b*, containing air or other fluid which expands with heat. The tube, *a*, has a double bend in it containing mercury, *d*, which, when the air in *a b* expands, is forced up the tube, so as to partially close the turnpoint, C, and cut off the supply of gas or flowing fuel passing in the direction of the arrows towards the stove or burner. By this means the temperature of a room can be kept even. Another form of the apparatus is shown in Fig. 2. It is designed to enable the user to set the instrument to regulate for any desired temperature. Here *a* and *b* are the thermostat as before, *d* the mercury, and *c* the angle or turnpoint which the fuel passes. The screw, *f e*, which passes into the tube by a stuffing-box, *g*, can be regulated by hand so as to penetrate more or less deeply into the mercury, thus raising or lowering the top of the mercury column and regulating the passage for the fuel. This regulator has been successfully used for some time past, and requires no attention, while from its simple and inexpensive character it is unlikely to get out of order. The form shown in Fig. 2 can also be used for controlling the height of gas-flames, and raising or lowering the light to any desired degree of illumination. The tube can either be made of glass or some metal, such as iron, which is unattacked by mercury.

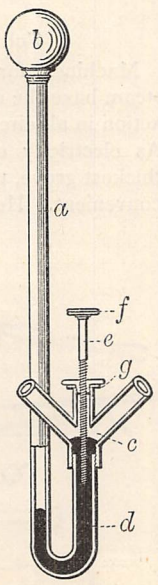


FIG. 2.

A Suspended Berth.

Many attempts have been made to prevent sea-sickness, but without success. The reason is that though a bed, or chair, or even the entire saloon of a vessel, be swung so as to keep its position with regard to the vertical, that will not stop the translation of the occupant either up, down, or along. Nevertheless, it is something to have a berth which will keep the horizontal, and such a one is illustrated in the accompanying figure. It is suspended from ball-and-socket joints, supported by two brackets, attached to athwart partitions of the vessel. The berth hangs by a system of levers, designed to compensate for change of level due to pitching, the swing itself correcting that due to rolling. A wire frame above serves to support a coverlet as a canopy, thus preventing the occupant from seeing the moving walls of the ship. To keep its movements within bounds two pairs of springs connect the bottom of the couch to the floor. One is a weak spring, the other strong, and the latter only comes into play after the former has been extended to the full. This berth has been tried on several voyages; and as it is a safeguard against both pitching and rolling, it is a decided improvement on the ordinary hammock.

A Paraffin Photometer.

Mr. Joly, M.A., has devised a new photometer of a simple but effective character, which is capable of comparing ordinary white lights with great accuracy. It consists of two parallelopipeds of paraffin wax, with smoothly-planed sides, placed together with the plane of the junction cutting the line joining the two lights at right angles. Each light shines through the

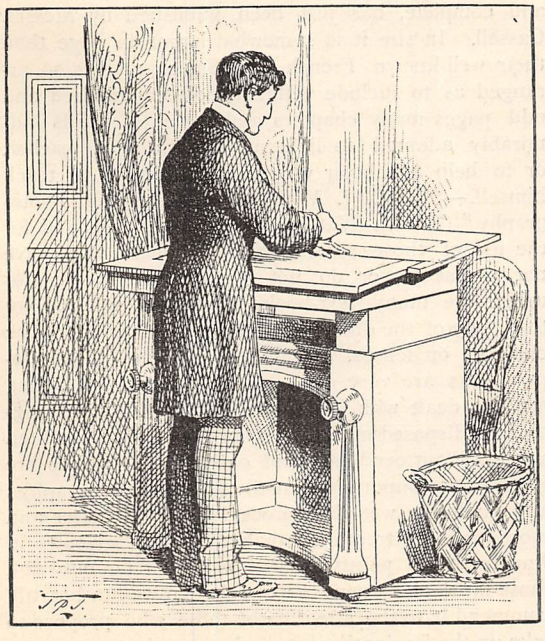
parallelopiped which is nearest it, and illuminates the translucent material. When the intensities of the two lights are equal, the line of junction disappears; but when the lights are unequal, the plane of division in the compound parallelopiped becomes visible. The object of the observer is therefore to move the parallelopiped between the lights until both halves of it appear equally luminous, and the dividing plane is lost to sight. Translucent glass, similar to the paraffin in its effects, is also used as a more durable material. Such a photometer has the rare advantage of being portable, and easy to use.

The Obolette.

This is a "fancy title" for a new musical instrument recently invented by Mr. Matthias Barr (well known as a contributor to our pages in times past). The instrument is made partly of wood and partly of metal, and its tone is of the flageolet order, but very mellow, and capable of considerable expression. The "obolette" has a large compass, with all the chromatic intervals; and the manipulation is strikingly simple, as there are no complications of "keys," the semitones being produced by means of convenient side-holes for the thumbs and little fingers. This instrument should become very popular.

An Adjustable Drawing-Table.

The figure illustrates a new drawing-table, which can be regulated in height to suit the stature of the draughtsman and the work to be done at the time. To this end the top is balanced like a window-sash by flexible cords passing over pulleys and carrying counterweights. The top is kept in position by means of slides; and the screws seen at the front are for regulating the height. Any slope can be given to the board by a simple arrangement in front. As the health of draughtsmen sometimes suffers from their having to remain so long in one position, the new table is to be recommended, as it allows them to vary their position.



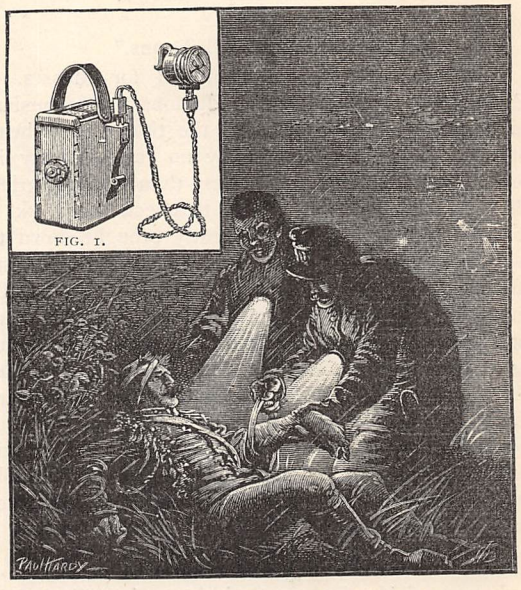


FIG. 1.

The Electric Light and Ambulances.

Some interesting experiments were recently made on Hampstead Heath by the officers and men of the London Division of the Volunteer Medical Staff Corps, an organisation which consists largely of medical students. The corps, under Surgeon-Commandant Norton, accompanied by ambulance waggons, halted on one of the Heath roads at night in a thick mist, and, after establishing a field hospital in a sheltered part of the ground, sent out searching parties, provided with small electric hand-lamps of the kind manufactured now by a number of makers, such as Swan, Pitkin, and others. The object was to discover wounded men in the darkness, and not only did they succeed in finding those who played this part, but they found that preliminary bandaging could be performed by means of the electric light. An advantage of this light is that it can be held very close to the thing under examination without difficulty. The electric lamp seems well adapted for ambulance purposes. Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate two recent forms of these electric hand-lamps. In the case of Fig. 1 the lamp itself is detached from the battery, which is contained in the box beside it, two insulated wires twisted together conveying the current to the incandescent lamp. The latter is seen in the face of the box,

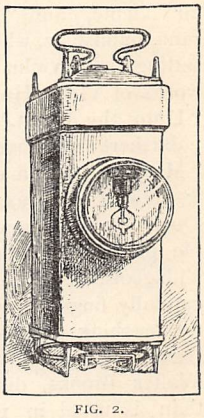


FIG. 2.

which has a hook on the back to catch in the button-hole, if necessary. Fig. 2 shows the incandescent lamp and its filament still better. In the former case the light is started by pressing the button seen on the side of the box, and in the latter case by simply turning the box and battery upside-down.

"Musicians of All Times."

Mr. David Baptie has compiled for Messrs. J. Curwen & Sons a concise dictionary of musical biography, to which he gives the title at the head of this paragraph. Though by no means bulky in form, the volume contains no less than 12,000 entries. So far as we have been able to check the work it is very accurate, and is evidently brought down to a very recent date. In a work of such dimensions mistakes are almost inevitable, and Mr. Baptie tells in his preface of two eminent musicians who died, one about four years ago, and the other only about as many months since, yet in each case there are three different dates assigned for their birth. If there is such uncertainty with regard to those who are our contemporaries, how can we wonder that Mr. Baptie and others should find it difficult to procure reliable information when they are dealing with the biographies of past generations?

Some New Music.

Lovers of Mr. Sydney Smith's music will find in "Arlequin et Columbine" (E. Ascherburg & Co.) one of the most attractive of his later works for the piano. Three easy and melodious little violin pieces by Guido Papini are—"Sérénade Italienne," "Dolce far Niente," and "Lily of the Valley," issued by the same publishers, who also send us a clever and original setting (with violin obligato) by F. Allitsen of some words of Victor Hugo's, translated under the title of "Unto thy Heart." From the same composer and publishers we have a pretty little soprano song, "Marjorie," with a captivating refrain. Messrs. Duff & Stewart send us, under the title of "Le Thiere's Duets for Violin and Piano," a set of pretty and simple pieces of moderate difficulty, and in "Rondo Villageois," one of Hummel's most useful pieces, carefully fingered and well printed. Well adapted for teaching purposes is the "Family Circle" series (same publishers), where the music, supplied by Mr. Walter Brooks, displays far more skill and taste than is usual in pieces of this calibre. We welcome also a reprint from Messrs. Duff & Stewart of Field's well-known "Rondo in E flat," a composition marked by his best characteristics.

All about London.

"The Metropolitan Year-Book" (Cassell) is a new *vade-mecum* for all who are in search of information about the metropolis. Its information is not such as interests Londoners alone, but will be found valuable by those whose connection with the metropolis is mainly of correspondence. Information will be found within its pages concerning such miscellaneous matters as cab-fares, societies and institutions, picture galleries and public libraries, places of worship, and a very full account of every department of municipal government, including even the recently-elected School Board, and County Council for London. It is impossible within the limits of a brief paragraph like this to do more than indicate a few of the most prominent items of interest in this volume, which should be in the hands of all who do business in London or with Londoners.

Songs New and Old.

Mr. Lancelot Martley has been very successful in his setting of "Five Songs," by Thomas Moore, issued by the London Music Publishing Company, each one of which is perfect in its way, and the collection comprises songs suitable for either male or female voices; the accompaniments are strikingly beautiful. The same publishers send us an original and pretty pianoforte solo by Erskine Allon, "Rustic Suite;" a song of considerable merit by our contributor, Mr. R. Ernest Bryson, "How have I thought of Thee?" and a very good part song for four voices, by Erskine Allon, entitled "Valerius' Song." "Reunited" (Hart & Co.), a song to which the music is supplied by Torriano, does not seem to us to possess any feature which raises it above the commonplace. Messrs. Hutchings & Co. send us a very pretty little gavotte by Charles Le Thiere, entitled "La Cloche d'Argent," and two pianoforte pieces—the first "Der Kleine Tambour," by R. W. Oberhoffer; and the second "Un Rêve d'Innocence," a pretty drawing-room piece by Hamilton Croft. Two other songs from the same publishers are Miss Annie E. Armstrong's setting of Charlotte Bain's "Not at Home!" a bright and pretty rendering in Scotch style; and "Old Time and the Maiden," in which Mr. Richard Harvey gives us some very pretty music.

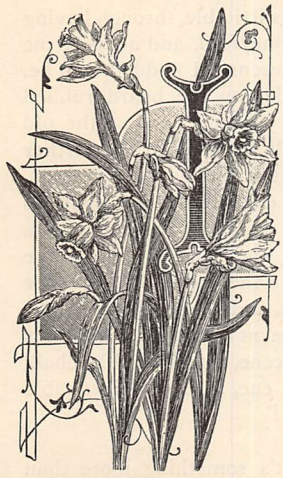
Two New Dictionaries.

A new German Dictionary, which is at once handy and complete, has just been published by Messrs. Cassell. In size it is somewhat larger in page than their well-known French Dictionary, and is so arranged as to include within its eleven hundred and odd pages many chapters and tables of words admirably adapted to lighten the task of a teacher, or to help a scholar who is endeavouring to teach himself.—Mr. E. J. Wall's "Dictionary of Photography" (Hazell, Watson, & Viney) is intended for the use of those amateur photographers who have not access to, or do not possess the facility for using, the many text-books that are required for the study of the different branches of their art. The chapters on lenses, and indeed all the optical departments are very good. Development and toning are also dealt with in very able articles. The swing-back is disposed of, however, in the absurdly-limited space of fourteen lines, and only two more lines are given to the important branch of micro-photography; and surely the wet-plate process deserved better and more thorough treatment than Mr. Wall gives to it. But the good points in this work so far outweigh those in which it seems to us weak, that we can heartily commend it to the attention of those who propose to take up the fascinating art of photography.

UNDER A STRANGE MASK.

By FRANK BARRETT, Author of "By Misadventure," "Harlowe's Helpmate," "Hidden Gold," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.



REDLANDS GETS UPON THE RIGHT TRACK.

I WAS still lingering over my tea, when there came a ring at the private bell—the office being closed—and presently my housekeeper opening the door, who should appear behind her but Coneybeare himself.

"I shall take the privilege of a friend, and come in without waiting to be asked," said he, not in his business tone, but in a bluff, hearty way, as if his sole purpose in visiting me was to have a genial chat about things in general.

I was glad to see him, for it saved me the trouble of going to him, and put me at an advantage.

"Well," he observed, taking a chair, "your client hasn't turned up."

"Yes, he has," I replied; "and I told him what you said—advising him to look elsewhere for money."

"I went a little too fast. I wish I had not said it. To tell you the honest truth, Keene, I am not at all comfortable in my mind over the other affair. I wouldn't trust that fellow Lestrange with a penny-piece."

"You told me this morning you did not like his appearance."

"I've seen him since then, and I like him less than ever; and I don't like the look of old Sylvester either. Why are they in such a hurry to get out of the country, eh?"

I shrugged my shoulders, and looked as if I were not at liberty to speak on that subject.

"Done something shady, I suppose," he said. "That wouldn't matter twopence to me if I'd got good security for my money. But I've not. There seems to be some hitch. This morning Lestrange said they would produce the title-deeds at once; this afternoon he tells me they can't be got at for a week. The old man offers to draw up a deed of transfer, upon payment of half the purchase-money—the rest to stand over till I am in possession of the titles."

"Why didn't you close with him?"

"Because I didn't know how long I might have to wait."

"Yes; and because you didn't know whether they would be worth anything when you got 'em," I added.

"Well, I didn't like the looks of it, you know. I knew you held the deeds, and I knew they had called on you, before they came to me, and I says to myself, it can't be all right, or they'd have got the things from Keene. However, if they are to be given up in a week——"

"But they won't be given up in a week, or a month, or a year either, if I can help it. You know that Miss Sylvester has gone away."

"Yes, I've heard something about *that*," in a tone of increased dissatisfaction.

"Well, she is my client; now, what sort of a lawyer should you think me to be if I gave up those titles to old Sylvester, knowing what he intended to do with them, when my client has a lien on them?"

"What lien?" he asked.

"A lien that shall be discharged before I part with a single deed. The estate was bought by old Sylvester for ten thousand pounds, and that's about all he'll be worth when he has paid for the improvements made by my client and her father."

"Between two stools I shall come to the ground," said Conybeare, rising.

"It looks like it."

"I'll have nothing more to do with these fellows, that's certain." He spoke with determination, shook his head, thought awhile, then added, "I suppose it's too late to find Redlands now."

"I might see him again to-night," said I.

"Well, if he comes, tell him I made a fool of myself: it's not often Bob Coneybeare owns up to that; but you can tell him, with my compliments, that I made a fool of myself, and ain't likely to do it again; and that if he's for selling his estate, I'm willing to buy whole or part, or make any arrangement he likes."

I thought it very likely that Redlands would come back to let me know what had taken place in his interview at Dalegrove Court, and I was not disappointed.

About half-past eight he galloped up to my door, almost as quickly as he had left it, flung the reins to a lad standing by, and came up to me as I opened the side door.

The first words he spoke were—

"What's the matter with old Sylvester's hand?"

Of all questions this was the least expected.

"His right hand," he added impatiently, for I could not at the moment reply—"the one he wears in a sling?"

"He met with an accident in the journey from Italy," I replied; "got his wretched old fingers jammed in the door of a carriage, or something of that kind."

"Have you ever seen his hand out of the sling?"

"Never: it seems perfectly disabled."

He smiled ironically. "He has been here some time, and I have learnt from one of the servants that he has never once had any medical attention from the day of his arrival."

He struck the table with his hand as he spoke, as though this was an important discovery. For my own

part, I could not see anything in it beyond a curious fact.

"That's extraordinary, to be sure," said I; "but what conclusion does it lead to?"

"That his hand is no more disabled than yours or mine; or if it is, that the injury is of much older standing than this recent journey."

"Well, sir?" I said, in a tone of interrogation, not yet seeing the point.

"I've another proof," he continued with excitement. "Look here, Keene: I got to the Court about five, having left the mare at the gate, because the lodge-keeper said I should find no one at the house to look after it. The only light I could see came from a room in the west side of the house—the part hitherto shut up, I am told."

"Yes."

"There are three windows to that room, closed on the inside with shutters; I could only see the light through the chinks—nothing else. But I heard men's voices, and above them the sharp click of billiard-balls. I went to the door and gave a pretty loud knock, waited, knocked again, and then the door was opened by Lestrange. He was astonished to see me: he held a lamp in his hand. I gave him my name, and told him I wished to speak with Mr. Sylvester at once, upon a matter of immediate importance, connected with the proposed sale of his estate. He hesitated a moment, then led me into the library, telling me in a high voice, sufficiently loud to be heard in the rooms on the other side of the hall, that Mr. Sylvester could only be approached on business matters in the morning, but that if I would tell him, Lestrange, what I had to say, he would take the earliest opportunity of communicating it to his master. I told him what I was prepared to do, and he made notes as I proceeded. During this there was no sound in the other room, but as I came to a conclusion, there was a rap on the floor, as if some one were striking it with the butt of a cue, and a shrill, squeaky voice piped out, 'I can't be left like this.'

"'I beg your pardon, sir,' said Lestrange, 'the governor is calling, and I must go to him. If you would like to see the old gentleman, you can come with me.'

"I nodded assent, and, as we crossed the hall, Lestrange continued in a lower tone, 'We have found a billiard-table in the house. Mr. Sylvester used to play the game at one time. Of course, he can't touch a cue now, but he amuses himself by placing the balls, and setting me to make the strokes; it's not very lively, but anything is better than doing nothing." We entered the room; there was a musty smell in it: everything was thickly coated with dust, except a long, old-fashioned billiard-board, which had evidently been dusted recently. Sylvester was standing with the cue in his hand, a hideous old man wrapped in a thick fur dressing-gown, his arm in a sling.

"'What do you mean by leaving me?' he squealed. 'What do I pay you for?'

"Lestrange went to his side, and shouted into his ear that I was a gentleman who had come to speak on a matter of business.

"'What's that to me?' cried the little old man, shaking with rage. 'He must wait till to-morrow. I want amusement now. Take this cue and do as I tell you: that's what you are paid for, servant.'

"Lestrange told me he was irritable, through having made a useless journey to Coneyford, and advised me not to introduce myself at present. I nodded, and he, taking a piece of chalk that lay on the board, rubbed the tip of his cue. But my eyes were fixed on the old man. Taking up the red ball, he went to the further end of the board, and placed it against the cushion. The light of the lamp fell directly on his hand as he did this, and I distinctly saw the mark of white chalk between his forefinger and thumb where some billiard-players use it to make the cue slide. He saw the mark at the same instant, and shot a glance at me. I watched some time, but he never again raised his hand into the light. Now, Keene, why should he chalk his left hand for the use of a cue, if he were incapable of using the right to hold it?"

"It's queer," said I.

"Queer!" he echoed; "it's something more than that."

"Still, supposing the injury is assumed—suppose he is able to play billiards, as you evidently believe he can——"

"I am sure of it," Redlands broke in. "I am sure that he was playing when I stopped to listen to the quick succession of strokes outside; I'll be bound he was in his shirt-sleeves, and that Lestrange kept me in the library till he got the signal that all was arranged for my inspection. That view of the billiard-room was given me to explain the sounds they doubtless suspected I had heard, and I should have been deceived by it surely enough *if he had not forgotten the chalk on his hand.*"

"Still," said I, yet in a fog, "I don't quite see——"

"I don't want you to see, Keene," Redlands broke in again. "I believe I have a clue to this mystery, and it is too delicate to trust in another's hands. I want you to help me blindly, in a certain sense, if you will."

"I understand you, sir," said I. "Too many cooks spoil the broth—I know that; I have been engaged in more than one case where I wouldn't trust any one with a single word of my purpose. As for helping you, that you may rely on, and I'll trouble you with no questions of my own. Now, tell me what I can do."

"In the first place, I must find out about that disabled right hand of old Sylvester: who can throw light on it?"

"Not a soul that I know of, unless, as you think, it is of long standing; in that case we might hear something about it in Amalfi."

"Then we must send to Amalfi. Do you know any one you can trust to make inquiries?"

"Yes; my head clerk is a decent linguist, and a shrewd fellow. But Amalfi is below Naples. He can't possibly get there under four or five days."

"No matter—start him at once; instruct him to

make every possible inquiry, not only about Sylvester, but about Lestrange."

"You shall speak to him yourself."

"Good. Now, you told me that old Sylvester confessed his crime in detail to Miss Sylvester. Tell me, if you may, all the particulars."

I saw no room for withholding anything, and related all that Marian had told me—not in the actual words she employed, because that I should have found impossible, but as nearly as I could recall them, and as I have written them down in the preceding pages. Twice or thrice Redlands checked me, putting questions to test the accuracy of my memory—especially at that point where the old man confessed to throwing the box containing papers, from which he had taken the money, down the well. When I came to a stop, he sprang up from his chair, his face lit up with intense excitement, and cried—

"It's a falsehood from beginning to end! I will prove it."

"Prove what, my lord?" I asked.

"Why, that Sylvester is as guiltless of that crime as I am."

"It's likely enough," said I. "He and Lestrange may have concocted the tale to get the estate into their hands. But they haven't got the money yet, thank goodness!"

"A fig for the money!" he cried. "It's poor Marian I am thinking of," and the tears sprang into his eyes at the thought of redeeming her from her sense of shame.

"Now, Keene," he continued, overcoming his emotion and resuming his quick, eager manner, "can you go up to London to-morrow?"

"Yes," said I.

"Then give me a pen and ink and paper." I put the writing materials before him, and he dashed off a letter. "This is to the family solicitors," he said, still writing: "Thorneyside, Thorneyside, and Oldam, Furnival's Inn. My father at one time, I believe,

"'DO YOU SEE THIS HOLE?'" (*p.* 324).

entertained suspicion of old Sylvester's guilt, and caused inquiries to be made. Thorneyside got together all the information that was to be found, and proved beyond doubt that Sylvester was blameless. Of course the inquiry was strictly private; I was a mere child at the time, and have only the faintest recollection of some talk on the subject. I should have forgotten it altogether but for recent events. I suppose it made an impression on my mind at the time because there was romance about it to excite a boy's speculation. However, Thorneyside is sure to recollect it all. He has a wonderful memory, and takes care of any papers that may ever chance to be of use. There, that's his address."

He handed me the open letter, in which he requested Mr. Thorneyside to give me all the information he possessed, or could collect, on the subject of his grandfather's tragic end.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

"REDLANDS *v.* R. S."

MY clerk, Mr. Bingham, and I both went to London by the first train the next morning. On the way I told him how he was to act, and in parting at Waterloo repeated my injunction to lose not a single moment, to spare no expense, and to telegraph in full every particular he could pick up at Amalfi concerning old Sylvester and Lestrange.

From Waterloo I took a cab to Furnival's Inn, and there had the good fortune to find Mr. Thorneyside in his office.

I gave him Redlands' letter, and told him my business.

"To go through all the papers connected with our investigation into the affair will take you a week," said he; "if you can tell me the particular point in question, I may settle it in ten minutes."

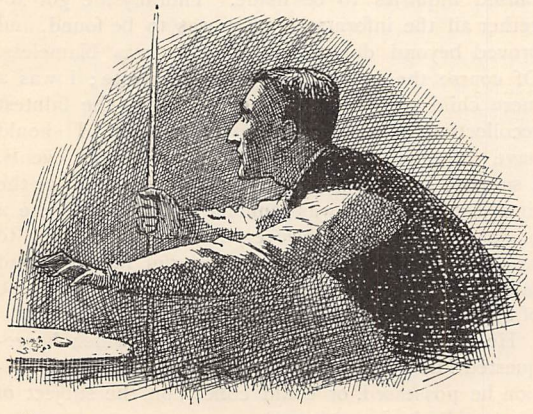
"The latter will suit me better," said I. "We wish to establish, if possible, proof that old Sylvester is innocent of guilt in connection with the death of Lord Redlands."

He nodded, and, after whistling through a speaking-tube, called: "Deed-box from strong room, marked 'Redlands *v.* R. S.'"

In a few minutes a clerk brought in a tin deed-box, and set it on the table; meanwhile Thorneyside had taken a labelled key from an indexed row in his safe. He dismissed the clerk, saying that he could see no one for half an hour, and then opened the box with the key he had selected.

The first thing he took out was a fresh copy of a yellow-covered magazine.

"That's curious," said he, laying it on the table and tapping it. "We shall come to that presently." Then he drew out a square oak box, about the size of an ordinary cash-box, with a small round hole gnawed through one angle; he smiled at this, as he set it down by the magazine. Finally, he fished out half a dozen letters and papers pinned together, and, glancing at those that remained, said, "I think these are all we shall require for your purpose, Mr. Keene." He seated himself, pressed his glasses a little firmer on his nose, took a look at the papers, and turning to me, continued: "Now, sir, you must know that this doubt which you now wish to clear up is of no modern origin. There are letters in that box from Lady Redlands to her friends, dated 1835, in which she refers in terms of horror and disgust to the offer of Sylvester to make her his wife after her husband's death, showing that she entertained scarcely a doubt of his guilt. Possibly, indeed probably, in rejecting his offer she did not conceal her strong belief that he was a doubly-dyed villain. I say probably, because such an accusation coming from the woman he loved, would account for his quitting the country after sacrificing part of his fortune and behaving with unwonted generosity towards his late friend, and sinking into a morose and morbid condition of mind. That voluntary exile on his part only confirmed Lady Redlands' suspicions, and when her son—born some months after the death of her husband—came of age she proclaimed her conviction to him. He at once ordered an investigation to be made, and for three months we were engaged in collecting evidence—that box contains all that we could scrape together. The presumptive evidence was strong, but not strong enough in my opinion to justify my client in going any further; I advised him to abandon further proceedings, and he reluctantly but wisely complied. He used to shake his head, and tell me I was too timid for a lawyer; but he lived to see that I had advised him well, for in 1870 we got a full confession of guilt from one of the rascals who tried to rob Sylvester on his way to Loecliff, and afterwards took Lord Redlands' life."



"I SAW HIS COMPANION EDGING TOWARDS A TABLE" (*p.* 328).

"You have that confession?" I asked.

"Yes, here it is," he replied, showing me the paper. "John Baker, who died a convict at Portland in '70, dictated this to the governor and chaplain on his death-bed."

"These death-bed confessions of criminals are not always to be trusted."

"True," said he; "I would never believe one without sufficient proof."

"Ah!" said I, "sufficient proof—that's what we want."

"And that we have. Here it is," said he, laying his hand on the square box.

Recalling to mind that part of Sylvester's confession relating to the missing box, and not doubting that it was now before me, I asked quickly—

"Did you find that in the well at the Court?"

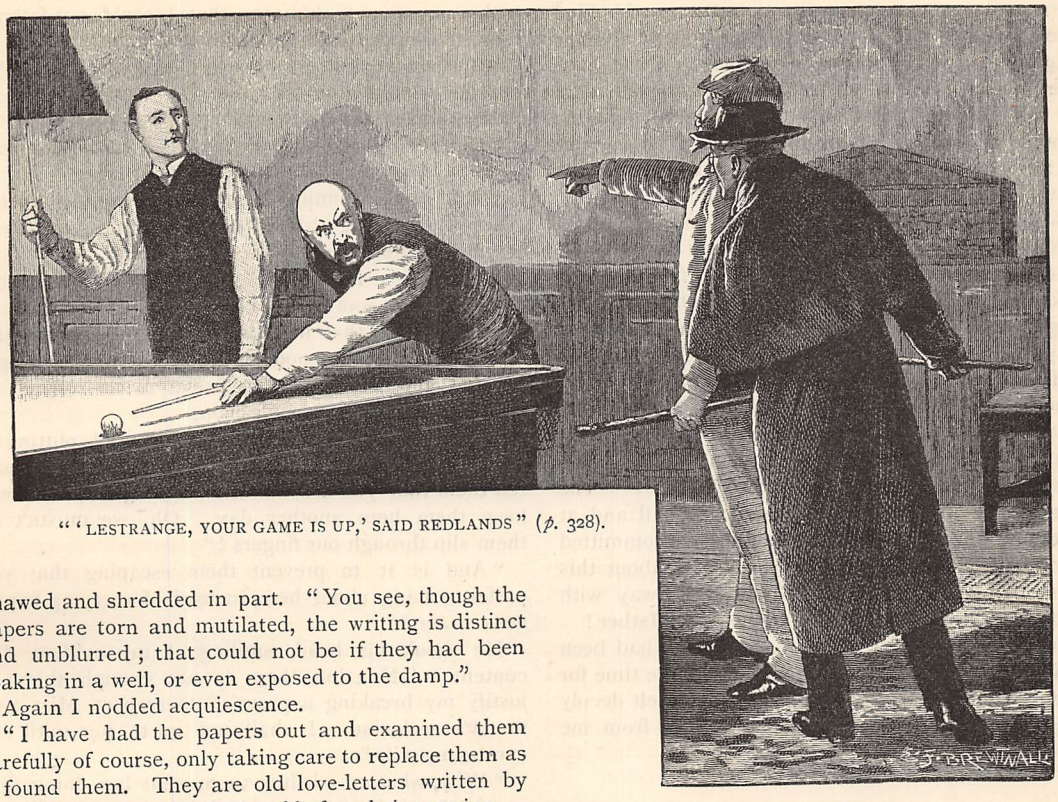
"A well!" he exclaimed, smiling; "that's about the worst guess you could have made, Mr. Keene. Do you see this hole?"

"Yes."

"That was gnawed by mice, who hit upon the box as a suitable place to nest in. You may be sure they have not done it since it came into my possession, and they were not likely to have done it before if it lay at the bottom of a well."

I nodded, rubbing my hands cheerfully, for here was proof positive that old Sylvester's confession was untrue in one particular at least.

"Look inside," continued Thorneyside, opening the lid and showing me a compact bed of written papers,



"'LESTRANGE, YOUR GAME IS UP,' SAID REDLANDS" (*p.* 328).

gnawed and shredded in part. "You see, though the papers are torn and mutilated, the writing is distinct and unblurred; that could not be if they had been soaking in a well, or even exposed to the damp."

Again I nodded acquiescence.

"I have had the papers out and examined them carefully of course, only taking care to replace them as I found them. They are old love-letters written by Lady Redlands to her husband before their marriage—quite immaterial to the case, but proving the veracity of John Baker's confession."

"Good," said I, "good; now tell me, sir, how you came by this box."

"John Baker, as you will find by this confession, after narrating minutely how he took the life of Lord Redlands, tells how having found a pocket-book with notes and money in it in this box, and expecting to find more notes among the remaining papers, he took the box away. He and his accomplice fled, and never drew rein until they reached a deserted farmhouse lying between Coneyford and Barnstaple. There they put up their horses in an empty barn, and examined the contents of the box. Finding nothing beyond the pocket-book that could be of service to them, they took it up into the barn-loft, and in the darkest corner jammed it into a cavity between the edge of the floor and the sloping eaves, knowing that it was not likely to be discovered in such a place until long after they themselves had got clear off; and in this they were not mistaken, for there we found it just as it had been left (plus a hole and a colony of young mice in it) thirty-five years ago, when we followed the instructions in Baker's confession and hunted it up."

"A convincing proof of Sylvester's innocence!" I cried.

"Yes; and when I showed it to the late Lord Redlands, he was the first to see that it should be communicated to Sylvester at once. It was the least he *could* do, and the most in reparation of the injurious suspicion cast upon the poor old man's honour by his mother and himself. I drew up a copy of the confession, and the late Lord Redlands wrote a letter frankly admitting the error into which he had been led by suspicious circumstances, and expressing his deep regret. The letter and confession were sent to old Sylvester through his son the colonel. He replied with characteristic coldness and brevity: 'The suspicion was unjustifiable; the injury irreparable; the excuse unnecessary.' Whether the suspicion was justifiable or not is a question; there can be no doubt that it was a natural conclusion to which an impartial judge might have come, and this proves it." Mr. Thorneyside held up the magazine to which I have referred.

"This," he continued, "is the *Universal Magazine* of last May. I will lend it to you to read as you go back, for I see you are anxious to return; that is the third time you have looked at your watch in the last five minutes."

"Yes," said I. "I hope to catch the next train back, for the news I have to take with me is to give happiness to two persons who are something more to me than mere clients."

"There is no necessity to detain you. Here is the confession—take that—and there is the magazine. You will find the article I refer to under the title, 'Curious Cases.'"

In the train I read the article pointed out by Mr. Thorneyside. Amongst numerous instances of baffled justice the case of Lord Redlands and Mr. Sylvester was given, the actual names of persons and localities alone being disguised. After stating the particulars that had already been made public throwing suspicion on two "mysterious highwaymen," the writer said: "Now how is it that no trace of the mysterious highwaymen, to whom the crime was imputed by Mr. S——, was never discovered, and why did he immediately after the first investigation quit the country, and so completely evade his friends and family that it is doubtful even at the present day whether he is living or dead? and why did he abandon to ruin and decay the estate he had acquired by the death of his friend? Is it not exceedingly probable that he himself was the author of the crime, and that he was allowed to escape from a feeling of delicacy on the part of the noble family who would naturally be reluctant to make their tragic affairs public?" The writer then went on to show in minute detail and at great length how "Mr. S——" might have committed the crime. Now to me the curious part about this explanation was that it agreed in every way with the confession made to Marian by her grandfather!

I looked at the cover of the magazine; it had been published in May—there was therefore ample time for old Sylvester to have read the article and dwelt deeply upon it before the demand came to him from me relative to the sale of the Redlands estate.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH AND LAST.

THE ADVERSARY BEATEN; THE GAME WON.

TRAVEL how you may, it takes a long time to go from Coneyford to London and back. I reached home too late to see Redlands that night, but I saw him early the next morning, and told him all that I had done and learnt. Finally putting John Baker's confession in his hand, with an envelope on which I had written Marian's address at Exeter, I said—

"There, my lord, take these papers to Miss Sylvester and make her happy."

I expected him to seize them with a cry of joy, and rush out of the house without another word, but taking the confession he quietly seated himself and began to read it with the soberness of a judge.

"Aren't you pleased with the result of this inquiry?" I asked.

"It is more than I expected," he replied, without raising his eyes from the paper.

"Nothing happened whilst I was absent yesterday?" I asked, thinking something must have gone wrong to explain his strange coolness, as it seemed to me.

"I saw those two fellows at the Court"—he looked up now. "We must pay them, Keene. They must not suspect that we are acting together for their overthrow. I pretended to be greatly annoyed that you were not to be found in your office, making that an excuse for not closing at once with their offer. They were quite satisfied—so was I." He said this with a meaning in his tone that I could not fathom, then he went on reading again.

"There's a train to Exeter at half-past ten," said I, looking at my watch.

He nodded and read on.

"Surely, my lord, you are going to take the good news to Miss Sylvester!"

"No," still running his eyes down the lines—"but I'm reading this paper as quickly as you will let me in order that you may."

"Certainly; if you won't go, I will," said I, rather testily, for I was disappointed by his manner. It seemed to me that he was the fittest person to give this joyful news to poor Marian. I went out, got my hat and gloves, and returned to the office; he was just finishing the confession.

"There you are," said he, rising, and putting it in my hand. "I shall go over to the Court and tell them that you are not at home again; that will keep them here another day. Oh, we mustn't let them slip through our fingers!"

"And is it to prevent them escaping that you prefer to hang about here, instead of carrying happiness to *her?*"

He shook his head, smiling at my evident discontent. "No; but there is not enough there to justify my breaking a promise to respect Miss Sylvester's seclusion. I shall not go to her until she can be my wife."

"Why, what on earth is to prevent her doing that now?" I cried. "She refused because she believed her grandfather was a criminal; now that it is proved he is nothing of the kind she can have no reason for refusing."

"You don't know her so we as I do," he replied, still smiling.

"Well, that's a good one!" I exclaimed, forgetting my professional etiquette and everything else in my feeling as a friend towards Marian. "Why, I knew her when she was a baby, and I've not lost sight of her since; and I know, perhaps better than you do, my lord, that she's a *sensible* young woman."

"Perhaps so; but you lose sight of the fact that she's sensitive as well. That confession proves that her grandfather is not a criminal, but it proves also that the man who attributes to himself the commission of such a crime for the mean purpose of obtaining possession of an estate, must morally be as despicable as though he had actually done the deed. Miss Sylvester would never accept a farthing of that man's money. And though she might be sensible enough to become my wife despite her poverty, she would never give me her hand whilst she thought that in its blood was the taint of madness, or of a vice that is worse than madness."

"We'll soon see about that," said I, clapping on my hat. "I warrant I'll change your opinion of her when we meet to-morrow morning."

He laughed; but I had no time to point out to him that he might strain sentiment on his side, but that Marian was too practical for any such nonsense; so

off I went without saying "Good morning" even, for I was vexed.

I found poor Marian at her relative's in Exeter, and wan, and pale, and unhappy she looked. It was clear enough to me that those who had been so effusively affectionate in the summer, when she was mistress of Dalegrove, were considerably cooler now that she was but a "poor outcast," as they had the impudence to call her.

I told her everything from beginning to end. She became greatly excited as I went through my narrative, her eyes sparkling with gladness, and her sweet, pretty lips curving in happy smiles, as I cleared her grandfather from the suspicion of guilt. And when, coming to an end, I paused to wipe the perspiration from my head—for I was as much excited as she—she drew a deep sigh of gladness, and bent in wonder over the confession I had put in her hand.

"Ah," thought I, "you are not such a little stupid as your sweetheart thinks." But just then I heard a little "pat," and then another "pat, pat," that sounded ominous, and I saw that the tears were falling from her eyes on to the paper.

"You are not unhappy, my dear?" said I, with a misgiving.

"Oh, no, no, no!" she cried, looking up with a face that belied her tears. "He knew—at least, he believed—my grandfather guilty of that crime the last time we met."

"Yes," said I.

"And *yet* he would have made me his wife," she said, with trembling rapture in her voice.

"Yes," said I, forgetting myself again; "but hang me if he hasn't changed his mind now he knows for a certainty the old man is innocent."

"Innocent!" she cried, bending her brows in anger. "Do you call him innocent who would take upon himself the shame of crime, who would burden me with a sense of that shame and disgrace for the vilest of mercenary motives? Do you call him innocent? I do not; and it is because he, my dear lover, understands me and knows how I value his honour and my own, that he spares me the humiliation and grief of any further interview."

"Well, I don't understand you young people, and your new-fangled notions," said I; nor did I—partly perhaps because I am a lawyer, and partly because I am what is called an old fogey.

I was glum enough when I met Redlands the next day, and he seemed particularly amused by my discomfiture. His high spirits perplexed me.

"Well," said I, "I took the good news to Miss Sylvester; but she's no better pleased with it than you are."

"I knew it," cried he joyfully; "I knew it. Never mind," he added, in a still more exultant tone, "I shall carry better news before long, please Heaven."

"Why, what has happened?" I asked.

"Nothing."

"Then what better news have we to expect?"

"That I will not tell till my belief is confirmed—or overthrown;" then, his face growing suddenly grave: "it will be bad enough for one to suffer if my hopes are not realised. Oh, that we had that telegram from Bingham!"

"It will come to-morrow or the next day, but it can only confirm what we know already."

"No," he replied with conviction; "I hope to goodness it may not, that it may show you in error, and justify my hope."

Now this puzzled me excessively, and I could make nothing of it; but there was no getting a word of explanation out of Redlands then. He was determined, if his hopes were annihilated, to bear the bitter disappointment alone.

Nothing particular happened that day. I received a letter from old Sylvester, demanding the instant delivery of the deeds, or threatening immediate legal proceedings. I had threatened legal proceedings myself, often enough, to care not a dump for this menace. I held the deeds, and did not mean to part with them till "legal proceedings" compelled me. Also one of the servants, who had abandoned the Court, called on me to deliver the latch-key of the back door, which she had taken away in the hurry of her flight.

"Keep the key," said Redlands when I told him: "we may want it. And double lock your strong room."

At length the telegram from Bingham arrived. Redlands was pacing impatiently to and fro in my office when it was handed in. It ran thus:—

"Arrived at Amalfi this morning. Sylvester left here two months ago with Lestrange: it is believed they removed to Ravello. I am going there at once to seek them. Conflicting descriptions of Sylvester: nothing known of his having received any injury to his hand. Lestrange, age about 36, formerly an actor, gave up the stage some time back, in consequence of an accident. He has only three fingers on his right hand."

Now this seemed to me to advance matters not a jot, and I was thinking that the message was worth nothing; but Redlands, with a shout of joy, snatched the paper from my hand, and read it again, the paper trembling in his feverish grasp.

"Victory!" he cried; "victory!"

"I don't see it; I wish I did," said I. "To begin with, there's an error, for Lestrange has as many fingers as I have, that I'll swear."

"And I," cried Redlands, "will swear he has but three."

"What, that secretary whom I——"

"The secretary is not Lestrange at all," he cried, "no more than the old man is Sylvester."

"What!" I gasped. "You think that the old man is Lestrange in disguise—a man who, you read, is 36——"

"I am sure of it," he broke in; "I have been sure of it for days past. I saw at once that he might be, *not an old man made up to look young, but a young man made up to look old.*"

This explanation took my breath away.

"I am now convinced," he went on. "We know now why he carries his hand in a sling."

There's nothing more simple in the world than a conjuring trick when you have been shown how it's done; and now nothing appeared more clear to me

than the mystery of this Sylvester-Lestrange affair, now that Redlands had explained it.

"You ought to have been a lawyer, my lord," said I; "I am a fool beside you, and willingly accept your guidance henceforth. What are we to do?"

"Send for your trap, Keene. We must go over to the Court; and put that key of the back door in your pocket."

It was on the stroke of eight, and a pitch-dark night, when the gig came to the door.

"You use a walking-stick, Keene?" said Redlands interrogatively.

"Yes; there are half a dozen in the hall there," I replied.

He chose a couple of thick, solid oak saplings, handed one to me, and taking the other himself, swung it in the air, testing its weight.

"They'll do; now come along," said he.

It was half-past nine when we reached the outskirts of Loecliff. Not a soul was about. We took the gig into the avenue leading to the church, and tied the reins to a tree. Then we put out the gig-lamps, and made our way along the avenue and into the churchyard.

"Now we must be silent," whispered Redlands.

Noiselessly and carefully we passed through the little wicket at the side of the churchyard, and entered the shrubbery that divides it from the Court. We heard not a sound until we came on to the lawn in front of the house, and there we caught the click of billiard-balls. Redlands nudged my elbow, and pointed to the chink of light coming through the shutters of the front room; then he whispered—"Round to the back door; which is the way?"

I knew the way well enough, and round we went as silently as we had come hither. I put the key gently into the door-lock and turned it. The next minute we were inside the servants' hall, and the door closed behind us.

"Do you know the way to the old billiard-room?" whispered Redlands.

"Yes; come on," said I.

We threaded the passages and came at length into the hall. It was as dark as night, but a thread of light on the ground to the right of us showed the door of the billiard-room, and now we heard more plainly than before the click of the balls, with occasionally a word and a laugh.

We got close up to the door, and Redlands laid his hand gently on the handle.

"Are you ready, Keene?" he whispered.

I had reversed my stick, seeing what we were in for, and now grasping it tightly by the thin end, I replied, "All right; burst in on the villains!"

"Bang!" went the door as it flew back, and there stood the pair of rascals before us—the man who called himself Lestrange at one end of the board, the real Lestrange at the other; the first leaning on his cue, the second taking a shot at the red, his cue deftly held by three fingers. The index was cut short off.

I shall never forget the look of him as he turned sharply round. He was in his shirt-sleeves; his face was still made up, in case of a visitor calling, but for the convenience of playing he had removed the wig from his shaven head, and the heat and exercise of the game had partially melted the enamel of his face, causing the wax and colour to run together in patches. He was grotesquely ludicrous.

"Lestrange, your game is up," said Redlands, sternly.

He looked bewildered for the moment, then he cast a keen glance at his companion, and seeing no encouragement for hope in his face, turned again to us, flung his cue upon the floor, and said bitterly—

"Yes; beaten!"

I saw his companion—we never learnt his name—edging towards a table near me on which glittered the rings and jewellery laid aside by Lestrange for greater ease in playing. I clapped my hand on them, and wagged my thick stick menacingly. I was not going to be done out of the spoils of our victory.

"Well, what are you going to do now?" asked Lestrange, coolly folding his arms—his voice was no longer a squeaky treble, but a fairly manlike bass.

"Turn you out of this house, first of all!" said Redlands.

"And run you into prison afterwards if you are to be caught," I added.

Taking no notice of me, Lestrange picked up the long cue from the ground, and said—

"On what terms are we to go?"

"Terms, you rascal!" cried my lord. "Do you think we have come here to compound with felons!" and with that he sprang upon him, took him by the nape of the neck, and ran him out into the hall.

The puny little man was no match for his well-knit, powerful adversary, and he cried for mercy as Redlands shook him, when he tried to use his cue as a mace and escape. But it was otherwise with me and Lestrange's accomplice. The fellow was more than my match, and when he charged I went to the ground, though I stood as firmly and made as desperate a fight of it as I could. He snatched up a handful of the jewels from the table, and making a headlong rush passed Redlands, and got out of the house by the door through which Lestrange had been ejected.

We were glad enough never to hear of them again.

The next morning another telegram came from Bingham. "Mr. Sylvester," he wired, "died six weeks since; he is buried at Ravello. I have seen the register. His house is shut up. Lestrange gone away. What am I to do?"

To this I replied at once: "Take possession of the house on behalf of Sylvester's heir, and take measures to secure the apprehension of Lestrange for the robbery of Sylvester's rings, &c., should he return."

With this last telegram Redlands flew off to Exeter.

Now he had news indeed that he could give to Marian—news that made her joyfully consent to be

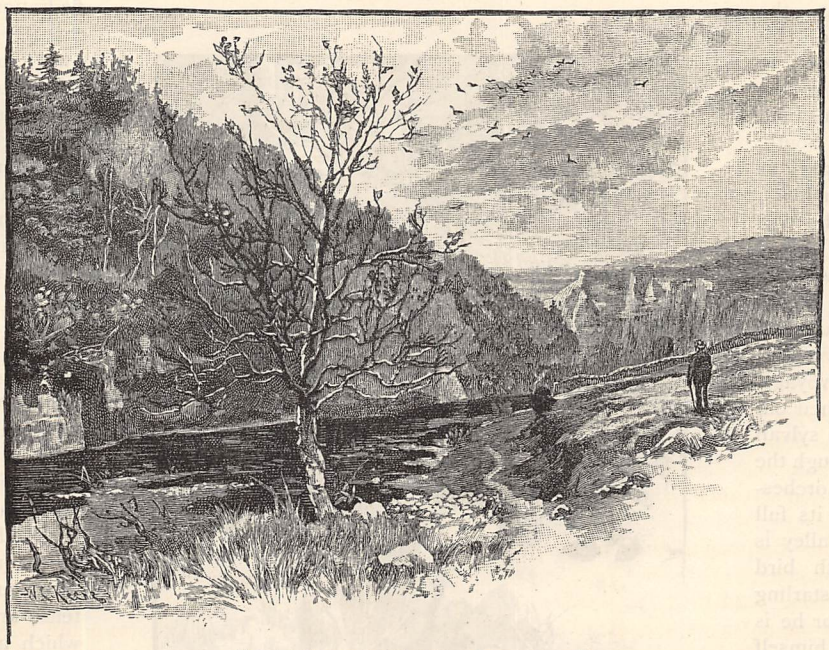
his wife. He took her from her fickle friends to London; there she was introduced to his family, and there she was married. I had the honour of giving her away, and that was the pleasantest event of the day for me—the affair being of a very stately and grand kind—much too grand for a simple old lawyer like me. I think Redlands himself was glad when the ceremony was over, and he whisked his dear little wife away from the artificial conditions to which she was as little accustomed as I. They went to Italy for the rest of the winter, and while they were away the dismal old Court was pulled down, and a wooden châlet set up for their home while the new house is being built. They live in the pretty little box now; their new home is to be called by its older name—Redlands Court.

THE END.

*** *Next month will be commenced a New Serial Story by* L. T. MEADE.

VOICES FROM THE VALLEY.

"FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD."



"ITS PICTURESQUENESS IS PATHETIC."

I.

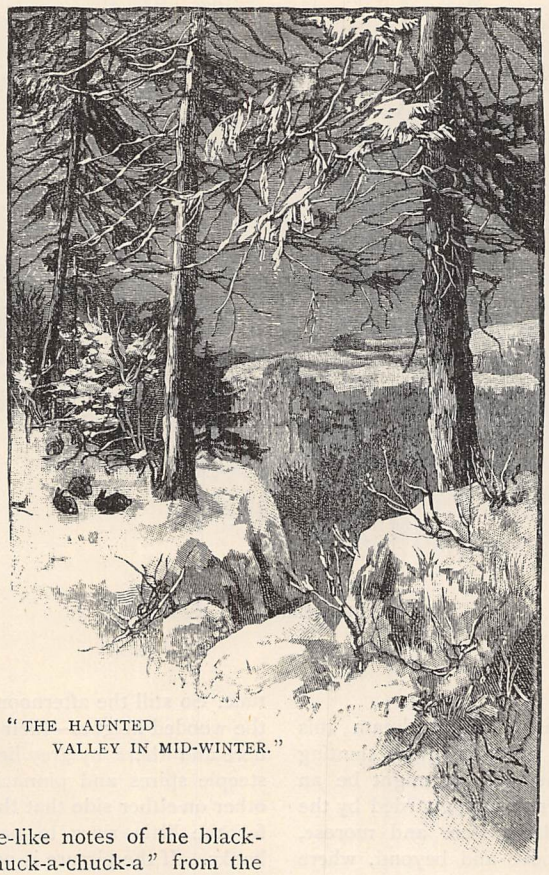
PEACEFUL as a child's dream this Derbyshire valley is in the slanting autumn sunshine. It might be an enchanted enclosure, guarded by the sentinel hills, austere and morose, that rise above and beyond, where the heather bells are fast fading from rose-colour to pale lilac, and the brackens are becoming rusty and yellow, amid the long coarse grasses, the silvery mosses, the marshy rushes, and the inky rills of these moorland wilds, broken here and there by lonely whitewashed farmsteads, and half-cultivated patches of fallow field, that lend human character and a semblance of life to the savage, wind-scourged solitude. So still the afternoon is in this rocky glen, where the wooded heights—their precipitous terraces broken here and there by grey limestone crags, that rise like steeple spires and pinnacles—draw so close to each other on either side that there is only a niggard space for the little river to pass between the impending banks. If the picture is poetical it is pensive, and its picturesqueness is pathetic. For to-morrow will be the First of November; and it is only the young who are careless of the flight of time. But to most of us, to those who have grown grey in the distracted fight, who are richer only in regrets, and to whom remembrance is sometimes only another name for remorse, anniversaries are so many milestones, telling that the end of the chequered journey is drawing near, while the crowning victory has not been achieved. The

young look with audacious confidence to the future, the old live in the past, and happy are they who can say—

> "Our yesterdays look backward with a smile,
> Nor, like the Parthian, wound us as they fly."

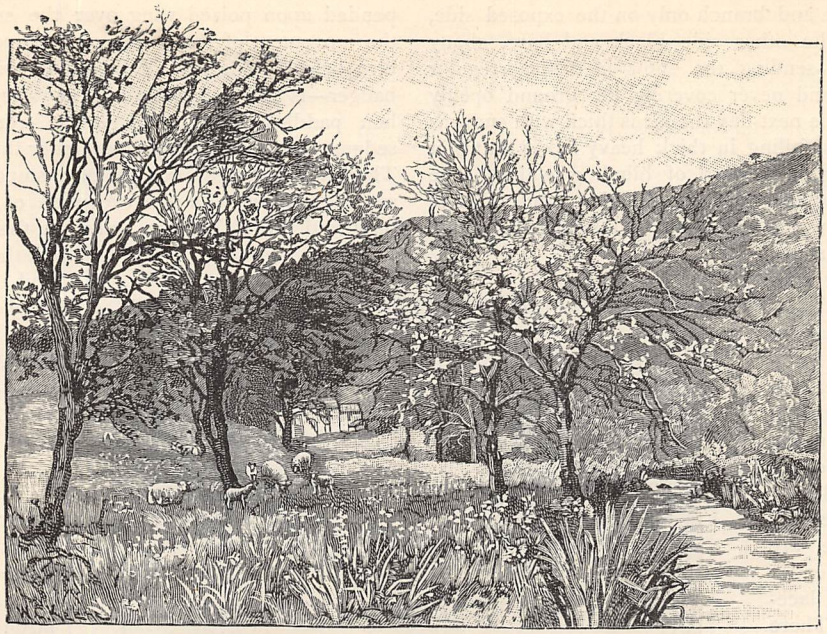
Spring is crowded with the delights of anticipation; autumn fills you with retrospective thoughts, vague and vain. It preaches a sermon half pleasant, half painful, a sermon in a sad minor key. The text of the subdued discourse is decline and decay: fading flowers, falling foliage, fleeting light, fancies that are fled, friends that were fickle, affections that were false.

Few wild flowers remain in this Derbyshire valley. The summer birds of passage have migrated. Gone are the chiffchaff and the whinchat; the wheatear, the cuckoo, the night-jar, and the corncrake; the willow, wood, or sedge warblers; the wagtail, the swift, the swallow, and the house and sand martins; the redstart, the whitethroat, the wryneck, and the blackcap; gone to sunny lands across the sea, to the palms and temples of the South. But when April is verging into May, you will hear in the dim grey light of early morning the whisper of their wings in the air, as they pass soft and silent overhead after their long voyage, and return to their old haunts in this sylvan solitude. Although the ornithological orchestra is not at its full strength, the valley is still vocal with bird music. The starling has not left, for he is chattering to himself as if he enjoyed the soliloquy. The jackdaw and the jay are noisy in the clefts of the limestone crags. The thrush yet sings with bluff heartiness, and elicits, as if in rival response, the full, flute-like notes of the blackbird. The linnet says "chuck-a-chuck-a" from the furze-bushes. The male chaffinch sings with unconstrained gaiety. His wife and family have left him, and gone to winter on the banks of the Nile; but he stops at home and keeps house cheerfully for her and them. The lark takes up its clear, ecstatic note to the silvery blue above, where the white clouds are blown like argosies of pearl before the western wind. There is the "rat-tat-tat" of the spotted woodpecker's beak on the hard bark of a fallen tree, followed by its laughing "yaffa, yaffa, yaffle." The cry of "pee-wit, pee-wit" takes you to the moors above the valley, where the lapwing is wheeling round his nest among the ling and heath, and the grouse and blackcock bask in the sunshine on some weather-beaten crag that peers above the moss and turf-like bastions of a ruined fortress. Returning to the haunted valley, and to the river that runs like a ribbon of trembling light down the deep and devious defile, let not that cheerful chorister the robin be forgotten. He is no fine-weather friend. His sweetly modulated voice is heard warbling when the songs of other birds are hushed, and his red waistcoat gives a gleam of warm colour to woods that are depressing in their dripping decay.



"THE HAUNTED VALLEY IN MID-WINTER."

The woods that seem to reach to the sky-line on either side of the hidden valley are opulent enough to suggest the chromatic combinations of a painter's palette. True, there is not that bewildering conflagration of colour, that gorgeous blaze of swift and sudden splendour, which distinguishes the "fall" in America; yet there are more tints than you can count in this Derbyshire valley in the shimmering light of this autumn afternoon: vivid reds and ruddy oranges, rich yellows and lustrous crimsons, toned down with gentle greens and greys, russets and maroons, dark purples, dull bronzes, indigo blues, and burnt umbers, all combined in a pastoral symphony of colour. Most intense are the beeches, which are of a vivid golden-red; the oaks are a dull yellow. The alder, hanging over the voiceful water, where it waves through the warp of feathery weeds, is still of a deep dark green. Redder than the hips and haws are the coral berries on the mountain ash. The sycamore is a russet-brown, and the ash is changing from a lustrous yellow to a bronzy greenish-black. The larches are sere and sombre, and the silvery birch, "the lady of the woods," has lost her flounces of green. The firs and pines are of that opaque blue which Turner loved to introduce into the shading of his perspectives. A soft brown are the nuts on the hazel; purple-black the berries on the



"SPRING IN THE ENCHANTED VALLEY."

elder; a bright, translucent, cornelian-red those of the honeysuckle; a deeper red the "haws"; a glossy black the bilberries. The blackberry-bushes in the brake are loaded with fruit that rings the changes of colour from a raw green, through various shades of red, to a luminous purple-black.

The placid, pensive afternoon wanes with the westering sun, whose fan-shaped fire burns the ridges of the moorland heights in a glow of dusky redness. The stream whispers a soft "sh—sh—sh" between the contracted banks. The faded leaves dance fitfully in the air, and fall with a musical sigh at your feet. In the fleeting light the inspiration of the scene has a melancholy power. The rising wind chases the sere and yellow leaves. They cover the grave of Summer. The sound of a lonely church-bell comes down the valley. Its slow and solemn tongue proclaims that "one of the children of the soil is returning to the earth whence he came." Tender and subdued are the surroundings, and by some subtle influence they translate themselves into your thoughts with suggestions of wider life and more reverent thought. Shelley must have felt this indefinable heart-yearning aspiration when he spoke of—

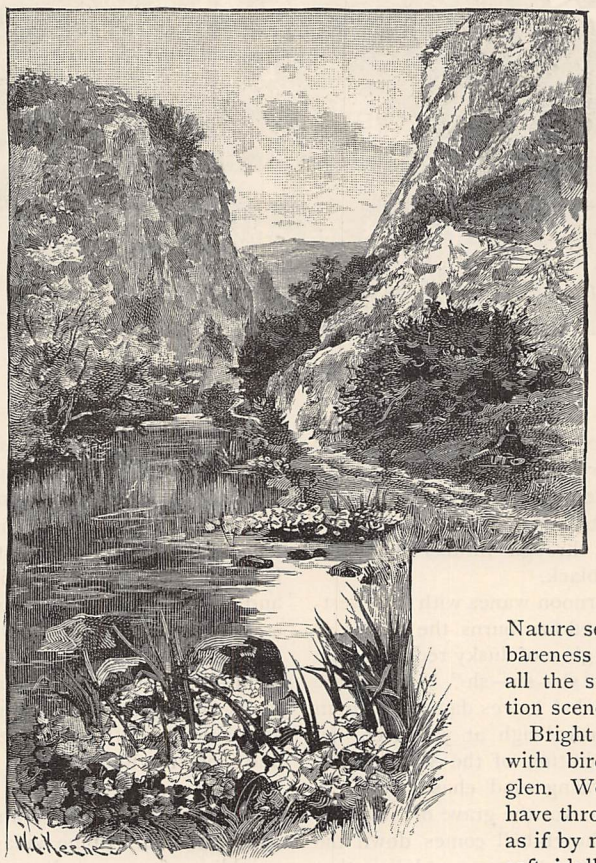
> 'The desire of the moth for the star,
> Of the night for the morrow,
> The devotion to something afar
> From the sphere of our sorrow.'

II.

THE haunted valley in mid-winter. The Derbyshire uplands have been blanched with snow for some weeks past. The sky is of a clear steely-blue. The sun lights up a world of white. The wind seems to blow direct from the heart of an iceberg. It cuts as keenly as Shylock's knife. Nature has ceased to be a painter. She has left the glowing canvas and warm colours for the cold white marble and the sharp-edged chisel of the sculptor. Snow in the tainted town is an uncomfortable compound that makes the dingy streets look more dolorous; but in this Derbyshire valley, and on the ocean-like moorlands above it, spotless, stainless, silent, silvery, it is the picture of purity, and transforms commonplace scenes into landscapes of wondrous beauty. Of all the forces of Nature, snow looks the most soft and gentle and innocent. There seems no strength in this ethereal, fairy-like, feathery, and fantastic thing. Yet it is the most powerful and aggressive of the elements. It is a scene-shifter that moves with muffled feet and insidious tread; but it obliterates an Alpine village without warning in the twinkling of an eye. It performs its destructive work without noise, breaking down the telegraph wires and arresting the lightning-flash with its imperative messages of life and death. Unassuming, unostentatious, hushed and still, there is no swagger or bluster in its voice; but it blocks the railway, chokes the cutting, and stops the flying express. Snow is an anomalous union of feebleness and force, of peace and power, of innocence and invincibility, of unsleeping activity and apparent tranquillity, of nullity and ubiquity, of insignificance and strength.

The snow-scenes in the hidden valley are never the same two days together. Nature delights in varying her picturesque effects. She composes her effects in "black and white" in the spirit of caprice. To-day, steel-blue and sunny, the ground is just whitened with the tiniest pilules of snow, smaller and whiter and harder than the first bud of the hawthorn; to-morrow comes a wild and withering "blizzard" from the west,

blanching bole and branch only on the exposed side, and leaving the other side black and bare, ebony against ivory—sending the snow in drifts, irregular and bulging, and never covering the ground openly and evenly ; the next day the air is thick with snow as the wind drops, falling in thick heavy flakes that blot out everything in a whirl of blinding white. The ragged edges of the hills are rounded, and folds of snow rise from the valley in undulations of white. Next to the snow, the hoar-frost presents the most fascinating pictures in the wintry landscape. It idealises everything. It paints its pictures on the window-panes of the keeper's isolated cottage in the valley. Delicate are the designs, tender is the tracery, lace-like the lines. There are architectural inspirations of spire and minaret, tower and dome, cathedral and castle. The flowers and fern-fronds and foliage might be the flora of a poet's dream. It is fairy-land on frozen glass. Finer than filagree, more fantastic than fret-work, every twig is crystallised ; every tree is laden with rich ice-jewels, that glitter and glisten in the sparkling sunburst like diamonds, whilst the prismatic icicles hang like gleaming spears on the limestone crags. The river flows icily between the withered banks. It no longer laughs in its radiant course. It brawls. There is snow-broth on its swirling surface. In the little back waters, where the current is not swift, the water is frozen, and the little tributary water-threads are covered with a surface of thin transparent ice, under which the water is as restless as quicksilver. The chaffinch, despite the numbing cold, is taking his bath, and now, with a jovial note of "pink, pink," flies away to preen his plumage in some sheltered bush and brae. In the woods there is the crow of the cock-pheasant, his showy plumage shining against the black trunk of a tree. The myriads of rabbits that honeycomb the haunted valley have betrayed their footprints in the snow. A kestrel hangs suspended upon poised wing over the scene, watching the movement of some starved field-mouse or a small bird below. The last of England's wild beasts—the badger—is still to be found in the valley. The moor-hen paddles about amongst the frozen reeds and sedges, and occasionally dives under the chill surface. There is the "sceap, sceap" of a snipe, rising in zig-zag flight ; but with the exception of the robin, the only wild birds that are active in the valley to-day are the missel-thrush and the tom-tit. Stay ! was not that weak little note the "tsit, tsit" of the golden-crested wren ?



"THE FOLIAGE OF FULL SUMMER IN THE FERTILE VALLEY."

III.

SPRING in the enchanted valley, with white clouds sailing in a lambent, lapis-lazuli sky. The rigid and relentless winter was loth to leave, and tenaciously held the land, even in April, in its iron grip. Suddenly, however, came the warm south-west wind and the nourishing rain, and Nature seemed changed from bleak bareness to an emerald-green with all the swiftness of a transformation scene.

Bright with flowers and blithe with bird-music is the beautiful glen. Woodland, heath, and hedge have thrown off their chrysalis case, as if by magic. All around are the soft, idyllic influences, the delicate sweetness, the passionate blossoming, the peaceful gladness, fair-hidden, yet full-confessed, trembling and pure, of the English spring-time. All the wild flowers seem to have concentrated themselves in this narrow valley, and all the wild birds seem to have congregated their song. Violets hide among the old mossy stones ; primroses star the tangled undergrowth in the wooded slopes above, where the lily of the valley, the purple orchid, the wild pansy, the wild strawberry, the blush-tinted anemone, the pink-varied wood sorrel, the cowslip, the celandine, the daffodil, and the curious cuckoo-pint run riot among the yet bronzed bracken and the uncurling scrolls of fern. The trees are tinted in every chord of green and gold and chrome and yellow. High above the winding roadway by the river are silent woodland paths among the rocks, that reveal perfect wastes of wild

flowers—vistas of forget-me-nots, speedwells, and wild hyacinths that cover the green undergrowth like patches of fallen sky. The gorse looks as if Midas had been flinging at random coins of gold over its prickly bushes. The bosoms of the blithe birds seem bursting with melody.

IV.

THE foliage of full summer in the fertile valley. The twilight glades of the wooded banks are now clothed with the rich panoply of July. The trees wear their richest liveries. The drowsy heat drives you to the margin of the river, that seems to send its current of crystal coolness through the tired brain to refresh the weary life. A liquid looking-glass, the water reflects the hanging greenery on its banks, save where the surface is hidden by water-lilies, the white stars of the flowers shining here and there among the broad green floating leaves. The water-ouzel, or "dipper," curtseying on a mossy rock, displays his white bib and tucker, and then dives into the river and disappears. A rat swims across the stream with a young one in its mouth. It is, no doubt, a mother teaching her offspring the art of natation. A kingfisher shoots like a blue arrow across a mimic cascade, wild and musical, as the water tumbles over the lichened boulders into a deep pool that mirrors the sky and the moving white clouds. The river is haunted with trout. It is a classic stream. Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton fished in its running waters more than two hundred years ago. But these fine speckled fish are full of endurance and daring, and defy the fly-fisherman. Local satire describes the trout and grayling of this valley as having passed the "sixth standard," and being able to tell at a glance from what Manchester or Liverpool fishing-tackle shops the gay flies and gossamer-like gut have been purchased. Instead of the angler decoying the trout, it is the trout that decoy the angler. The water is so pellucid that the fish have the sport, and not the fisherman. One "Judicious Hooker" has suggested that, in fishing this wide-awake little river, "a visible fly attached to an invisible hook, on an invisible line, should be thrown with an invisible rod by an invisible piscator." But, after all, fishing for the sake of filling your creel is only a secondary consideration. The river is the objective point that transports the rodster from the mercenary, struggling, unsympathetic world into the country, to be taught the lore which Nature brings. It is an excuse to get by the side of the soliloquising stream. It takes him from the sordid surroundings and poisoned air of the town into a land of green beauty, to the sound of wild songsters, and the smell of opening flowers; to the flow of the responsive river, the flash of the kingfisher, the flight of the swallow, the flutter of wings and leaves. For him is the music of merle and mavis, the perfume of meadow-sweet and snowy elder-tree, and the soothing wash-wash of the eloquent water.

While the waves plash pleasantly, and the wild birds build in the boughs by the river, and we "read Nature like the manuscript of Heaven, and call the flowers its poetry," you may listen to the mysterious talk of the Voices of the Valley. What is the vibrating refrain in the touching old German song that Madcap Violet so tenderly recalled?—

"*Far away—in the beautiful meadows—is the house of my home. Many a time I went out from it into the valley—O you beautiful valley—I greet you a thousand times—Farewell—farewell!*"

EDWARD BRADBURY.

SOMETHING MORE THAN A SYMPTOM.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

HERE is a scene from life, reader—from my own life, in fact. The time is eighteen hundred and fifty something, and I am standing in a row of about a dozen other not-too-happy urchins, being examined on the work of the week, for it is Saturday forenoon. The school is one of the best in the far north of Scotland, and the teacher is admitted by all parents to be a "tickler," for it is generally believed that the depths of his erudition are unfathomable. We boys consider him a "tickler," too, but one of a different sort. The words of wisdom, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," he construes in a painfully literal sense. The meaning he attaches to the verb "to live"—that is, as far as little boys are concerned—is "to be and to do and to suffer," and he exemplifies it in the persons of his pupils every day in the week. He has a "pointer" to probe us in the ribs, a thin rattan cane for light work, and a piece of old bridle, with two fingers on it, to "pandé" us on the open palms—a dire and dreadful punishment in frosty weather, when the hands are blue with cold—and he has also his fist with which to box the ear. Let me take this opportunity of telling parents that boxing children on the ears has often led to deafness, and to disease of the brain, which has in time ended fatally.

You may guess how I loved that teacher! I used to long for some miracle of the Jack-and-Beanstalk order to take place. "Oh!" I used to think, "if some good fairy would come behind me, and touch me with her wand, so that I might grow up into a man with a sudden bound! I should not want to be a man for more than five minutes," I thought.

Five minutes would have been quite long enough for that dominie's comfort.

But here we are at our lesson of recapitulation.

"Now, little boy," he says to me, "tell me smartly and quickly the several meanings of the words 'entomology,' 'etymology,' and 'etiology.'"

I begin blundering about "beetles," get mixed up in "birds," and end by getting punched all the way to the bottom of the class.

But perhaps the method of my earlier education may have had something to do with my unwillingness at the present time to bother my readers with anything that might be called "dry logic." If as a tiny lad I was apt in my own mind to connect the words "*physical* science" with the administration of brimstone and treacle, as a man I am unlikely to obtrude on others something perhaps not half so sweet—the science of physiology.

But, stay, I can make a little of it go quite a long way, and as that little will tend to make my subject more easily and perfectly understood, it can hardly be objected to.

What, then, I want to point out to some, and recall to the memory of others, is some facts concerning the anatomical construction of the digestive canal, beginning with the pylorus or lower outlet of the stomach.

It is generally believed—by the uninitiated public, I mean—that digestion is practically concluded when the food leaves the stomach; but this is very far indeed from being the case, for the intestines have their work to do, the chyle or pap formed in the upper receptacle has to receive the secretions of the liver and other important organs, has to be turned into chyme, and that chyme has to be absorbed by a wonderful network of special vessels and carried away upwards to the thoracic duct, which presently empties it into the blood. Just one lesson of importance may be learned from this: it is most essential for health and life that, even after it has cleared itself of its nutritious contents, the stomach should be allowed to rest for a time, empty, or as empty as it ever is. And this for two reasons—first, that the organ itself may recuperate; and, secondly, to give the lower and longer portion of the digestive canal fair play. For if food is thrown into the stomach immediately after it is empty, a large amount of nerve or working power is abstracted from the *duodenum*, *jejunum*, *ilium*, &c., and they must, therefore, be hampered in their efforts to do their duty.

And this very "sin"—I can call it by no milder term—of eating too often, is one of the principal causes of the complaint I devote this paper to, and to which I may be permitted to give the name of "constringency," a name that at all events is quite as expressive as any other.

But with regard to the construction of that portion of the digestive economy more immediately at fault in those suffering from this complaint, all that I desire you to remember, and that you must remember, is this: virtually speaking, the canal is composed of three coats, *i.e.*, it is like three tubes one inside the other. The lining coat is a mucous membrane covered wholly with exuding outlets, and to a large extent also with a protruding pile, so to speak, each *villus* of which, waving free and supplied with nerve, vein, artery, and absorbent apparatus, drinks in, as it were, the nutritious portion of the food. The second coat is the muscular, the length of each muscular fibre going round the canal, not up and down it; do not forget that. The third coat is a fibrous one, which, for practical purposes, I may merely describe to the lay reader as the one that gives firmness to the whole canal.

Well, now, the very mention of mucous membrane as the lining of the digestive canal implies the fact of exudation, and it is this exudation which tends to keep the contents moist. Without this supply of moisture they could neither be forced onwards nor induced to part with their nutritive portion for the supply of the blood. You see, then, how all-important this coat is.

As to the action of the muscular part of the tube, it is called vermicular. If the reader will kindly close his fist as he scans these lines, and keep tightening finger after finger till he feels the nail of each pressing against the palm, he has a homely, though pretty accurate, example of the action of the muscular coat in question.

All, then, you have to bear in mind is the exuding or mucous membrane; the pile of free-floating *villi* which absorb nutrition (suck it up, you may say, and pass it on behind to vessels that carry it away to the blood); and the muscular coat, with its peculiar, worm-like onward-movement action.

So long as these are all in working order, everything is all right; and if good food, in not too great abundance, and all unpoisoned by stimulants (either in the form of too-hot sauces or acid-producing liquors), is eaten, good blood is bound to be made, and health and happiness are the almost certain results. But a hitch in the working of either coat spoils all, and, so long as it exists, the individual owner thereof is simply miserable; he but lives, as I did at school, "to be and to do and to suffer."

And now a few words as to the ordinary causes of constringency or torpor of the digestive canal; and these will lead, naturally enough, to the suggestion of remedies for its removal.

From what I have already said, it must be evident that the cause of the trouble may be confined to any one coat, but of course all three may be implicated, and generally are. Take the mucous or lining coat first, and we find that dryness, or rather a lessened degree of moisture, in this will interfere very much with the later stages of the digestive process. One common cause of such a state is the abuse of heating foods and stimulants. This is a direct cause, for fever—in a slight degree—of the system is engendered, and the lining membrane of the whole body, including even the air-passages, is dried to some extent. Too sedentary habits form another cause. Your easy-minded, lazy folks, however, who sit for sake of sitting, are not so much troubled with the complaint as the work-a-day man or woman who has to use the brain. In all cases of brain disorder of an exciting

character, we find the system is much bound ; and to a lesser but a very uncomfortable degree study has the same effect. So has worry of mind (*i.e.*, *brain*, in this case).

A cause of dryness in the mucous membrane but seldom thought of is hard water used for drinking or cooking purposes. See to that at once, if you are a sufferer. Better send for water for your tea, coffee, or soup, to a well miles away than endure misery that may lead to a total break-up of the system.

Excessive tea and coffee drinking also tends to dry the system. Many other causes lead to the same, especially among the weaker sex.

So much for the mucous membrane. Now for the muscular. It is weakness alone that this will suffer from, and want of exercise is an all-pervading cause. All the muscles of the body are strengthened by exercise, which tends to the proper flow of all the secretions of great glands, such as the liver, pancreas, and kidney ; determines the elimination of poisons from the blood, such as bile and urea ; and keeps the skin in splendid working order. But the reader will readily perceive that if it be the mucous coat that is in fault, exercise, though it may assist Nature, will not cure the complaint as long as any of the causes above mentioned are allowed to hold sway.

The muscular coat is weakened from the want of a sufficiency of good and easily-digested food, or from over-eating. Again, if the mucous coat is long out of order, the muscular has extra work and strain in forcing onwards the over-dry contents of the canal.

For the same reasons, too, the fibrous coat will be weakened, and, as too often happens in people advanced in years, it gets stretched and to some extent useless.

I may add that if too much of green vegetables is taken, as is sometimes the case, flatulence and fermentation take place, and distension of the canal, which tends greatly to weaken both the muscular and fibrous coats.

And this leads me to add still another cause of torpor—namely, the abuse of aperient pills and aperient medicines generally. These may be needed occasionally, but to *keep on* taking them is certain to lead to the most distressing debility of the digestive canal, which is known to end at times in complete obstruction, and this seldom fails to end all.

The primary symptoms of constringency or torpor of the digestive canal are well known (the very names I have given the complaint are sufficient to describe them), but the secondary symptoms are not so easily distinguished ; and, indeed, the case is often treated as if the torpor were a mere symptom, when it is something considerably more. The patient after a time becomes torpid himself, life loses all charm, he suffers from headaches or fulness in the head, is drowsy and stupid after meals, sleeps heavily at night without being over-much refreshed, has cold feet and maybe hands as well, is nervous, gloomy, and generally dyspeptic.

Digestion is performed very slowly, and he is apt to peptonise himself, if I may so call it, under the impression that the gastric and pancreatic juices are not in sufficient force. One week he takes tonics, the next diuretics or aperients. In a word, he is all in a muddle, and knows it, but cannot help himself.

Now the cure of all this trouble may be described in a few words. The sufferer must have—to the greatest extent possible—permanent and complete change. He must remodel his method of living ; lay down strict laws for himself, and abide by them for some time to come.

Stimulants, sauces—even tea and coffee, except in most moderate quantities—must be avoided.

He must get up in the morning when he wakes, nor sleep on too soft a bed. Hard walking exercise, or plenty of cycling, is part of the cure. He must encourage Nature by regularity in everything.

A glass of cold water before breakfast should be taken with the juice of half a lemon in it.

Foods such as bacon for breakfast, oatmeal or groats, and a moderate amount of green vegetables with dinner, all do good. Fruit for breakfast and dinner does good.

Medicine : I do not intend to prescribe drugs. Rational hygienic cures are before medicinal. The cure, indeed, lies in the sufferer's own hands. And, in conclusion, let me earnestly impress on all the fact that long-continued torpor is highly dangerous, and truly somewhat more than a symptom, for, if neglected, it may lead to a breaking-up of the constitution.

MY SULLEN CHILD

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

IT is not easy to keep up with the children in a journal. You are ill, or they are ill ; and, behold, many blank pages ! I find many scattered notices of Lucy in the last two or three volumes of my book, and I always write of her, I find, as "poor Lucy." Now, I wonder why ? The child is certainly neither unhealthy nor unhappy—at least, not with any reason ; but again and again I find this sort of entry :

"Lucy looked so little pleased at the children's 'garden party,' that I said she should stay within and play with her dolls."

"Lucy displeased with her porridge ; says nothing, but black looks all day."

"Hugh bumped against his sister : by accident, I truly believe, but Lucy can't get over it ; speaks to no one, and looks as if under a cloud."

Well, I need not go on ; the fact is, the child is

sensible of many injuries heaped upon her; I think there is no ground for the feeling, for she is really very sweet when she has not, as the children say, the black dog on her shoulder.

It is quite plain to me, and to others also, I think, that we have let this sort of thing go on too long without dealing with it. We must take the matter in hand. How to account for it? Alas! that is easy enough; though John says, "Nonsense, dear! You have not a grain of sullenness in your composition!"

But, please God, our little Lucy must not grow up in this sullen habit, for all our sakes, but chiefly for her own, poor child! What if she marry a man of like mind? She might easily do so, for I think no one suspected this secret life of sullen rage in me—at least, not since I left the nursery. That's the worst of it; people do not really know what misery they may transmit to their children, and allow them to grow up in; for, after the nursery and the first days of school life, we learn to control our feelings outwardly, to walk through life with quietness and self-restraint; and our parents and friends say, "Ah! that child has outgrown his ugly temper," or his idleness, or sullenness, or whatever may be the bad place in his life. But suppose two such marry! How hateful in another is the evil trait which you have been trying to mask in yourself!

Well, I felt that in this matter I might be of more use than John, who simply does not understand a temper less sunny and open than his own.

I pondered and pondered, and at last some little light broke in upon me. I thought I should get hold of one principle at a time, work that out thoroughly, and then take up the next, and so on, until all the springs of sullenness were exhausted, and all supplies from without stopped. I was beginning to suspect that the laws of habit worked here as elsewhere, and that if we could get our dear child to pass six months, say, without a "fallen countenance," she might lose this distressing failing for life.

I meant to take most of the trouble of this experiment on myself, but somehow I never can do anything without consulting John. I think men have clearer heads than we women: that is, they can see *both* sides of a question, and are not carried off their feet by the one side presented to them.

"Well, John, our little Lucy does not get over her sulky fits; in fact, they last longer and are harder to get out of than ever!"

"Poor little girl! It is very unhappy for her and for all of us. But don't you think that it is a sort of childish *malaise* she will grow out of?"

"Now, have you not told me, again and again, that a childish fault left to itself can do no other than strengthen?"

"'Tis true; I suppose the fact is, I am slow to realise the fault. But you are right; from the point of view of *habit* we are pledged to deal with it. Have you made any plans?"

"Yes, I have been trying to work the thing out on your lines, just like curing a crying child. We must watch the rise of the sullen cloud, and change her thoughts before she has had time to realise that the black fit is coming."

"You are right; I do think the identical treatment might be followed with much success. If we can only keep the child for a week without this settling of the cloud, the mere habit would be somewhat broken."

We had not to wait for our opportunity. At breakfast next day—whether Hugh's porridge looked more inviting than her own, or whether he should not have been helped first, or whether the child had a little pain of which she was hardly aware—suddenly, her eyes fell, brows dropped, lips pouted, the whole face became slightly paler than before, the figure limp, limbs lax, hands nerveless—and our gentle child was transfigured—become entirely unlovable. So far, her feelings were in the emotional stage; her injury, whatever it was, had not yet taken shape in her thoughts; she could not have told you what was the matter, because she did not know; but very soon the busy brain would come to the aid of the quick emotions, and then she would be sulky of fixed purpose. Her father saw the symptoms rise, and knew what they would lead to; and, with the promptness which has many a time saved us, he cried out—

"Lucy, come here, and hold up your pinafore!" and Lucy trotted up to his side, her pinafore held up very much, to receive the morning dole of crumbs for the birds; presently, back she came radiant with the joy of having given the birds a good breakfast, and we had no more sulky fits that day. This went on for a fortnight or so, with fair but not perfect success: whenever her father or I was present we caught the emotion before the child was conscious of it, and succeeded in turning her thoughts into some pleasant channel. But poor Jane, who has less time now than in Hugh's earlier days, has had bad hours with Lucy; there would sit the child, pale and silent, and with fallen countenance, the day through, doing nothing because she liked to do it, but only because she was made. And, once the fit had settled down, thick and steady as a London fog, neither her father nor I could help in the least. Oh, the inconceivable settled cloudiness and irresponsiveness of that sweet child-face!

Our tactics were at fault; no doubt they helped so far as they went. We managed to secure bright days that might otherwise have been cloudy, if we were present at the first rise of the sullen mood. But it seemed impossible to bring about so long an abstinence from sullen fits as would eradicate the *habit*. We pictured to ourselves the dreary life that lay before our pretty little girl: the sort of insulation, the distrust of her sweetness which even one such sullen fit would give rise to: worse, the isolation which accompanies this sort of temper, and the anguish of repentance to follow. And then, I know madness is often bred of this strong sense of injured personality.

It is not a pleasant thing to look an evil in the face. Whether or not "a little knowledge is a dangerous," certainly it is a trying thing. If we could only have contented ourselves with "Oh, she'll grow out of it

by-and-by," we could have put up with even a daily cloud. But these forecasts of our little girl's future made the saving of the child, at *any* cost, our most anxious care.

"I'll tell you what, Annie: we must strike out a new line. In a general way I do believe it's best to deal with a child's faults without making him aware that he has them. It fills the little beings with a ridiculous sense of importance to have anything belonging to *them*, even a fault. But in this case I think we shall have to strike home, and deal with *the cause* at least as much as with *the effects*, and that chiefly because we have not the effects entirely under our control."

"I'm not sure I quite see what you mean," I said, for I had a shrinking dread that John was going to uproot some horror both in Lucy and her mother. Her sullen temper was, I became more and more certain, an inherited trait. And though I had really made great efforts to make him know the worst that was in me, it was a different thing to have him poking about amongst the roots of our being—my poor little girl's and mine—and fetching the ugly thing up between his fingers! "But, John, what if there is no cure? What if this odious temper were *hereditary*—our precious child's inheritance from those who should have brought her only good?"

"Poor little wifie! so this is how it looks to you. You women are sensitive creatures. Why, do you know, it never occurred to me that it might be all *my* fault. Well, I will not laugh at the fancy. Let us take it seriously, even if, as it seems to me, a little morbid. Let us suppose that this sad sullenness, of which I hear so much and see so little, is indeed Lucy's inheritance from her sweet mother—may she only inherit all the rest, and happy the man whose life she blesses! The question is, not 'How it has come?' but 'How are we to deal with it?' Equally, you and I. Poor things! It's but a very half-and-half kind of matrimony if each is to pick out his or her own particular bundle of failings, and deal with it single-handed. This poor fellow finds the prospect too much for him! Nay, as a matter of fact, I believe that every failing of mind, body, temper, or what not, is a matter of inheritance, and that each parent's particular business in life is to pass his family forward freed from that particular vicious tendency which has been his own bane—or hers, if you prefer it."

"LUCY'S PEAR WAS NOT TOUCHED" (*p.* 338).

"Well, dear, do as you will; I feel that you know best. What it would be in these days of greater insight to be married to a man who would say, 'There! that boy may thank his mother!' for this or the other failure! Of course the thing is done now, but more often as a random guess than otherwise."

"To return to Lulu. I think we shall have to show

her herself in this matter—to rake up the ugly feeling, however involuntary, and let her see how hateful it is. Yes, I do not wonder you shrink from this. So do I; it will destroy the child's unconsciousness."

"Oh, John, how I dread to poke into the poor little wounded heart, and bring up worse things to startle her!"

"I am sorry for you, dear, but I think it must be done; and don't you think that you are the person to do it? While they have a mother, I don't think I could presume to poke too much into the secrets of the children's hearts."

"I'll try; but if I get into a mess you must help me through."

The opportunity came soon enough. It was pears this time. Hugh would never have known whether he had the biggest or the least. But we have told Jane to be especially careful in this matter. "Each of the children must have the biggest or best as often as one another, but there must be no fuss, no taking turns, about such trifles. Therefore, very rightly, you gave Hugh the biggest, and Lucy the smallest pear." Lucy's pear was not touched; there the child sat, without word or sob, but all gathered into herself, like a red anemone whose tentacles have been touched. The stillness, whiteness, and brooding sullenness of the face, the limp figure, and desolate attitude, would have made me take the little being to my heart, if I had not too often failed to reach her in this way. This went on all day, all of us suffering, and in the evening, when I went to hear the children's prayers before bed, I meant to have it out.

We were both frozen up with sadness, and the weary little one was ready to creep into her mother's heart again. But I must not let her yet.

"Well, my poor Lucy, so you have had a very sad day?"

"Yes, mother," with a little quivering sob.

"And do you know we have all had a very sad day—father, mother, your little brother, nurse—every one of us has felt as if a black curtain had been hung up to shut out the sunshine."

The child was sympathetic, and shivered at the thought of the black curtain and the warm sunshine shut out.

"And do you know who has put us all out in the dark and the cold? One little girl drew the curtain, because she would not speak to any of us, or be kind to any of us, or love any of us all the day long; so we could not get into the sunshine, and have been shivering and sad in the cold."

"Mother, mother!" with gasping sobs, "*not* you and father?"

"Ah! I thought my little girl would be sorry; now, let us try to find out how it all was. Is it possible that Lucy noticed that her brother's pear was larger than her own?"

"Oh, mother, how could I?" and the poor little face was hidden in her mother's breast, and the outbreak of sobs that followed was too terrible. I feared it might mean actual illness for the sensitive little soul. I think it was the right thing to do; but I had barely courage enough to leave the results in more loving Hands.

"Never mind; don't cry any more, darling, and we will ask our Father above to forgive and forget all about it. Mother knows that her dear little Lucy will never love Lucy best any more. And then the black curtain will never fall, and we shall never be a whole long day standing sadly out in the cold. Good-night for mother, and another sweet good-night from father."

The treatment seems to answer. On the slightest return of the old sullen symptoms we show our poor little girl what they mean. But the grief that follows is so painful that I'm afraid we could not go on with it, for the sake of the child's health; but, happily, we very rarely see a sulky face now; and when we do, we turn and look upon our child, and the look melts her, until she is all gentleness, patience, and love.

THE TRYSTING-PLACE.

I.

WESTWARD over the pale green sky
The rosy pennons of sunset fly;
Nestward slowly the great rooks hie,
With cawing and laboured flapping;
The bushes blend in a vagueness dark,
And the further trees stand tall and stark;
I hear the rushes whisper and shake,
As a flutter of wind begins to wake,
And louder grows
In the quick repose
The sound of the river's lapping.

II.

Still half an hour, by the abbey-chime!
I come to the tryst before the time;
I hearken the river's rippled rhyme,
And the sedge's rustled greeting;
And I cheat my heart with feignèd fears,
And sigh as I wait (for no one hears),
To make the joy more rich and vast
When I feel his lips on my own at last,
And hear no sound
As the world goes round
But the throb of our two hearts meeting.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

(*Drawn by* PERCY TARRANT.)

THE TRYSTING-PLACE.

(*See page* 338.)

THE GARDEN IN MAY.

THAT "gay deceiver," the month of May, is upon us once more; yet its popularity cannot be gainsaid. Perhaps the greatest charm about it lies in the fact that it seems to say to us daily, "The winter is past." But *is* the winter past? Snow-balling and skating are undoubtedly past, but though we are now, it may be, playing tennis under a cloudless sky, we dare not yet sit down in the open when the "set" is over and let a biting east wind scrape our face. Such a rash experiment would certainly lay us up, and might even end in laying us low. Or, take another view of the month of May. Get out of bed about four o'clock in the morning. It may be quite a cloudless sky, and the cuckoo has been "hard at it" for the last hour; but look out of the window at that corner of the lawn that the sun has not yet found out, and it is grim winter "scotched but not killed," for there you see the ghost of January still skulking about, and throwing a white shroud over the green grass. Perhaps you get into bed again, not a little alarmed about the geraniums just bedded out, and almost in a panic at the thought, "Did I forget to shut the cucumber-frame yesterday?" You run out after breakfast; of course, the ghost has gone *then*. The cucumber-frame *was* shut, for the gardener says he opened it this morning at seven. *That* is a relief, certainly; but you go to your flower-beds, and find that your plants have nothing like recovered from the shock they received when they saw the ghost at 4.30 a.m. Why, fright has turned some of them actually black in some places. But what will our readers say to the following extract from a northern English parish register: — "*June* 9, 1814. *Ice a shilling thick!*"

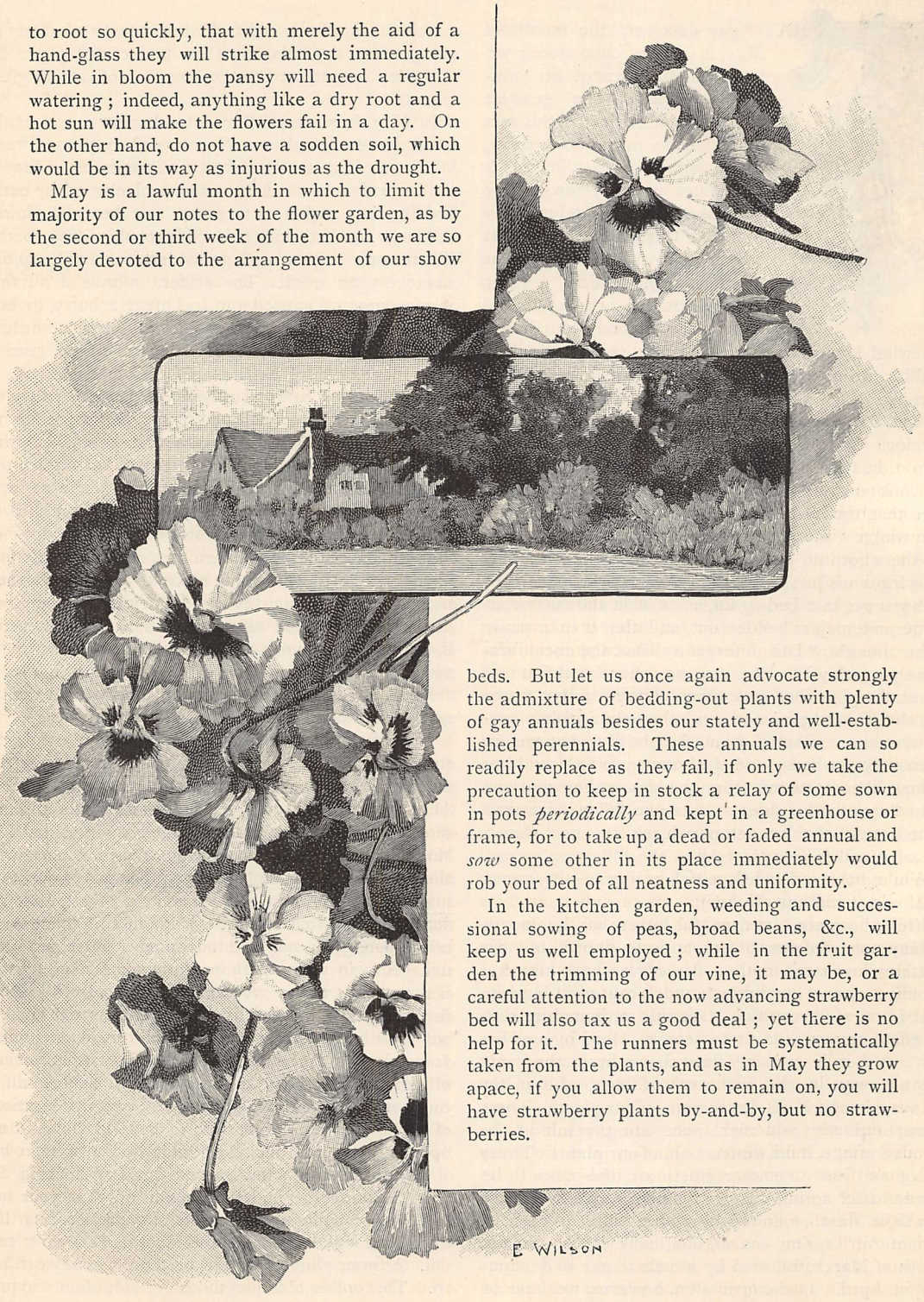
While, however, the deceitful beauty of the month of May not infrequently tempts us to dub it as "Sir Flatterer," we must not, on the other hand, take too gloomy a view of our subject, and in a fit of ill-humour call May a winter month. Already we have hinted at the effect on our bedding-out stock caused by a white frost; and it is certainly true that a premature bedding-out, say in the first week of May, of any but the very hardiest of our flowers, might, in the event of an unusually cold night succeeding, result in the serious damage, if not destruction, of our plants. These spring and early summer frosts are the more to be dreaded after a mild winter. January and February with little frost or snow, sometimes finds us with an "unnatural" spring—as we illogically call it—in the month of March, followed by a little winter of destruction in April. One consolation, however, we have in the fact that most of our perennial stock of plants that stand out in the open all the year round, and on which much of the old-fashioned beauty of many of our gardens depends, must be, and certainly are by this time accustomed to the vagaries of our English climate.

A May frost very often — to borrow once again from the great master—"scotches," but does "not kill" our flowers. We shall find, perhaps, a few of the larger leaves of our geraniums blackened by early bedding-out, and it may be a little head of flower similarly touched. These will probably drop, but a few warmer nights and genial showers will rapidly advance your stock. The evident moral of all this is, of course, "Do not be in too great a hurry to bed out;" at all events, be careful to have a hardening-off process carried out. This, of course, gives a little more trouble; but it is certainly better to have a *second* wheeling and carrying of plants rather than to have a number of bald places on your beds, or to allow June to be well advanced, finding you with flowers of uneven growth and height. To harden off, take a few dozen plants from the greenhouse and stand them on boards along your gravel walk in a warm aspect, protecting them at night for a week or so with gauze or some such protection; or, if you prefer it, wheel your whole stock to some light shed and stand them on the ground, leaving the door open all night. The only objection to this last resort is, perhaps, that your plants, while in the shed, will never, or hardly at all, see the sun. Then, again, the delay in bedding-out is often amply made up to us by the delightful show of late spring flowers.

The end of April often hardly finds our hyacinths quite over, at all events in a late season; while the tulips will, in many places, be in full bloom. And next there are our beautiful pansies, which, in the absence of strong winds, will flourish better in the month of May than under the fiercer suns of the later summer months. A garden can, for a large portion of the early summer, be made to look very attractive almost by these flowers *alone*, so that a word or two about them just now may be said with advantage. First, as to the soil. A fairly rich soil is best adapted for the growth of the pansy; do not give too strong manure, but some decayed, and taken, perhaps, from some spent cucumber or other frame would answer very well. Some decayed turfs that you have allowed to rot in a heap will give you the best loam. With this as one half of your compost, mix for the other half, equal proportions of turfy peat and thoroughly decayed horse-dung. Such a compound will do admirably for the growth of pansies in pots; but to form beds of them in the open, scatter three inches in depth all over your bed some leaf-mould and decayed manure, forking the whole well together with double that depth of your subsoil. As your plants progress keep them gently earthed up. This will enable you to obtain side shoots to propagate from, which are far better than those taken from the top, as the side shoots you will find disposed

to root so quickly, that with merely the aid of a hand-glass they will strike almost immediately. While in bloom the pansy will need a regular watering; indeed, anything like a dry root and a hot sun will make the flowers fail in a day. On the other hand, do not have a sodden soil, which would be in its way as injurious as the drought.

May is a lawful month in which to limit the majority of our notes to the flower garden, as by the second or third week of the month we are so largely devoted to the arrangement of our show beds. But let us once again advocate strongly the admixture of bedding-out plants with plenty of gay annuals besides our stately and well-established perennials. These annuals we can so readily replace as they fail, if only we take the precaution to keep in stock a relay of some sown in pots *periodically* and kept in a greenhouse or frame, for to take up a dead or faded annual and *sow* some other in its place immediately would rob your bed of all neatness and uniformity.



In the kitchen garden, weeding and successional sowing of peas, broad beans, &c., will keep us well employed; while in the fruit garden the trimming of our vine, it may be, or a careful attention to the now advancing strawberry bed will also tax us a good deal; yet there is no help for it. The runners must be systematically taken from the plants, and as in May they grow apace, if you allow them to remain on, you will have strawberry plants by-and-by, but no strawberries.

HOW TO WASH COLOURED DRESSES.

BY PHYLLIS BROWNE.

IT is a most trying experience when dresses which have been made of materials "warranted to wash" come back from the hands of the laundress with all their beauty gone, and their pretty colour faded. Such a mischance is almost enough to make economical folks say that they will never wear coloured prints and muslins again. Yet dresses of this sort are so fresh and so becoming, they are also (when the difficulty connected with "getting them up" has been satisfactorily disposed of) so lasting and inexpensive, that it is not likely that those who have a liking for simple and charming costumes will be able to withstand the temptation to procure them. Repeatedly these people will say to themselves that "printed dresses are very charming," and then add, with a sigh, "if only they were not so soon dirty, and if they did not spoil so easily, and cost so much to wash." Yet the probability is that again and again these cogitations will end with the purchase of the printed fabrics referred to, and a repetition of the disappointment connected with their renovation.

If people who have so great a liking for printed fabrics could but manage to wash their prints at home, how easy it would be to indulge in them, and how becoming and inexpensive would be their attire from this time forth! It is the professional laundress who ruins prints. She does not destroy them out of malice; she is a very well-meaning individual; and if she had plenty of time to bestow upon them, she could doubtless make them look much more satisfactory than the amateur laundress can possibly do. But she is a busy woman; she has piles of clothes to wash and send to their respective owners before the end of the week, and has neither time nor patience to spend upon what she calls "fiddle-faddling" over a print dress here and there. Consequently, she puts the dress into the first lather which is convenient for the purpose, never stopping to think whether or not the said lather contains soda or bleaching powder. When the dress is rinsed she hangs it out at once, if there is room on the lines; but if there is not, she leaves it lying in the basket until there is room. Yet every minute that it lies there the beauty and brightness are going from it, and that process of deterioration is being accomplished which will shortly bring a look of annoyance and vexation to the countenance of the owner of the garment.

The laundress was quite right in her conclusion, however; to wash coloured prints and muslins there must be "fiddle-faddling;" indeed, fiddle-faddling is required more than hard work in operations of this sort. For one thing, the operator ought not to commence proceedings unless she feels that she has leisure to complete her task. Nothing spoils coloured fabrics so much as to begin them and then to let them remain, waiting for a convenient season to be finished. After being once wetted they should be rinsed and dried as quickly as possible, otherwise the colours will run. Everything that is hot should be avoided for them also; they should not be washed in hot water, they should never be boiled (of course), they should never be dipped into hot starch after they are dry, they should not be ironed with a hot iron, and they should be hung to dry, not in the sun, but in the shade. A shady day, when there is a light breeze, is the *beau idéal* of a day for drying coloured goods. Here it is that our friend the laundress so frequently fails. She cannot "pick and choose" her time, and picking and choosing is part of the fiddle-faddling which makes this work a success.

Heat, however, is not the only thing we have to be afraid of when washing prints. Soda is to be avoided with scrupulous care, and so also must be those chemical compounds which cleanse such goods so quickly that they carry away more than the dirt. Wash the prints therefore quickly and well in two soapy waters, and do not rub the soap upon them; then rinse them well in clear cold water. When the colours are very delicate, experienced individuals like to put something into the rinsing water to keep them from running. It is very usual to put several handfuls of salt into the rinsing water for this purpose, and it certainly achieves its end; the disadvantage is that when salt is used the dress soon becomes soft, especially in damp weather. Alum, vinegar, ammonia, black pepper, and ox-gall, are all used for brightening the colours of washing materials. The latter-named substance is, perhaps, as well known as any, and it undoubtedly proves effectual—at least for a time. Very often it has been found that the garment soon becomes dingy after it has been used. Yet when all is said and done, these various "aids" are, or should be, superfluous. If the print or cambric is of fairly good quality, if it has been washed quickly in cool water without a suspicion of soda and rinsed in clear cold water, it will come from the wash looking lovely, especially if it has been hung in the shade to dry, and ironed carefully.

When colours are very delicate, fabrics are often washed in bran and water instead of soap and water. The South Kensington people strongly recommend bran because, they say, it is safer than soap. The way to use it is to pour half a gallon of boiling water upon half a pound of bran, let it stand for some hours, then strain it, and use it lukewarm without soap, remembering to turn the dress inside out before washing, and to dab it up and down and squeeze it to get out the dirt, and to avoid rubbing. Coloured dresses should always be hung to dry with the inside outwards. If they are to be kept in good condition, they should not be allowed to get very dirty before being washed.

It has already been said that coloured dresses

should be ironed with a cool iron. It may be added that it is much easier to iron the skirts of dresses if a narrow board is provided, made narrower at one end, over which the skirts can be hung, so that they can be laid single, and turned round and round as they are ironed. This board may rest on trestles, or even on the top of the backs of two kitchen chairs which have weights on the seats to keep them steady. The board must be covered with thick flannel, over which a clean coarse sheet should be pinned, as an ordinary ironing-board would be. Ironing coloured dresses is a very much easier business when a board of this sort is available. The thickest part of dresses—such as the gathers, sleeves, and waistbands—should be ironed first. The dresses should also be ironed on the wrong side first, and finished on the right side. Muslins look better when they are ironed twice in different directions. Skill in work of this sort, however, can only be gained by practice. The way to learn to iron is to iron.

It may be added that washing materials are much more likely to stand the wash if they are wisely chosen when new. Of late years there have been so many improvements made in the arts of mixing colours and printing calico, that it is now safe to buy colours which used to fade very speedily. Yet still we have to say that lilac wears and washes best, and that blue, mauve, green, and black need to be bought with caution. Some pinks wash very well. Authorities tell us that printed material is likely to wear well if the impression is marked well on the wrong side of the fabric. The safest way, however, of ascertaining whether or not print will wash well is to experiment upon it; and really prudent people would never be content to buy a dress until they had tried what it was worth by passing a small piece through the wash-tub.

There are other fabrics besides prints and muslins which can be very satisfactorily washed if a little pains be bestowed upon them, although they do not strictly come under the name of washing fabrics. Amongst these may be mentioned merino, llama and serge, alpaca, mohair, linsey, &c. Goods of this description should invariably be picked to pieces before they are washed. The way to cleanse them is to put the breadths one at a time into a strong lather (lukewarm) and press it against the sides of the vessel or pass it through the hands till it is free from dirt, but refrain from rubbing it unless this is absolutely necessary. When clean it should be rinsed in another thin lather, squeezed, not wrung, as dry as may be, and ironed on the wrong side before it is quite dry. If the fabric thus washed be black, a little ammonia should be put into the rinsing water with it, and this will greatly improve it. But ammonia should not be used for anything but black.

THE STRUGGLES OF ABEL STRONG.

A LIVING CHESS STORY. BY HENRY FRITH.

Our life is like a game of chess,
The board our little sphere:
Alternate bright and darkened spots,
As is existence here!

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

THE BOARD AND ITS OCCUPANTS.

HOULD you ever be in Devonshire, and, quitting the railway, strike across the country to the more northern and eastern district, you may chance to light, as I did one afternoon, on a pretty coast village called Esthamlet. If you travel thither along the high road from Taunton way, you will surely pass through Westonbridge, a town of some importance, possessing several thousands of inhabitants, mostly work-people in the great machine shops of which Mr. Aggington was master.

You will be charmed with Esthamlet, as I was; and so, being independent and seeking rest, I sent for my luggage, and one fine day found myself located in the roomy and pleasant cottage owned by Mr. Strong, an honest, upright man, who was a widower, and had an only son Abel, who was daily employed in "the Works."

Esthamlet is, as I have said, a pretty village, the houses of which are tumbled about rather irregularly, not of set purpose or design of line and rules. It was, like many another Devon village, approached by narrow lanes only, until the coach road sent a side path to it, and vehicles could then pass in and out without shouting and heated arguments. There is a charming old church, lichen-grown and ivy-clad, with tombstones to match, and a glimpse of the channel through the north windows, between which you will read the epitaphs on marble slabs to various memorial Claxtones—an old family, you may be certain.

My first appearance in the village was signalised by a little adventure. I was making my way along the narrow fern-bordered lane, when suddenly upon me, round the turning of the road, cantered a beautiful girl on a high-mettled steed. In a moment I should

have been run over, had not she, by a sudden wrench at her bridle, caused her horse to swerve right into the hedge, damaging her boot and habit, and, I am afraid, bruising her knee.

"I beg your pardon," she cried, holding in her horse. "I am afraid you are hurt." For I, in my haste, not being youthful, had fallen on one knee, slipping against the pile of stones by the roadside.

Her beautiful face and sympathetic eyes would have cured me had I been hurt. I regained my feet in a moment, and assured her I was not injured, but feared she was.

"No," she said, smiling, and disclosing teeth as white as peeled almonds behind her cherry lips. "No, sir, I am quite unhurt. I am sorry I alarmed you. Good day."

She bowed: I raised my hat, and gazed after her rapidly receding form as she cantered merrily away alone, unattended.

"Who is that young lady?" I inquired of a young and fine-looking man, whom I almost immediately encountered. He was a workman of a superior class, I could see, but his face had something noble in it — a lofty expression of pride, patience, and determination. His hair, beard, and moustache were brown of hue and fine in texture; his nose was straight, his eyes clear dark blue, his mouth and chin firm and full: a handsome man, and in his Sunday clothes doubtless striking in appearance, for he was tall, well-proportioned, with large well-shaped hands and feet, as befitted a person of his vocation and inches.

He had little dialect in his speech. His reply was ready, respectful, calm, and indicated one born to better things than he apparently enjoyed.

"That's Miss Aggington—Miss Mildred folks call her. She's daughter to our master of the Works."

"The Engineering Works?" I asked.

"Yes; she's a fine young lady, and a good rider. Good day to you."

"Good day," was my reply. "Thanks. Is that Esthamlet yonder?"

"Aye; down the lane yonder is Mr. Aggington's."

He indicated a square stone house half-hidden amid trees on the slope of a hill southwards, plainly visible. Beyond that rising ground was the moor. I knew so much; then my informant said "Good day" again, and passed on.

I reached my inn, and secured a neat and tidy chamber overlooking what is called the street of Esthamlet. There are some shops of a miscellaneous kind, and opposite the inn, but higher up the street, stood a substantial cottage of a superior class, inhabited apparently by people of some taste, if of not great means. The flowers, the curtains, the extreme cleanliness and neatness of the place, gave one a feeling of wholesomeness which attracted me to the place.

After my meal a clattering of horses' feet drew me to the window. A lady and a gentleman trotted past. Miss Aggington and her father! Every one looked at them, and had a good word for her. Her father was apparently not a great favourite.

"Ah! he's a proud man, and she has it too, no doubt; but he's hard, that's what he is, sir," said my host. "Good evenin', Abel," he continued, nodding to a young man whom I immediately recognised as my informant of the lane.

"Who is he?" I asked quickly, with some curiosity.

"Abel Strong's his name, sir. A right fine fellow, too! He's a good workman, a good son, and some do say as he admires Miss Mildred, the Squire's daughter. But it ain't in nature that she'd love *him*, 'for all his good breeding.'"

"Where does he live?" I inquired.

"In yonner cottage; his father have had better days. He's a draughtsman, is Abel, a clever fellow, proud and reserved in his ways, and honest as the day. But I hear he's silly after Aggington's daughter."

So Abel Strong was his name. The neat cottage which I admired was his father's house. He was in love with the daughter of the rich "Squire," as he was called—Mr. Aggington. Miss Aggington was the prettiest girl I had ever seen, rich and well educated, yet the young man aspired to her hand! There was the board, here were the pieces coming up; the game was about to commence. I thought that I would remain and be a spectator of the play.

Circumstances and fortune favoured my plans. The bracing air revived my rather over-worked brain. I rested, sent for my baggage, and took lodgings in Mr. Strong's house, where I could observe the game I had anticipated, and perhaps assist in its development. Under these circumstances was woven the story of Abel Strong—as romantic and as adventurous a record of love, pluck, and endurance as ever you heard. Let me now efface myself from the narrative as much as possible. The action will go more smoothly if I record events of which I was a spectator without appearing in the foreground at all. There is interest and incident to come, I promise you, and as pretty a love-tale as ever caused a maiden's tears to flow in joy and sympathy!

It was during my first week's sojourn at the cottage —Fernleigh Cottage it was called—that I became acquainted with some particulars concerning the Strongs. It appeared that Mr. Strong's wife had lost the greater part of her fortune in consequence of the defalcation of her trustee when she was an orphan, and yet unmarried. But her affianced husband did not hold back for want of means. The courageous couple, strong in their love and faith, took each other by the hand, and emigrated to America, where, alas! in a few years Mr. Strong was left a widower, and his only child deprived of a mother's care!

But again Strong acted up to his name. Not sorrowing as one without hope, he resumed his business and prospered. He saved some money, remitted a portion of it to England, and invested the remainder in some land company in Canada. For all this last investment he never received one farthing of interest. The capital was in the earth, buried, unproductive, but through no fault of Thomas Strong. He worked,

had his little Abel educated, and finding age creeping over him and trouble bowing his sturdy back, he carried his child away to England again, and sought a home in sweet Devonshire.

As Abel grew up he developed a taste for drawing and engineering. The establishment of Mr. Aggington's works at Westonbridge gave him the chance he had longed for. He entered there, worked, and was placed in the "drawing office," where his "elevations," "sections," and "plans" constantly received approval. Abel grew in favour, and being well-mannered and well-informed, was frequently requested to take visitors round the works. In this way he became known to Mr. Aggington and his beautiful daughter Mildred, and advanced himself in the office by his application.

These particulars I gleaned during the first few days of my residence with Thomas Strong. He was rather aged and garrulous, but of dignified mien and appearance. He lived on the interest of his small investments, and of course Abel supplemented his income. Father and son were friends, almost brothers. It was affecting to witness the son's solicitude for his father, and the parent's pride and affection for his only child.

By continually observing and ruminating upon the various phases of existence in Esthamlet, I by degrees trained my fancy to map out the place as a kind of CHESS-BOARD on which those people in whom I had become so wrapped up would move in a most interesting struggle. All the necessary elements were, in my mind, supplied. First, the Queen—the dainty Mildred Aggington, moving freely as she pleased around the board of Esthamlet, capturing hearts as she flitted from place to place, conquering all by her kindliness and beauty, yet avoiding capture. The king, proceeding with circumspection, I painted in my mind as Mr. Aggington, who likewise was not taken prisoner in my game, as it turned out, although truly he received many a "check" from time and circumstance. The knight, the bold and faithful hero, Abel Strong, advanced bravely enough at first, but was turned aside for awhile. The pawns and rooks we may just pass by. The "common men" in the factories came forward and pressed on, getting taken here and there, but the main interest in my chess-board of Esthamlet centred in the higher pieces and in their adventures. So, pardoning my fancy, you will see my reason, and judge of my interest in the game, which I will set forth in the following chapters.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE PAWNS MOVE.

"THERE'S a party going over the Works this afternoon," said Abel Strong to me one day. "If you would like to come, call on me after dinner-hour."

"Thank you; I shall be delighted to see your great Works," was the reply. "Who will be there? Some grandees?"

"Some friends of Mr. Aggington's. He has a party of people staying in his house yonder. The Factory is turning out some big casting to-day at two o'clock. It will be a fine sight if you don't go too near, and if no one causes an accident."

"No one would—I mean, not purposely," said I.

"Wouldn't they?" he replied. "Why, I've known a man maimed for months by a falling 'pig,' and another nigh killed by a broken band flying off, because the men had offended some of their mates! Sheffield hasn't the monopoly of outrages, by any means!"

"But cannot the perpetrators be found?" I asked.

"Not when the others are '*traitors*' in men's minds," replied Abel Strong grimly. "They've tried games on me, but they'd better mind what they are about!"

He nodded his head with a very determined air, and we parted. He proceeded to his business, while I went strolling about until "dinner-time." After a snack, I hurried over to Westonbridge, and met Abel proceeding to the Works. He seemed angry, and had much ado to restrain himself.

"Anything the matter?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied shortly. "You remember what we talked of this morning?"

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, some one's been tampering with my plans for the new locomotive sheds, and, unless I'm mistaken in what the foreman says, they've a spite against his cast to-day; so look out!"

"There will be danger?" I exclaimed.

"Well, look out, that's all! I can't find anything wrong. We've been round, but this paper looks 'fishy!' See here!"

He handed me a folded scrap of paper, black in the creases and "thumbed." It ran thus:—

"To an upstart sneke!

"Mind your stiff upper lip don't get cast down one day! Bah! you coward. Why don't you come out and fight!

"BOB, THE CUTTER."

I re-folded the paper without a word. Then, finding he was silent, I said—

"Do you know the author of this precious piece of work, Strong?"

"No; I wish I did. He would be sent about his business if I could manage it. He may endanger a dozen lives to-day, and Miss—I mean Mr. Aggington's friends' limbs. However, I will keep my eyes open. I am 'conductor,' you know. Come up to my room till the people arrive."

We passed in, and upstairs to the offices pertaining to the clerks and draughtsmen. The windows looked out upon the yards and shops, in which latter wheels and bands were whirring, hammers clanking, men in "slops" busy in all directions, while outside "trollies" ran rattling, laden and empty, on many useful duties.

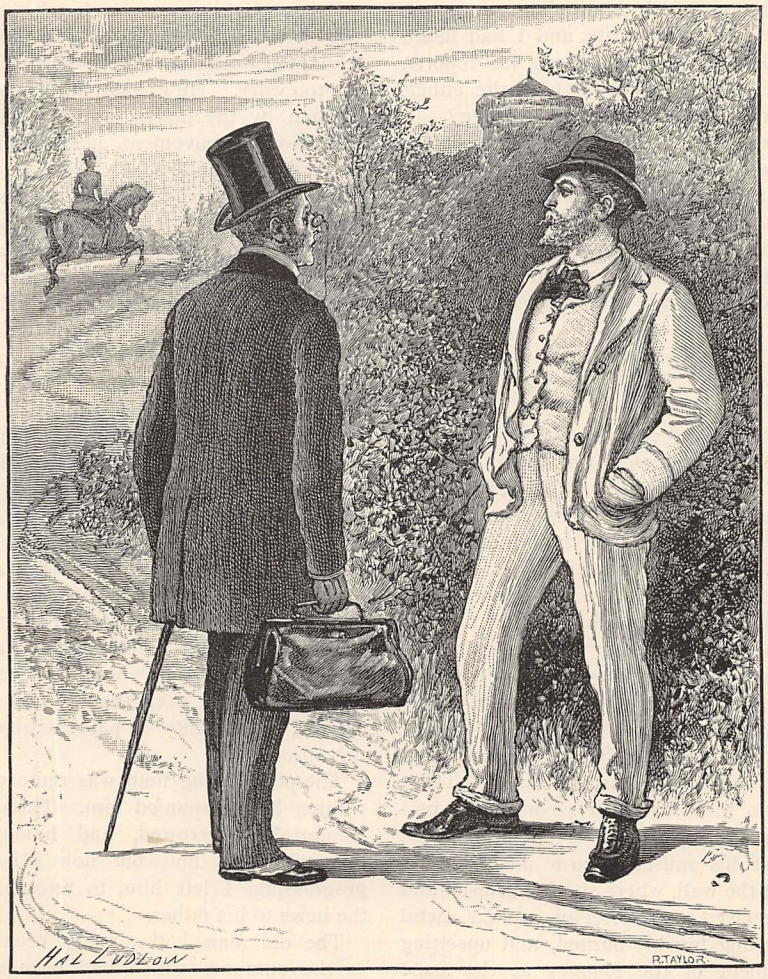
Two o'clock was approaching. The black hands of the white-faced clock pointed to five minutes to two, when a whistle and a call up an india-rubber tube

summoned Abel. We hurried down together. He seemed rather nervous, and his greeting of the party, who were accompanied by Mr. Aggington himself, and Miss Mildred of course, seemed to me to savour of shyness.

"Is the cast nearly ready, Mr. Strong?" asked

The molten metal sparkles and crackles in a dangerous way at times, and this I presumed made Abel warn us. There were several officials present to view the casting, but no one interfered with the foreman and his mates.

Abel went about explaining the operations, and



"'WHO IS THAT YOUNG LADY?' I INQUIRED" (*p.* 343).

Miss Aggington sweetly. Abel replied, and as she looked round towards her friend, a pretty young girl, her glance fell on me.

"Good afternoon," she said, bowing and smiling. "You are also interested in us, I see?"

I made some reply, but Abel I perceived got red, and immediately suggested a move to the furnace from which the cast would be made.

The molten metal, as most readers are aware, runs into vessels, and thence into moulds, according to circumstances. Sometimes the red stream is carried to its destined mould by a spout. The smelting furnace is plugged like a cask when the required quantity is drawn off.

I noticed that he continually tried to keep Miss Aggington in the background.

"I am sure, Mr. Strong, you do not wish me to see the casting. You put me back every time, just when I had a splendid place, too!" she said half-playfully.

She seemed rather petulant, but Strong made no reply. He merely raised his round hat, and I thought he looked very handsome in his suit of blue serge, and quite gentlemanly too.

"Are you ready, Mr. Harker?" asked Abel.

"We are," replied the man. "Ready, Bob?"

I started. Bob was the name signed to the threatening note, but a "cutter" would not be in the foundry.

Nevertheless, I thought I would be on my guard. Was it possible that the man would attempt to injure Abel?

There was a pause. Silence was strictly observed. I felt "wound up," as it were, and I could perceive that Abel had some fears for the result. Suddenly I caught the expression on the face of the man named Bob. His eyes were fixed on Mr. Aggington in a covert, revengeful way which boded him no good. I knew the master was no favourite, and I had heard that because he looked to Abel Strong for reports, &c., the young draughtsman was no favourite either. Could the "casters" be meditating any outrage?

It was an anxious moment. The visitors kept in line, intensely interested. I saw Abel edge closer to Miss Aggington, an expression of painful anticipation in his eyes, a watchfulness which was extreme. The word was given, the plug was withdrawn, and the scintillating stream of molten metal ran quickly into the mould prepared for it, within a few feet of the ring of spectators.

"Beautiful!" "How splendid!" "It glides like golden water. Look!" "How will they stop it?" "Most interesting! Excellent!"

These were some of the commendations bestowed upon the workmen. The mould was filled, and the cast left to cool. There was no danger, after all! The company were dispersing to another part of the foundry. Miss Aggington, her friend, Abel, and myself remained. He was explaining something rather apart from us when I heard a yell of horror.

Some one—I knew not who—had filled a vessel with molten iron, and had sent this messenger of death, hissing and biting at its prison, down the inclined rail used for such transport, against which Miss Aggington was standing.

The bucket came along swiftly, its burning contents intended for some more distant mould. There was hardly time to wink, but in a second Abel perceived the danger. He uttered a cry of horror, and with one sweep of his muscular arm dashed Miss Aggington against the wall, where she fell bruised and half insensible, received the vessel of molten metal full on his side, getting terribly burned, and upsetting it over the pavement of the foundry at the same moment.

The stream of fiery metal dashed its spray in all directions, and fell heavily too in the face of the man called "Bob." If he had given the word to let go the bucket on the trolly, he was already punished. He had half killed Abel Strong, but for whose readiness and pluck Miss Aggington might have shared even a worse fate with him.

The confusion, excitement, and terror in the foundry were terrible. Many men were injured; the famous cast was destroyed; Miss Aggington half dead from fright and severe bruises; Abel Strong writhing in agony some three paces from her, his clothes in rags, his flesh in huge blisters!

Mr. Aggington rushed back. "Send for the doctors and police, and you men come here. Where is the foreman?"

"Here, sir." The man was sullen and rude.

"And your men—where are they?"

"Yonder—scalded, most of them!"

"You will pay dearly for this day's work. Go; you are dismissed! I will prosecute you!"

"Dismissed! Then you'll have something to remember me by. Prosecuted—ah!" snarled the foreman.

He raised his muscular hand, armed with an iron rod, against his employer. In another second Mr. Aggington would have been felled to the floor, but he was too wary. He rushed in, gripped the astonished foreman by the body, and in a moment threw him heavily on the pavement, against which his head came with a fearful thud!

We had scarcely time to witness this affair, for every one who was uninjured was assisting the wounded, attending to the furnaces and to the spreading stream of molten metal. Sand was hurriedly thrown over the flooring to check the gliding current of golden fire. Every effort was made by the majority of the men to prevent further accident, and they fortunately succeeded.

But Miss Aggington and Abel Strong required more than temporary attention. The young lady was quite unable to walk unaided, and her preserver was in a terrible plight.

Mr. Aggington's first care was for his daughter, and having seen her cared for, and on her way home in his comfortable landau, he made some inquiry concerning Abel Strong. He was too faint to reply to any questions, while Mr. Aggington expressed his satisfaction at his conduct, and praised him highly for his action. But "Miss Mildred" had sent him no message, not even thanks, and Abel's blisters increased in intensity of pain at what he deemed her ingratitude.

The poor young man was removed to the hospital, whither I accompanied him. Then, after seeing him comfortably bestowed, and having received strict injunctions to find out how Miss Aggington was progressing, I left him, to return home and break the news to his father.

The old man had already been greatly alarmed at the rumours which had been quickly spread in Esthamlet. All kinds of reports were rife. "Miss Mildred had been killed, and ten hands, including Abel Strong, had been scalded to death in the fiery stream of metal!" So they said.

The truth was sad enough, in all conscience, and old Strong was greatly agitated.

"He saved her, did he—he saved the young lady?"

I assured him that his son had behaved with splendid presence of mind.

"She is a beautiful and good girl," I added, "and any one would gladly do anything for her sake."

"Aye, aye; but hark ye, mister: I hear whispers that my lad has already cast his eyes on his master's daughter. He must not forget his position and hers."

"Certainly, Mr. Strong—certainly. Such an attach-

ment might be disastrous. Abel's position is far beneath hers, yet——"

"Yet," exclaimed the old man, in an excited manner, "I would almost as soon see my son in his grave as married to *her!* Position! Why, do you think my son is a day labourer, sir? My word! —Abel is far beyond Aggington's girl! Position, indeed! Why—but never mind—Abel shall never marry Mildred Aggington if I can prevent it! Say no more. She should rather die!"

"My dear sir——" I began.

But he waved me away, and it was in considerable surprise that I sought my bedroom, puzzling my brain concerning his meaning, and wondering how Abel would receive the news in the morning that no message had come from the Hall for him. Miss Aggington had not condescended to ask about the man who had saved her life at the risk of his own. Then old Strong's prejudice: what did that mean? The game had opened with vigour indeed, and my curiosity was excited, not without reason, as it proved.

END OF CHAPTER THE SECOND.

A FLORENTINE MAY-DAY.

MAY-DAY in Florence in the olden time:
A festal day of pomp and pageantry,
Of coronals and banners fair to see,
Of peal of deep-toned bells, and silver chime—
A day of all things tuned to one sweet rhyme:
"Love! Love!"

Out to the city gate there flocks to-day
Full many a maiden garlanded with flowers,
Speeding to meet, amid the festooned bowers,
The city's bravest youths, in rich array:
For this the song the silver trumpets play—
"Love! Love!"

And there the noblest youth steps forth to greet
Her, the most loved, the fairest maid of all,
With Beauty's prize—a lily pure and tall;
And, as the people shout, fond glances meet,
And all the sounds proclaim this message sweet—
"Love! Love!"

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

WHAT IS VEGETARIANISM?*

BY A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE VEGETARIAN SOCIETY.

THE practice of vegetarianism has of late made much progress in London, Manchester, and other English towns; and the vegetarian system of diet which, ten years ago, was commonly regarded as a mere "fad" or crotchet, is now treated respectfully, or even admiringly, by such eminent scientists as Sir Henry Thompson and Dr. B. W. Richardson. It may not be amiss, therefore, to give a short account of the present state of the vegetarian movement; the objects at which it aims; and the chief arguments which are advanced by vegetarian writers and speakers in advocating their cause.

There are two societies in existence which aim at substituting the use of fruits, cereals, and other vegetable products for the flesh of animals, one of these institutions being presided over by Professor J. E. B. Mayor, of St. John's, Cambridge, the well-known classical scholar. This is the original Vegetarian Society, founded in 1847, which has its headquarters in Manchester, and consists of members, associates, and subscribers, with a monthly organ entitled the *Vegetarian Messenger*. Secondly, there is the London Vegetarian Society, a recent offshoot of the former, established on a somewhat similar basis, and carrying on a vigorous propaganda in the London district and the South of England. The *Vegetarian* is a weekly journal, published at the office of the London Vegetarian Society; while almost the same principles are preached in the *Herald of Health* and one or two minor periodicals.

An active crusade is thus kept up by means of public meetings, lectures, discussions, vegetarian dinners, and the circulation of vegetarian literature; and the result is already seen in the increased attention which the question of food-reform is receiving at the hands of the general public and those who are specially interested in hygienic and social problems. The vegetarian restaurants, of which there are now twenty-nine in London, seven in Manchester, and one or more in Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Nottingham, Newcastle, Portsmouth, and other large towns, have done a great deal towards making vegetarianism popular.

* The author alone is responsible for the views expressed in this paper.

A FLORENTINE MAY-DAY.

(*See p.* 347.)

It should be clearly understood that "vegetarianism" does not mean a diet of garden vegetables, as the title is sometimes wrongly taken to imply; the common idea that a vegetarian is one who lives on cabbages and potatoes being altogether erroneous and misleading. The staple articles of the vegetarian diet are the cereals (especially in the form of wheat-meal bread and oatmeal porridge), the legumes (such as peas, beans, haricots, and lentils), and last, but not least, the various kinds of fruit. Most vegetarians also admit the use, in moderation, of such animal products as milk, butter, cheese, and eggs; since these can be obtained without that sacrifice of animal life which it is the vegetarian's chief object to avoid. Some few, however, make a point of being vegetarians in the strictest sense of the word, and do not admit even dairy produce into their dietary. Nor is there the slightest difficulty in living healthily on such a diet; since the food-value of wheat-meal, oatmeal, lentils, peas, and beans, has been shown by indisputable chemical analysis to be actually higher than that of flesh-meat; in other words, one can get more nutriment from a pound of wheat or haricots than from the best beef. This was very clearly stated, and very rightly insisted on, by Dr. B. W. Richardson in his recent lectures on food. The real obstacles in the way of the adoption of a vegetarian diet are due, not to the nature or quality of the food itself, but to the difficulty in some households of obtaining the right substitutes for meat, and getting them cooked in the right manner. This is an obstacle that cannot be overlooked at the present time, but which is likely to grow less and less as the food question is more widely studied and understood.

The aims of the Vegetarian Society, as set forth in the *Vegetarian Messenger*, are "to induce habits of abstinence from the flesh of animals (fish, flesh, fowl) as food, and to promote the use of fruits, pulse, cereals, and other products of the vegetable kingdom." The reasons which cause vegetarians to aim at this change of diet may be conveniently classed under three heads.

First, on the score of health. They regard flesh as being a *stimulant* in food—as alcohol is in drink—which may lend a temporary and spasmodic accession of strength, but is inferior to vegetable products in all the permanent qualities of nutriment. They assert that a diet of which flesh-food forms no part, induces a clearer and calmer state of mind, and a greater power of resisting bodily fatigue; and they point to the significant fact that ninety-nine out of every hundred vegetarians are also total abstainers from alcoholic drinks. In a word, they think many of the diseases by which men are at present afflicted might be mitigated, or altogether prevented, by the adoption of a simpler and more natural diet; and they have the authority of the chief scientists on their side when they assert that the anatomical structure of man, as shown in the formation of the teeth and digestive organs, tends to prove that man is by nature neither carnivorous, like the lion; nor herbivorous, like the ox; but, like the ape, *frugivorous*.

Secondly, great stress is laid by vegetarians on the superior economy of their system of diet. Every housekeeper knows only too well that the butcher's bill is always the most formidable item in the weekly expenditure, and this item the vegetarian altogether avoids—a point which is of great importance in the consideration both of domestic and national economy. "Thus," says a vegetarian economist,* "one of the results of the adoption of vegetarianism would be that the money now devoted to the costliest form of food would be available for increasing the pleasures of home-life. Whilst it would wean from noxious luxuries, and practically eradicate intemperance, it would give greater scope to every form of innocent recreation and of intellectual pleasure. It would disestablish the butcher and the publican, it would aid in converting the medical profession into a preventive service, but it would secure the prosperity of the farmer and the fruit-grower, and give employment to all those arts and trades that add to the enjoyment of human life."

Thirdly, the desire to avoid taking the life of harmless animals, except under the stress of absolute necessity, is an argument which has induced many persons, at various times and in various places, to adopt the vegetarian diet.

Whether a diet of this kind is preferable to that which is at present in use, and how far it is practicable in any given case, every thoughtful person will best decide for himself; for vegetarians have no wish to force their opinions on those to whom they are distasteful. But there can be no doubt as to the *possibility* of a vegetarian diet; for vegetarianism, after all, is very far from being a new invention, however strange it may sound to some English ears. Abstention from flesh-food was taught by Pythagoras, the famous Greek philosopher, several centuries before the commencement of the Christian era; and also by Buddha. In the mediæval Christian Church the same custom was very prevalent; moreover, the working classes of all countries have always been to a large extent, if not wholly, vegetarian. But it is only in recent years that vegetarianism has been carefully studied, and established on what may be called a scientific basis; the lectures on food-reform given by eminent medical men, the establishment of vegetarian societies and newspapers, the popularity of vegetarian restaurants—all these are signs of the times which every one nowadays is noticing and talking about. Among the beneficial results of the interest thus awakened in the question of diet, we must not omit to mention the provision of cheap meals for school-children, and the increased supply of nutritious whole-meal bread; a much-needed stimulus has also been given to the growth and importation of fruit. In short, people are beginning to discover that vegetarianism is not by any means so foolish a practice as at one time it was considered.

* "Vegetarianism and National Economy," by W. E. A. Axon, F.R.S.L.

Life-Thoughts.

Words by JOHN FRANCIS WALLER, LL.D.

Music by BERTHOLD TOURS.

Andantino, quasi allegretto.

PIANO.

p

Con Pedale.

p

Lin - ger-ing in the fad - ing light At win - ter ev - 'ning's close,..... An

p

old man watch'd the deep - 'ning night, And spoke a - loud his woes:..... "O

cres - - - - - - - *cen* - - - - - - - - - *do.* *f allargando.*

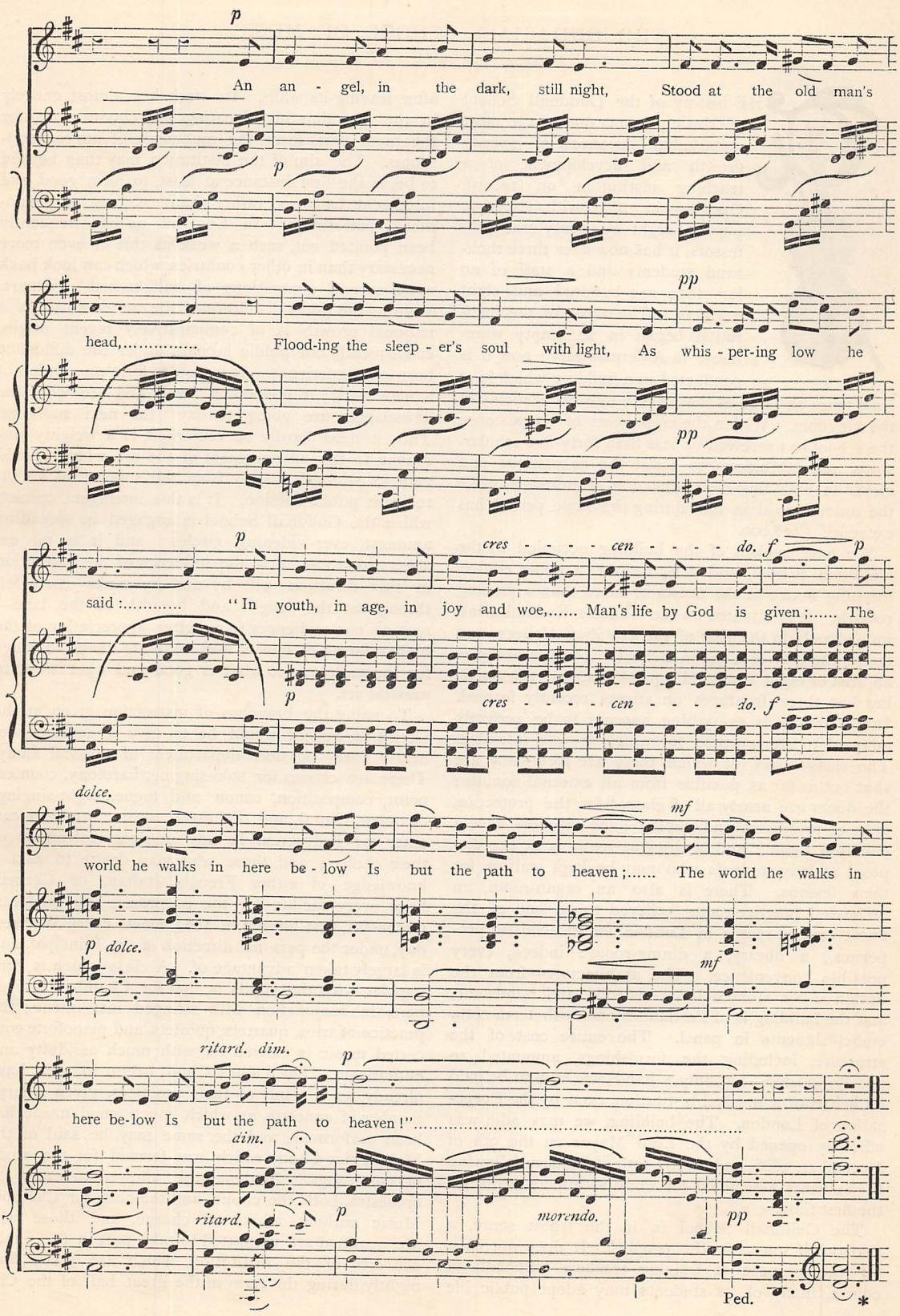
wea - ry life, how false thou art! O mock - ing world, how vain!..... Love, joy, and hope like

cres - - - - - - - *cen* - - - - - - - - - *do.* *f colla voce.*

ritard. *dim.* *a tempo.*

dreams de-part, And pleasure ends in pain!"

ritard. *dim.* *p*


p
An an - gel, in the dark, still night, Stood at the old man's
p
pp
head,..... Flood-ing the sleep - er's soul with light, As whis - per-ing low he
pp
p
cres - - - - cen - - - - do. f p
said :..... "In youth, in age, in joy and woe,..... Man's life by God is given ;..... The
p
cres - - - - cen - - - - do. f
dolce.
mf
world he walks in here be - low Is but the path to heaven ;..... The world he walks in
p dolce.
mf
ritard. dim.
p
here be-low Is but the path to heaven !".....
dim.
ritard.
p
morendo.
pp
Ped.
*

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC.

THE history of the Guildhall School of Music presents one of the most remarkable instances of speedy growth and development of a teaching institution on record. Opening in 1880 with sixty-two pupils, taught by twenty-nine professors, it has now over three thousand students and a staff of no less than one hundred and eight teachers. The work of the institution began in an empty warehouse in Aldermanbury; now it is conducted in a building which is at least twice as large as that of any musical academy in the kingdom. Within the eight years of its existence the school has received no less than forty-five scholarships and exhibitions to assist the necessitous and clever in obtaining their education gratuitously, while the amount paid in fees during the same period has exceeded £118,000.

We have spoken of the building occupied by the Guildhall School, and it is, indeed, a noble edifice, meriting notice at the outset by more than a passing remark. It is situated on the Thames Embankment, immediately in the rear of the new Zion College, and facing the City of London School. The site occupies an area of eight thousand square feet, and the building has three frontages on streets recently formed. Inside the walls everything appears to be perfectly adapted to the purpose for which it was intended. The class-rooms (of which there are forty-two) are shut out as far as possible from all external sounds; the doors are nearly all of glass, "for the protection alike of professors and pupils"; the teachers have a common room; and a drawing-room is at the disposal of lady students who may be kept waiting for their lessons. There is also an organ-room, an orchestral practice-room (believed to be one of the finest concert-rooms in London for its acoustic properties), a library, a dining-room: indeed, every possible convenience. The architecture—from the design of Sir Horace Jones—is solid and handsome, and the building is of Portland stone, with terra-cotta embellishments in panel. The entire cost of the structure, including the furnishings, amounted to nearly £30,000—certainly a handsome sum to be paid on behalf of a musical institution, even by the Corporation of London. The building, we may add, was officially opened by the Lord Mayor on the 9th of December, 1886, and on the 10th of January following the students assembled for work within its walls for the first time.

The Guildhall School is, in the truest sense, a "school of music for the people." It does not exist for the purpose of training teachers, although, of course, many of its students may adopt public life after leaving its walls. Its work lies almost entirely in the direction of educating the classes that, for the most part, form the audiences of our concert-rooms. The aim of the institution may thus be said to be, in the first instance at least, to form good and intelligent listeners, rather than excellent or phenomenal performers. In England, as has frequently been pointed out, such a work as this is even more necessary than in other countries, which can look back upon several generations of enlightened amateurs. With us the general culture of the art of music as a national growth is of comparatively recent origin, consequently our public labours under the diffidence born of inexperience. It is slow to form an opinion of a new work; it prefers to "wait and see what the newspapers are going to say" the next morning. This, it need hardly be remarked, is a weighty hindrance to the advancement of the art, which should gain its strength mainly from the support of an intelligent public opinion. It is this intelligent opinion which the Guildhall School is engaged in spreading amongst ever-widening circles; and it is no exaggeration to say that the influence of the institution in this direction will by-and-by make itself felt throughout the length and breadth of the land—rousing our audiences to a better appreciation of the higher forms of music, and enabling them to judge for themselves as to what is good and what is bad in musical art.

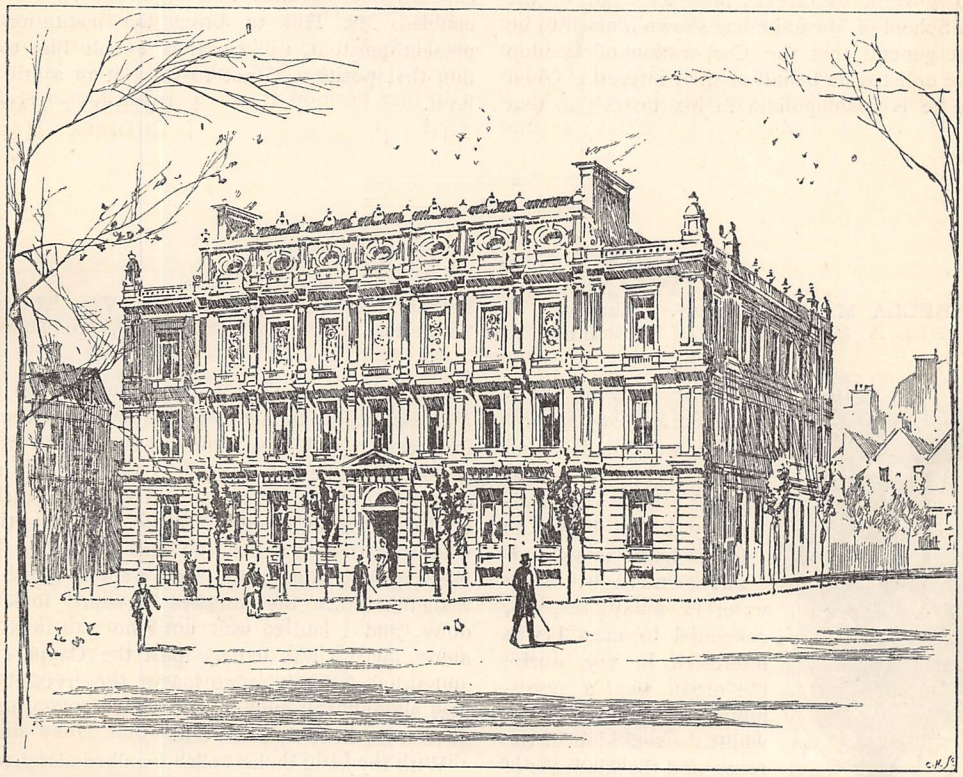
To name the branches of instruction given at the Guildhall School would be to give a catalogue of nearly every possible department of musical study. There are classes for solo-singing, harmony, counterpoint, composition, canon and fugue, sight-singing, chamber, choral, and orchestral music; students can enter for instruction in any musical instrument of their choice; and those who may desire to gain a knowledge of either French, Italian, or German have every facility for the purpose. The Students' Orchestra, first formed in 1884, meets every Wednesday, under the personal direction of the Principal, and is largely taken advantage of. A class which is very popular with the pupils is that for Chamber Music; here, in conjunction with stringed instruments, the practice of trios, quartets, quintets, and pianoforte concerted music is carried on with much assiduity and enthusiasm. The Ladies' Choir, begun in 1883, have already, as a result of their practices, given a large number of concerts, at which much good music has been performed; and the same may be said of the Male Voice Choir, which was formed for the study of part songs. Students are allowed to enter the orchestra, both the choirs, and the class for Chamber Music without additional charge, and those who are qualified are permitted to take part in the public concerts of the institution, which are given fortnightly during the term in the great hall of the City

of London School. An excellent idea, started by the Principal, is that of inviting every one of the professors to give a lecture, with musical illustrations, on the special subject which he teaches in the School. These lectures, which take place weekly, are free to the students, and are very largely attended.

A distinctive feature of the Guildhall School is that all the classes devoted to the more common subjects of study run on well into the evening. Most of the other leading musical institutions discourage evening classes, because they desire that their pupils shall take up music as a principal study and a sole profession. We have seen that the aim of the Guildhall School is, however, not to make teachers so much as intelligent and cultivated amateurs; and to give instruction throughout the day only would be to defeat this aim by excluding those engaged in commerce, or in any other way working for their living. That these evening classes supply a want hitherto felt is convincingly seen in the avidity with which *employés* of London houses avail themselves of their privileges. The Guildhall School does not greatly encourage the present craze for examinations, but those who have studied not less than three years in the institution may undergo, if they desire it, an examination for a "Certificate of Proficiency," and an "Associateship of the Guildhall School of Music," the fee for this examination being five guineas.

No school of music for the people could prosper unless its fees were such as to be within the reach of every one who may be desirous of receiving instruction, and in this respect the Guildhall School is a model for imitation. At the Royal Academy of Music the student pays £30 per annum, and at the Royal College, £40, whether as a beginner or for "finishing" lessons, and thus the younger students "have practically to contribute to the expenses of the advanced pupils." At the Guildhall School of Music this is not the case; here the student pays for the kind and amount of instruction he receives, and for nothing more. If he is a beginner the charge will amount to only £4 10s. yearly; while the highest terms for three half-hour lessons a week are but £33. It has been objected that these low charges have proved injurious to professors outside the walls of the school; but those who can look on the matter from an impartial point of view will probably agree in the opinion that only incompetent teachers—of the class who announce eight lessons for a guinea—are likely to suffer from the competition. The instruction at the Guildhall School, if it is cheap, is at the same time sound, and this can hardly be said of the teaching given at low charges by unqualified professors.

The Guildhall students are much assisted by its exhibitions, scholarships, and prizes. Of these it is unnecessary to give a detailed account; we need only



THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC.

mention that according to the latest list there are now forty exhibitions of £5 each, two of £5 5s., two of £10, and one of £20—certainly a very creditable register for an institution so young in years.

No notice of the Guildhall School could be complete without reference to Mr. H. Weist Hill, the Principal of the institution, for to him the wonderful success of the school as a teaching college is almost entirely due. A pupil of the Royal Academy of Music, Mr. Hill began his professional career as a violinist, in which capacity he served for many years under the late Sir Michael Costa. His *métier* was, however, to command, to govern, to direct; and as head of the Guildhall School of Music he has shown himself to be the fittest general that the Corporation of London could have enlisted on behalf of their interests. As a musician, he is cosmopolitan in his tastes; so that neither is English music likely to be ignored, nor are the productions of foreign masters denied that attention to which, by their merits, they are justly entitled. As Principal of the Guildhall School, Mr. Hill's position is an important one, both as regards its opportunities and its responsibilities; and if he only goes on as he has begun, the institution which he directs will, ere long, become one of the most prominent factors in the musical education of the country. The rapid growth of the school has fully proved that the people themselves think well of the undertaking, and the great musical ability, combined with the sound capacity for business and organisation, which has enabled Mr. Hill to bring the institution to its present position, will certainly enable him to maintain that position, if not to raise it to a still higher level.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON. Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

MAKING ACQUAINTANCE.

NEARLY a week had passed since I had come to Monk's Hollow, and already I had begun to feel at home in my new surroundings. They were, in many respects, congenial to me. I was interested in my work; the organ was a never-failing delight to me; whilst the seclusion of the place, and the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Talbot, gave me a feeling of rest and security that I had not known for a long time. My children were, as Mr. Talbot had remarked, much like other children. There were bright and dull ones; good and naughty; pretty and ugly; but I was resolved to like them all, and to know them in their own homes as well as at school. Nevertheless, in spite of Mr. Talbot's warning against favouritism, the little Coles, with their pretty, gentle ways, their blue eyes and transparent skins, were already dearer to me than the rest of my pupils. They looked, too, and were, so terribly fragile that, although I never showed my predilection, I was obliged to be extra careful with them, particularly as they lived rather far off, and were therefore more liable to arrive with damp feet or over-heated. For the same reason I had not yet visited their home, so when, on the first Saturday morning that came round, Hester timidly whispered to me that mother would be so pleased if I would come to tea that afternoon, I accepted the invitation, which was kindly extended to my dog. My poor Duke! I am afraid that he did not get as much exercise as he should in these early days of his arrival at Monk's Hollow. He was therefore wild with delight when, on this Saturday, he saw me preparing to take him for a walk so much earlier than usual. In his ecstasies he nearly knocked me down, and I had to wait until he was in a soberer mood, for my way led me past the Cappers woods, and although Sir John no longer preserved the game, that was all the more reason that Duke should not disturb the little that was left.

With my hand on his collar I walked along, fervently hoping I might pass through the domain without encountering the Bath-chair. I had been lucky this week. Since my interview with the little girls in the churchyard I had seen nothing of the Challoner family; and although they interested me more than any other people in the village, I would cheerfully have gone a mile out of my way to avoid meeting any one of them. But this afternoon I was not to be so fortunate. First of all, I came upon a nursery division, consisting of three little children ranging from five years old downwards, under the care of a girl of about fourteen, who had to push the perambulator and at the same time keep an eye upon a small boy, the eldest of the trio, so like Sir John that there was no mistaking who he was. With the air of a prince, he marched fearlessly up to Duke, and laid his little hand upon his head, in spite of the remonstrances of the nursemaid.

"Master Arthur, don't you touch the dog. He will bite you surely."

"Oh! no, he won't," responded Master Arthur with superb confidence. "Will he?" looking up into my face.

"No; he is very fond of little children," I answered.

"Does he belong to you, eh?" and on my nodding in the affirmative, "You must not let him get into the woods. Father would be awfully angry if you did."

"No; that is why I keep my hand on his collar."

"And does he obey you?"

"Yes, always. He is a very good dog."

"Pasha won't obey me, and I mustn't take him out. Do you whip your dog?"

"Only if he is very, very naughty."

"I whip Pasha, but he does not mind me," mournfully. "P'raps you give yours sugar-plums?"

"No, I don't," I answered, longing to carry the dear little boy home with me, "but I love him very dearly, and he loves me."

"I don't know who you are, or I would come and see you and your dog."

"I am the new schoolmistress," I answered—"Will you pay me and Duke a visit some day?"

"Master Arthur, you come along," remonstrated the nursemaid; but Arthur waved her off.

"You go on, Jane, with the babies," he replied magnificently; "I want to stop and talk to this"—here he hesitated for a minute—"this lady," he continued boldly.

"But you had better go with your nurse when she calls you," I said.

"She is not my nurse; she is only a girl. My nurse went away; mover said she couldn't 'ford such a 'spensive servant. I don't mind Jane."

"But you ought to mind Jane, if she has to take care of you."

"I don't like her," confidentially. "I'd rather stay wif you and Duke. May I?"

"No, darling; you must run after Jane, or Lady Challoner will be vexed."

"How did you know who I was, eh?"

"Of course I knew," I laughed. "Now run along, that is a dear boy."

"You're 'fraid mover will be angry, but she won't. Good-bye, Duke; and good-bye, schoolmistress. I will come and see you soon," and lifting his straw hat Arthur set off down the hill after the long-suffering Jane.

"Mover couldn't 'ford such a 'spensive servant." How the words echoed in my ears, and made my heart ache! Were all these innocent people suffering through——? Whirr! whizz! Up flew a pheasant, and off darted Duke, as if to prove my words as to his obedience an empty boast. But the rebellion was only momentary. A few seconds later he was walking again by my side, looking penitently into my face, and very thankful I was that he was doing so, for I had hardly turned the corner into the lane that led to the Coles' when I espied the Bath-chair coming towards me, with a body-guard of the two little girls and another boy.

No sooner had she caught sight of me than the younger of the two girls ran to meet me with a shout. "How d'ye do, Miss Morton?" she cried. "I did not know your name the other day. We wanted to come and see you very much, but mother had no time; our lessons take her so long now. Father," turning to the Bath-chair, which had come up to us by this time, "this is Miss Morton that Gwen and I——"

"Good day, Miss Morton; I hope your dog"—eyeing Duke suspiciously—"is not a poacher."

"Isn't he a beauty, father?" broke in the irrepressible Sibyl. "Look at his ruff."

"He is very handsome, certainly."

"I take care that he does not poach," I answered, "and he is well broken in. Good afternoon, sir," and only too anxious to escape from those keen eyes that would look me down so searchingly, I set off once more towards my destination. But again Sibyl stopped me.

"Which days do the children do needlework now?" she asked. "Mother likes to see the needlework; so p'raps, if I tell her which days they do it, she will bring me and Gwen——"

"And Arthur too, please," and then I blushed violently, for I saw that Sir John had heard and noticed my slip of the tongue. "I met him just now," I continued hurriedly, "and he said he would like to come and see Duke, my dog; so will you bring him too?"

"Oh! yes; of course we will. He is awfully fond of dogs, and——"

"Certainly, Miss Morton," from Sir John reassured me. "You had better not ask the children to come too often, or they will always be making incursions on you. They are terribly fond of company—that is, Sibyl and Arthur are."

"I shall be so glad to see them whenever they like to come," I answered; and feeling quite comforted by the kind smile that had accompanied Sir John's last words I took my way to the Coles', this time without being detained. Without further adventure I reached the gate, and stopped for a second outside to contemplate Hester's home. What a pretty little place it was! I almost thought I must have made a mistake; so evident were the tokens of well-to-do-ness and refinement that I could not but fancy that I must have hit upon some gentleman's abode.

But no! there was Hester just inside the gate, waiting for me in all her Sunday best, and looking quite as pretty and almost as lady-like as Sibyl or Gwen, with a beaming smile of welcome on her little soft face.

"I thought you'd be here soon," she said, slipping her hand into mine. "Father said as how p'raps you would not come after all; that it was a liberty to ask a real lady, as he understands you are, to come; but I told him you were very pleased."

"And so I am—delighted," I answered; "and I want to know father and mother very much indeed, for I think it very kind of them to ask me."

Hester blushed with pleasure as, with her hand still in mine, we walked up the path to the house amidst a mass of bloom and perfume from wall-

flowers, lilac, and other sweet-smelling flowers, with which the air was heavy.

"Mother is always ill," said Hester, "or she would ha' come to meet you. She has to lie down a'most all day; and father, he ain't very bright either; so Susie and I, we have to look after things a great deal, and help father."

"That must be rather hard work for you," I answered, "besides going to school."

"But we have a servant," responded Hester with some pride—"Genefer Ford; she is sister to your servant."

"And what does father do?" I asked; "is he a farmer?"

"No, not exactly. We do keep a cow and poultry and bees, but I don't think he's a farmer. He just looks after the place, you see. Once we lived in London, but we left it about two years ago, and came here, where father was born."

"A retired London tradesman," I mentally remarked, but had no time to say anything, for at this moment the door opened, and there stood Mr. Coles himself to welcome me. At the first sight of him his face seemed familiar to me, but later in the afternoon, when I was in close proximity to him, I became convinced that I had made a mistake, and that I had never seen him before. A tall, ghastly pale man, thin with the terrible thinness of disease, with eyes unnaturally bright, it was pitiful to glance from him to Mrs. Coles, a pretty, delicate-looking woman, who must once have been the image of Hester, and to see two comparatively young people laid on the shelf, with death slowly but surely creeping upon them.

Poor little Hester and Susie and George! I wondered how long it would be before they were orphans. It was comforting to reflect that poverty was not added to their troubles. That they were very well off, for people in their position, was most apparent. The nice old-fashioned sitting-room into which Mr. Coles ushered me was as comfortably furnished as any one could wish; the tea spread in my honour was a sumptuous repast, and Mrs. Coles was very much better dressed than I was. They gave me a hearty welcome, apologising at the same time for the liberty, as they called it, of asking me.

"It was all Hetty's doing, miss," said Mrs. Coles. "The child would not rest until you had been invited; and Hetty, she always do have her own way, for her father's heart is so set on her, he can refuse her nothing."

Mr. Coles here murmured something vague about making a favourite, alleging as an excuse that they had lost four little ones, and that Hetty was so delicate they never thought they should rear her at one time; after which the business of tea began, and we all gathered round the table, except Mrs. Coles, who seemed chained to the sofa. With tea Mr. Coles began to thaw considerably, and by the time he had heaped up my plate with all the dainties with which the table was laden—from bread-and-butter to whortleberries and cream—conversation was flowing freely.

Monk's Hollow and its history was a fruitful and interesting theme, full as it and the adjacent country is of quaint, not to say barbarous, traditions, customs, and sayings, such as still linger in the remoter parts of England, and on the subject of which Mr. Coles was a very well-spring of information. He was a native of the place, as had been his father and grandfather before him, besides which he was a well-educated and extremely intelligent man, who took a daily London paper, and the shelves of whose book-case were filled with the works of standard authors. In spite of all this, there was a something in his manner which was not pleasing; a nervousness and restlessness, a shiftiness in his glance, that struck me disagreeably, but which I put down to his complaint, the while nothing could be more pleasing than the evident love and affection that reigned between him and all the members of his family.

After tea, which was rather a solemn meal, and not to be lightly hurried over, Hester took me into the garden to show me "father's flowers." I had guessed that I should find a pretty garden at the back of the house, from what I had seen in the front, but I was not prepared for anything half so fascinating as the combination that met my eye of garden and heathland sloping hand-in-hand down to the river, and so cunningly laid out that the tiny domain looked quite an extensive pleasure-ground, and I at once jumped to the conclusion that Mr. Coles' profession must be either that of a nursery or landscape gardener. As for the flowers, I have seldom seen anything like them. The whole place was a blaze of colour from camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas, belated tulips and budding peonies; whilst round and about, lifting their dainty heads amidst clumps of golden gorse and broom, the wild flowers were growing in a perfection and beauty that said much for the climate, and yet more for the care bestowed on them.

"You see, miss," said Mr. Coles as I stood lost in admiration, "I dearly love my flowers. The doctors have all told me I ought to live out of doors in a mild climate, and so I devote myself to my garden. There's not a gardener in all the grand places about here as can touch my roses when they're in season. I carry off all the prizes at the shows. Lady Challoner, she is very jealous of them—not that they have any roses to speak of now at Cappers; they used to have beautiful gardens, but that is many years ago, when Mr. Page was the head-gardener. He is gone to be head-gardener to the Duke now; but if he were still at Cappers I would beat him in roses—yes, that I would. I forget all my troubles," here he heaved a sigh which seemed to come from the depth of his heart, "when I am amongst my flowers."

They were indeed superb, such as even I had not been able to accomplish in my own dear old home, where they had been a hobby of mine, in which I had indulged regardless of expense. Quick-sighted Hetty must have guessed the wistful longing that came over me as I went from one plant to another, delighting Mr. Coles by my appreciation of his darlings; for she whispered something to her father, who immediately began gathering of his choicest for

"WHIRR! WHIZZ! UP FLEW A PHEASANT" (*p.* 355).

me, with a lavishness and generosity that you seldom meet with when the gardener reigns supreme.

"You're welcome, miss," he said, as I begged him not to despoil his borders too much, "if only for Hetty's sake. Besides, it's a pleasure to cut them for any one who likes and understands them as you do. You know a great deal more about them than Lady Challoner, for all she is so fond of them."

I made no answer to this remark; my eyes were fixed on the distant sea, where the sun was going down in flaming splendour. To me the sea, with its golden trail, spoke of hope, even in a sorrow like mine; whereas if I turned to the moorland I caught, or fancied I caught, sight of the Fastmoor chimneys.

"This is the view I like best," said Mr. Coles, noticing my intent gaze; "round in front of the house it is maybe grander, but it is desolate and gruesome, and the prison—one can never get away from its chimneys. I sometimes wish I had not settled here, so near it, where one cannot lose sight o' it."

I looked at him with some astonishment; the man was literally shuddering as he spoke. Surely *he* could have no cause to shudder at the bare idea of Fastmoor; it only showed how hyper-sensitive his disease had made him.

"You have gathered me quite enough flowers, Mr. Coles," I said. "I will not have one more, for I am sure you ought not to be out any longer, now the sun is going down. Let us go in and talk to Mrs. Coles; I should like to have a chat with her before I go."

Mr. Coles acquiesced readily enough. He seemed glad, as I was, to leave the garden, and to lead the way back to the parlour, where Mrs. Coles was evidently expecting me.

It seemed a comfort to the poor woman to have some one fresh to talk to, for hardly had I settled myself by her sofa than she began to pour out her troubles to me, telling me of sorrow and sickness in the past, of sorrow and sickness in the future.

"You see, miss," she said, laying her hand on my arm, "four little ones have I buried one after another in London. They could not live in the town. They pined and drooped and died; and Hetty, she would ha' died, too, if we had not left it and come here. But now she is a different child; please God we may rear her; though neither I nor her father will ever see her a woman."

She said it quietly and simply, as though she were stating an undeniable fact, with no demonstration of grief, and when I tried to express my sympathy, "I may live some years yet," she answered; "the doctors say so. It is as God wills. For I feel no fear for the children. They will have their little bit of money, and they are good children. They will always make friends, and Mr. and Mrs. Talbot are sure to see to them. Mrs. Talbot is very fond of our Hetty, as all the gentry are; she has such pretty ways. When we first came down here she was terribly ill, just fading away, as my other little ones had done before her, and as I understand Miss Blanche did when she lived in London. I can't tell you, miss—no, not if I were to talk for ever—how kind Mr. and Mrs. Talbot were then. They thought of everything for me, and at last, when I was nearly worn out with the move and the nursing, and Coles in one of his queer fits as he has sometimes, they took the child right away to the Rectory for a month, and sent her back to me quite bonny and strong."

"Ah!" I said, as Mrs. Coles paused to draw breath, "I have already found out how good and kind they are. Was it on account of Miss Blanche's health, then, that they left town?"

"Hers and Mrs. Talbot's. They lived in a terribly-crowded part, so I have been told; I don't rightly know where. Anyway, the doctors said if they did not leave, they could not answer for their lives; and as Mr. Talbot had worked there for twenty-five years, long before he married, he had earned some rest too, miss, I think; don't you?"

"Yes, indeed; but——"

"So then they came here," continued Mrs. Coles, who, when she had secured a listener, did not neglect her opportunities, and merely asked a question in order to take breath, "and a good day it was for Monk's Hollow when they did. My husband says the place is as different to what it was when he was a boy as you are to Miss Jones, miss. But there, they could not save Miss Blanche. She died after all, poor dear young lady!"

"But it was many years afterwards, wasn't it, Mrs. Coles? Her death could not have been caused by living in London as quite a child."

"Oh dear, no, miss. She died of scarlet fever; but she was always rather delicate, I believe; at least, so Mrs. Bolton, who was her nurse, and who married the gardener at the Rectory, told me. There is a deal of trouble in the world, miss. I dare say you know it yourself, for all you look so young."

"Indeed I do, Mrs. Coles."

"I thought so," responded Mrs. Coles, with just a dash of triumph at her own perspicacity in her tone. "I could read it in your face. If it is not a liberty, miss, you are like the picture of Miss Blanche at the Rectory, the one that is in the rector's study and in Mrs. Talbot's bedroom. Have you seen it?"

I shook my head. "No," I said, "I have only been in the drawing-room. Tell me more about Miss Talbot, Mrs. Coles; I feel very much interested in her."

"I can't tell you much, for I did not know her. She died three years before we came here. But every one says she was a sweet young lady, and the rector, he worshipped the ground she trod on. Every one loved her, and they do say the captain wanted to marry her."

"What captain?"

"Captain Challoner, Sir John's eldest son. But I don't quite know the truth of all that. Mrs. Bolton, she is very careful, and never will say nothing. Anyway, he went right away somewhere—India or Africa, Coles knows where—when she died, and he's never come back yet."

"And poor Mrs. Talbot?"

"Ah, poor lady! she has been an invalid ever since. She always had bad health; but when she first came here she was very gay, fond o' going out, and having company, and a great deal at Cappers, where there were fine goings on then. But that is a long time ago. There are no goings on now, for Sir John, he is ruined, and folks say——"

"I think I ought to be going, Mrs. Coles," I broke in abruptly. Did I not know all, too much, about Sir John?

"No, just you stay a little longer, if you don't mind, miss. Coles and the children are gone, I think, to put you up some honey and eggs. You must wait until they come in. I do like a bit of a chat now and then, tied to the sofa as I am most days. And I don't often have visitors, for this is a terribly out-o'-the-way place. The rector, he comes always once a week or oftener, and the very sight of his coat does me good; and Mr. or Miss Bostock, they come now and then; but I would rather be without them, for they fidget so, if you know what I mean, miss, and ask questions. It's 'Mrs. Coles, why do you do this? Mrs. Coles, why do you do that? Why did you leave London? Why did you come here? Why do you lie on the sofa?' until I get that worried that I tell them they had better ask Coles all about it, for I don't know. And never a good word to say for the children, and they the best in the parish. But there, miss, I always lose my temper when I think of Miss Bostock; and I know I don't feel as I should towards her, so I had better say nothing more about her. Then there are Coles' cousins, at the farm yonder,

they come to see me sometimes; and Lady Challoner used to call in with the young ladies and gentlemen, but I don't often see her now. Since they have parted with so many servants and the governess, she has to see to things herself, poor lady, and——"

"And don't you see anything of your neighbours?" I interrupted desperately (was I never to be quit of the name of Challoner?); "I passed two or three houses close by here."

"Cottages, you mean, miss," and I saw at once that I had made a mistake. "No, miss, I keep myself and the children to myself; I don't wish them to be intimate with all the noisy rude children in the village. I am not proud, but I should like my little Hetty and Susie to grow up different to most of the girls about here. Coles is a very superior man—the rector thinks so, I know—and as we have a bit of money and——"

"Oh! Mrs. Coles, I beg your pardon," I cried, quite overwhelmed by my ignorance of Monk's Hollow etiquette, "I quite understand. You see," I continued apologetically, "I have only been here a few days, and know nothing of the people yet."

"No, o' course not, miss; but when you do, you will find out——"

But what I was to find out never transpired, for at this juncture Mr. Coles appeared on the scene, accompanied by the three children, and bearing a basket.

"I have put you up a few eggs and some honey besides the flowers, miss," he said, "if you will accept them. The children can bring the basket back on Monday."

I thanked him warmly for his kindness, and then I rose to go, for it was getting late, and Duke was beginning to be troublesome. With the promise of coming again soon, and accompanied by all the children to the gate, I set off home in the gathering twilight. On my way I passed the tabooed cottages. They looked trim and tidy and home-like; women and children were standing about in the gardens, and I stopped and had a word with them, the children always serving as an introduction, smiling to myself as I thought of my *faux pas* with Mrs. Coles.

Two hours later I was setting my casement window wide open, before retiring to bed. In the darkness and alone I could bear to look towards Fastmoor, to whisper, as I did every night—

"Good night, my darling. Thank God, another day is over for you."

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

"MUSIC HATH CHARMS."

THE next day was Sunday, when I was to preside at the organ for the first time. The instrument was an old friend of mine; I had been passionately fond of it ever since I could remember, and, being a spoilt child, had triumphed over all opposition and taken lessons in it from the time I was sixteen. I, therefore, felt myself fully competent for the office I was about to perform, and yet I was unaccountably nervous.

Perhaps it was the initials B. T. that I found on all the music, which showed me that Blanche Talbot had been my precursor; or was it that I knew that, in the transept opposite to where I sat, the whole Challoner family would soon be silently passing judgment on me? I had seen them all come in; Sir John in his chair, in which he remained, Gwen, Sibyl, the eldest boy, and Arthur; had heard the latter's loud whisper, "Mover, that's Duke's mistress," and had had time to steal a glance at "mother."

She had a stamp of countenance with which I was familiar. It was, if I may so express it, a regular London face—well-bred, cold, and discontented, verging on sadness. She looked worn and fagged, and I could well believe that she had enough to make her so, with care and worry, to say nothing of Sir John's health. Impassive as a Sphinx, she sat at the far end of the seat, her hands loosely clasped, with an air of weariness and indifference about her that not all Arthur's whisperings could disturb. Presently in came Mrs. Talbot, followed almost immediately by Mr. and Miss Bostock, who walked down the church rather as if the whole edifice belonged to them, Miss Bostock eventually taking her place amongst the school-children.

Then I began the voluntary. I remember it was an adagio of Beethoven's that I had chosen, because in its breadth and simplicity it was so soothing. It drove away my nervousness as if by magic. I could think of nothing but the music; and Challoners, Talbots, and Bostocks were all merged in the notes. The organ was a first-rate one, like everything else in that dear little church; no one had offered of that which had cost them nothing. The rest of the service proceeded smoothly enough. The chants and hymns were simple, suitable to a purely agricultural population, and I heaved a sigh of relief at the end, to think that this my first ordeal was over.

Mr. Talbot gave me a fleet approving smile as he passed to the vestry, followed by the choir, and I remained where I was until I thought the congregation would have dispersed. But no sooner had I slipped out of the little side-door nearest to me, and swiftly turned the angle towards home, than I felt some one pulling at my dress somewhat roughly behind, and turned round to see "Master Arthur."

"Mover wants to speak to you," said that young gentleman, in his half-coaxing, half-imperious way; "come along."

I felt rather inclined to resist.

"I think I must go home and give Duke his dinner," I said. "Poor Duke! he has been chained up all this morning."

"Nerry mind him," responded Arthur, "you come to mover."

I could not help laughing at the small despot—he was so evidently under the impression that every one was to be at the beck and call of "mother"—and when I remembered that she was Lady Challoner I made no further resistance, much as I disliked penetrating the knot of gentry assembled at the churchyard gate. But the Talbots were there, as well as the Bostocks and Challoners, and the rector came to meet me.

"Bravo! Miss Morton," he said; "why, you never told us you were such a proficient on the organ."

"Because I am not," I answered, smiling, mechanically clasping Arthur's little hand.

"Here she is," cried that small boy, triumphantly dragging me towards his father. "She wanted to go home and give Duke his dinner, but I wouldn't let her."

"Arthur is not very polite, Miss Morton," said Sir John, as he put out his hand to me, "and I must beg your pardon for sending him after you in that unceremonious fashion, but I thought his little legs would catch you before you disappeared. Lady Challoner would like to make your acquaintance."

Meanwhile Mrs. Talbot, who had silently taken my hand, had led me up to Lady Challoner, who stood a little apart, and had never stirred or attempted to approach me, but had remained looking as though she had neither part nor lot in the matter.

"Gladys," said Mrs. Talbot, just a trifle impatiently, "let me introduce you to Miss Morton; I want you to know her, for she is a friend of mine."

Then, at last, Lady Challoner gave some sign of life.

"I am very glad to make your acquaintance, Miss Morton," she said, in a listless, somewhat drawling voice, "for my children have done so on their own account already, they tell me. They are always teasing me to take them to the school. What days do the children do needlework now?"

"On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Fridays they knit," I answered.

"Well, I must try and find my way down some afternoon, if I can manage it. I may probably bring some work I want done. Good morning. John, don't you think we might be moving home?" turning to her husband, and paying no further attention to me.

I at once took the opportunity to slip away, but Mrs. Talbot came after me.

"My dear," she said, "don't be in quite such a hurry. You must give me a minute to thank you for your playing this morning; I cannot tell you how refreshing it was after what we have been experiencing lately. The boys, too, sang better than I have heard them for months. Every one is delighted at the change. And that reminds me that I want to ask you not to be offended at Lady Challoner's manner. It is quite natural to her, and she does not mean anything by it. It is a great pity, however; but you must not mind it."

"No, I shall never mind or be offended at anything Lady Challoner says or does;" and then perceiving that my words might sound strange, "I feel so sorry for her and Sir John," I added hurriedly. "Now I must really go home to my Duke. Shall I come up this afternoon and sing to you, if you will promise me that you will have no visitors?"

"No, I cannot promise that, for the Challoners invariably have tea with us Sunday afternoons. It is one of the laws of the Medes and Persians. But, Miss Morton, you would really be doing a kindness if you would come all the same, and sing to Sir John. He is passionately fond of music, and he never hears any now. Lady Challoner has no more in her than your Duke, perhaps less; and he cannot go about as he did formerly to wherever he could hear a note of Handel, Beethoven, or Mendelssohn. Ah! I see in your face that you are relenting; that is right. It is just as good a deed to sing to Sir John as to visit Mrs. Coles, and the poor man wants the demon in him exorcised as much as any of us."

"But he is accustomed to hear first-rate singing," I remonstrated. "He will not care for mine."

"Don't fish for compliments," laughed Mrs. Talbot. "If I have discovered that some one has the sweetest, most sympathetic voice that I have heard for a very long time, and has been taught by first-rate masters, Sir John will very soon do the same. By the way, he is quite aware that I do not allow any secular music at the Rectory on Sunday."

"I understand," I said; "and, from what you say, he doesn't care for the modern lights, Wagner, Brahms, &c., and the host of English composers of the present day?"

"No, certainly not. He and I are quite agreed on that subject. We are very conservative, and very behind-hand, at Monk's Hollow. Now I must be going; the rector is waiting in the pony-carriage for me. Good-bye," and with a smile Mrs. Talbot turned back to join her husband, leaving me to go home.

Well, it was no good struggling against fate. I would have given a very great deal never to set eyes on any member of the Challoner family, never to hear their names mentioned again, and it seemed that I was destined not to pass a single day without coming in contact with them. Already the conviction was slowly forcing itself on me, that not only must I no longer try to avoid them, but that I must positively seek them out, and that my singing to Sir John this afternoon would be only the first in a series of like ordeals.

With a heart full of sadness, not, I fear, untinged with bitterness, I ran at full speed down the remainder of the hill, only anxious to get home, when, to my annoyance, as I turned a corner, I came almost full tilt against Mr. and Miss Bostock, who, accompanied by two friends, were taking a stroll before going home. I had grown to know these two well by this time, for not a day had passed since my arrival at Monk's Hollow that one or the other of them, or both together, did not put in an appearance at the school. I must confess that at this early stage of our acquaintance the only thing that drew me to them was their affection for one another. For Mr. Bostock, there was but one woman in the world, and that was his Lizzie, and I am not at all sure that Lizzie did not share his opinion. She was certainly a handsome, showy-looking girl, very clever, and, as I discovered later, ambitious, who, endued with iron strength herself, spoke in pitying terms of all her neighbours, "poor Lady Challoner," the "poor old rector," and was busily gathering up as much as she could into her own most capable hands all the threads of the village

interests, in order to play more fully the part of squiress of the parish. Towards me her manner varied; but to-day, for the first time, she shook hands with me, and I was wicked enough to attribute it to Sir John's example.

"Why, you *are* in a hurry, Miss Morton," she said reprovingly, as I apologised for the just-missed collision; "I was wishing to see you, to tell you that Mr. Bostock and I are very much pleased with the way you played the organ this morning. It is a great improvement on what we have had lately. The next thing to be overhauled is the choir. I must see to that as soon as ever I can. The poor old rector——"

"Mr. Talbot was talking about it to me yesterday," I interposed; "I think he is fully aware of its deficiencies just now."

Miss Bostock smiled. "Ah! well," she said, "you come up this afternoon to the Manor, and we will consider what is best to be done. Don't come till four, for I shall be engaged."

"I am sorry to say I cannot come at all; I have engaged to be at the Rectory."

"Oh! really. Then I must see about it another time. I won't keep you now; good morning. Oh! by the way, I noticed Hester Coles fidgeting in church this morning, and talking. The Coles are very uppish people; you must keep those children in their place," and with a patronising nod Miss Bostock left me to go home, whilst she pursued her way towards the Manor.

I returned to my domicile feeling as though I had been stroked the wrong way, until I reflected that, in the character of schoolmistress, I must be proof against such trifles, and that, above all, I must studiously keep myself aloof from all village politics and parties, and concern myself simply with my duties. Was it not quite enough for me for the present that I was going to sing to Sir John and Lady Challoner to-day?

Punctually at four o'clock, with my music under my arm, I took my way to the Rectory, my heart beating absurdly, considering the occasion. I suppose it was that I was out of practice, and had for the last two years been leading a secluded life, but the prospect of singing this afternoon was intensely distasteful to me, as was the whole business. To Mr. and Mrs. Talbot I could sing for hours, feeling sure that my voice recalled their dead Blanche's; but Lady Challoner's cold flabby thanks, even Sir John's warmer expressions of gratitude, was an ordeal I did not look forward to. I dreaded, too, breaking in upon the Sunday family party; and it was a distinct relief to me that, when the parlour-maid opened the drawing-room door to announce me, I caught sight of Sibyl's sweet face and curly head.

And how foolish were all my fears! Mrs. Talbot welcomed me with her usual warmth, as though I had been a member of the family party; Sir John greeted me with hearty cordiality; Lady Challoner stretched out to me a limp, but not unfriendly hand; whilst Sibyl, with that inborn courtesy you see in some children, handed me tea and cake, and asked after Duke. And after awhile, sitting there in the dear old-fashioned drawing-room, sweet with the scent of roses, I forgot, as I so often did at the Rectory, that I was the village schoolmistress, forgot my shyness, and unconsciously revelling in the company once more of my equals, began to converse with Sir John and Lady Challoner as I might have done two years ago. That is to say, I talked to Sir John and Mrs. Talbot; as for Lady Challoner, she sat, sipping her tea, quiet and impassive, save that I noticed once a very slight elevation of her handsome eyebrows, when I betrayed a knowledge of that world to which she belonged, that put me on my guard, and made me remember in what capacity I sat there.

"When you have quite recovered your tea, Miss Morton," said Mrs. Talbot, seeing that time was creeping on, "I know you will kindly sing to us a little bit, not much"—turning to Sir John—"for she will have the organ again at six, and I am afraid Sunday is anything but a Sabbath to her."

Sir John said nothing, only looked at me inquiringly as I acquiesced; whilst Sibyl, drawing a low stool forward, ensconced herself almost under my petticoats.

"Will you sing something of Handel's?" she whispered to me. "Father loves Handel, and so does Mrs. Talbot."

"Yes, dear" (what a sweet child it was!)—"tell me what Sir John likes best."

She took my music, and, turning it over, placed "Comfort ye my People" on the desk. There was absolute stillness in the room as I began to sing, and it might have made me nervous, if I had not, as usual, forgotten everything but what I was doing. When I had finished, I turned towards my audience, and then, oh! how glad I was that I had listened to Mrs. Talbot. Sir John's countenance was quite altered. The crease in his forehead was smoothed out, and in his eyes there shone a warm light, such as I could not have believed in an hour ago.

"There is no one like dear old Handel," was, however, all he said. "Thank you, Miss Morton;" whilst Sibyl again made her private remarks—

"Father will go to bed much happier to-night," she said.

After that I required no further pressing. One after another I sang Sir John's favourites from Handel and Mendelssohn, until I finished up with my nightly hymn that I sang every evening before going to bed, to carry me through the long night, to me always crowded with the thoughts of my darling. When at last it was time to start for church, Sibyl requested to come with me. "Please, mummy darling, let me sit with Miss Morton, close by the organ," she said.

"I like our own seat best," remarked Gwen, looking at Gerrard.

"Well, you and Gerrard sit in our seat, and Sib with Miss Morton," said Sir John, "and then you will all be satisfied." Then turning to me and putting out his one hand (alas! the other was paralysed), "Thank

you very much, Miss Morton," he said; "you don't know what a treat you have given me. I wonder if you will ever repeat it?"

"As often as ever you like, Sir John."

"That is very good of you," he said, "but don't make rash promises; I may call upon you to keep them."

"I shall be very glad to keep them," I answered, and then I turned to go, for I caught Lady Challoner's cold eyes fixed on me, and somehow they made me feel uncomfortable.

"Miss Morton," said Sib, clasping my hand tight, as together we walked towards the church, "will you teach me to sing some day? I want to sing very well indeed, like you, to please poor father."

"Willingly, dear," I answered; "but not yet awhile, you are too little."

"I'm nine," she said. "I should like to learn the violin too, like Alice Vernon; but we can't afford lessons, now we have lost all our money. Father says I shall have to be a governess, so I must learn a lot, mustn't I?"

"He only says that to tease you, Sibyl, I expect?" I asked eagerly.

She nodded her head. "Yes," she laughed, "father likes teasing us. Of course, when I grow up I shall be married, like mother; only then I should have to leave father. I am not quite sure what I shall do yet."

"No, I would not make up my mind just at present," I answered.

"I do like you, Miss Morton, so much. You are so pretty, and when the sun shines on your hair it looks like real gold. Father says you are the prettiest girl he has seen for ever so long, and you do sing just like an angel."

"And you are a dear little chatterbox!" I answered—colouring to the roots of my hair as Sibyl passed on to me "father's opinion"—"but you should not repeat what one person says of another."

Sib opened her sweet eyes wide. "Not nice things?" she asked. "I thought you would be pleased that father said you were pretty," in a crestfallen voice. "Ain't you?"

In all truth I could have answered, "No, not at all," but that I feared my words might be reported back to Sir John, so I changed the subject whilst we stopped to wait for Mr. Talbot and the other children.

I think I went home that evening happier than I had felt since I had been at Monk's Hollow. A fresh interest had sprung up this afternoon in my life, suggesting to me the possibility that I might have it in my power to lighten, if only by a feather's weight, the load that lay on Sir John and Lady Challoner's shoulders, and that in more ways than one. It put quite a fresh aspect on things in general, and on the Challoners in particular, giving me plenty to think about; but amidst all the *pros* and *cons* that I kept turning over in my mind, Sibyl's words, "Father will go to bed much happier to-night," struck a chord of gladness in my heart such as I had not known for a long time. I went to sleep with the words on my lips, and fell into a confused dream of the stranger of the St. James's Street episode and Sir John singing together, over my shoulder.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

CHALLONER *versus* BOSTOCK.

IT did not require any very great perspicacity on my part to discover that the outwardly Arcadian village in which my lot was now cast was as much divided into two camps as if it had been an Italian city of the Middle Ages, and that the two camps were respectively docketed "Challoner" and "Bostock."

Not that there was any open hostility between the parties; nothing could be more polite, more urbane, than they were to one another; but that there was a silent struggle going on between them I learnt, much against my will, from the poor people around me, and especially from Mrs. Coles.

The Coles were stout Challonerites; their proclivities were all aristocratic, and not even Lady Challoner herself could have spoken with more contempt of Mr. Bostock as a "tradesman" than did the fragile, suffering Mrs. Coles, who, truth to tell, was an inveterate gossip, and that not always of the most charitable order. In vain I tried to stem the stream of information that was poured into my unwilling ears as I sat by the sofa where the poor woman lay the livelong day. One after another I was compelled to listen to the iniquities of "those Bostocks," commencing with the fact that Mr. Bostock was the sole mortgagee of all Sir John's property, and ending with the indignant—

"And it's my belief, miss, and Coles says so too, that when Sir John sells Cappers—and the poor gentleman, they say, means to do so when the Captain comes home—that Mr. Bostock will step in and buy it."

"And if he does, Mrs. Coles, what harm will there be in that? If Sir John sells the place, Mr. Bostock's money is as good as any one else's," I foolishly answered, for it was foolish to argue with Mrs. Coles on a subject which concerned neither her nor me.

"Of course, miss, his money is good enough. Folks say he is almost as rich as the Duke, but that I don't believe; but why can't he be content to stay in that great big mansion of his, that is more like an hotel than a gentleman's house, instead of wanting to step into Sir John's shoes? They'll not fit him, you may be sure. What could he do at Cappers, where everything is old and worn and faded, after his own grand place that, they tell me, is fitted up like a palace? But that is where it is, miss; that is all he is trying for—to step into Sir John's shoes. He began it directly the poor gentleman was laid by, and bit by bit he has taken his place everywhere. They say he means to stand for this division of the county the next election, which is what Sir John was member for. He won't have Coles' vote, I can tell him that; and he may try as he likes, he will never be the open-handed gentleman Sir John was—he is very close, although he gives away a great deal—

no, nor the sportsman either; for what I mean, miss, is," and Mrs. Coles laid her hand emphatically on my arm, "Sir John is what I call an old English gentleman, for all he has a terrible temper; and the Captain, from what I hear, will be just such another; but Mr. Bostock is not, and never will be one."

I am bound to confess that silently—for a schoolmistress is like the Queen of a constitutional government, she must have no politics—I, too, was a Challonerite; that is to say, I found the Challoners far more interesting than the Bostocks; but both Mrs. Coles and I were in a minority, and the greater part of the village bowed down to the rising sun, as is the way with human nature, even in Arcadia.

When therefore, one afternoon, some time after I had sung to Sir John, when the needlework at the school was in full swing, and Miss Bostock, with eagle-eye, was inspecting buttonholes, stitching, darning, and the other mysteries of the art, the door suddenly opened, and Lady Challoner, followed by four children, appeared, I could not help feeling vexed that she had not happened to fix on an hour when Miss Bostock was not present.

"Stand up, children," I said, "and make your curtseys. Here is Lady Challoner."

The next moment I was sorry, for I saw Miss Bostock flush an angry red, and then I remembered that I had not given the order for her, and was annoyed. The fact was, I was so accustomed to Miss Bostock's frequent incursions into the schoolroom that familiarity had, as it were, bred contempt; but this was the first time that Lady Challoner had put in an appearance in my domain.

She came in calm, impassive, simply dressed, acknowledging the children's curtseys with a gesture and a smile, and then she shook hands with me, and I saw at once that she had the good-breeding to intend to be more courteous to me here in my own kingdom than she had thought necessary to be on Sunday. I soon perceived that any apprehensions I might have entertained on the score of the meeting of the two ladies were perfectly unfounded. With a smile quite warm and cordial Lady Challoner advanced towards Miss Bostock, holding out her ungloved hand.

"I might have guessed I should find you here, Lizzie," she said sweetly, whilst I was stealing a kiss from Arthur. "I think you spend all your time in the village or at your orphanage; at any rate, you never come and see me. It is more than a year, I believe, since you have had tea with me. When are you coming again?"

I could see that Miss Bostock was quite taken aback by the cordiality of these advances, but she quickly recovered herself, whilst a gleam of something like triumph shot into her eyes.

"I might say the same of you, Lady Challoner," she answered quite playfully; "you never come and see me."

"That is true, but I have an excuse that you cannot bring forward. I have no carriage, and I cannot possibly mount the hill to the Manor on foot. I should be out of breath for a month, to say nothing of being very much tied at home by Sir John."

Miss Bostock smiled pityingly. "I too am, as you say, very much taken up with a variety of employments, and with my father, but I shall be very glad to come and see you at any time."

"'Any time is no time,'" responded her ladyship cheerfully. "What do you say to to-morrow at four? I have the Vernons coming to tea. You know them, don't you?"

Miss Bostock coloured ever so slightly. "No," she answered curtly.

"Really! Oh, you ought to know them; they are such charming people. You must certainly come to-morrow and be introduced to them," and having thus held out one hand of fellowship to Miss Bostock, whilst with the other she pointed her to the place she occupied, Lady Challoner turned her attention to the school-children.

"I see, you have just been round inspecting the needlework," she continued, in her lazy voice, as she settled herself in a chair. "That will save me the trouble; you can report to me on its merits."

"Those you must judge for yourself, Lady Challoner," responded Miss Bostock, "for I do not pretend to be the connoisseur in needlework that you are. I think it, however, my duty to look it over from time to time, as I do all the other branches."

"Miss Morton must, I am sure, feel very much obliged to you," looking at me interrogatively, whilst in the corners of her mouth there gleamed the shadow of a satirical smile.

"It is most kind of Miss Bostock to take so much interest in the school," I answered, in all sincerity, annoyed at Lady Challoner's manner; and then, at last, for time was getting on, the inspection began.

"I think I can guess," said her ladyship, leaning back in her chair, "whose is the best work this afternoon. Hetty Coles," raising her voice slightly, "bring me whatever you are doing to look at, my dear."

Hetty at once stepped forward, and came up blushing and dimpling, whilst Lady Challoner took the garment she was making in her hand, inspected it narrowly, pointed out its perfections and imperfections, dwelt long on the buttonholes, and then dismissed her. Meanwhile Sibyl and Arthur had been going amongst the children, as gravely as two little judges, greeting most of them by name, and betraying an intimate acquaintance with their affairs, sometimes asking them searching questions about their families and their doings, until Sibyl returned to her mother, reporting that Susie Coles worked next best to Hetty. Accordingly Susie was then sent for and her work looked over, and so it went on by Sibyl's recommendation, whilst Miss Bostock stood by, infinitely scandalised at the waste of time engendered by the proceeding, until Lady Challoner had seen as much as she cared for.

"I must hear the children sing now, Miss Morton," she said, "and then, I suppose, it will be time for them to break up?"

"Yes," I answered; "but there are quite twenty minutes yet. They will have time to sing several things. I hope you will think they have got on."

"I have no doubt I shall," she responded graciously. "They ought to, as you are so musical. Sib and

followed on prayers, died away than Arthur threw his sailor hat up to the ceiling and down again.

"You may go now, children," he said, in his princely fashion; "I am going to have my dear Duke. Fetch him, Miss Morton."

"I STOPPED AND HAD A WORD WITH THEM" (*p.* 359).

Arthur," turning to them, "go and stand with the children, and sing with them."

The two little ones obeyed at once, whilst Gwen and Gerrard planted themselves more firmly on either side of their mother, and I struck the note. Song after song, glee and round and madrigal, those two little golden-haired creatures carolled out with the school-children, their faces blushing and dimpling with delight; but hardly had the last note of the evening hymn, which

"Say 'please,' Arthur," reproved Sibyl.

"Please, Miss Morton."

"We must wait for a little while until the children are gone, and then I will fetch him," I answered, as I accompanied my little flock to the passage outside, where hung the hats and cloaks. But I had not been gone a minute before I was recalled to the school-room by a great noise, to find Duke madly tearing round and round, whilst Gerrard and Arthur

were urging him on, and clapping their hands with glee.

"I found him," cried the latter, running up to me, "and I let him out. He was shut up in such a pitty little room, almost as pitty as mover's."

"What is that, Arthur," inquired Lady Challoner, "about a pretty room? I am afraid he was very naughty to let out your dog," turning to me, "but the boys are beyond me; I cannot manage them."

"I wanted you to see Duke, mummy. Come here, Duke."

But Duke, instead of going to Arthur, walked up to me and laid his head on my hand, and I led him to Lady Challoner.

"Well, he is a real beauty," she remarked quite enthusiastically.

"Not at all a proper adjunct for a school-room," interposed Miss Bostock severely. "I cannot say I approve of him at all. He makes the children idle, and the whole place in a mess."

"No, indeed," I answered. "He is not allowed to come into the school-room in school-hours, and he is a very good dog in every way."

"That is right; stand up for your dog," said Lady Challoner, in her most drawling manner. "Now I want to see the 'pitty room,' please," quite briskly. "Has Mr. Bostock built a new one?" turning to Lizzie.

The girl coloured. "Oh dear, no," she answered testily; "how could he? He has no authority to do so, even if he wished to."

"Oh, I don't understand," helplessly; "I am very stupid about business, aud I thought Mr. Bostock managed and settled everything about the school now. Hetty Coles," suddenly raising her voice, as the three little Coles passed through the room to go out, "how are your father and mother?"

"Much the same, thank you, my lady," answered Hetty, dropping a very profound curtsey.

"What a pretty little creature that is!" remarked Lady Challoner as the door closed behind the child. "I hope, Miss Morton, you make pets of those little Coles; they are such very superior children."

"But, Lady Challoner," cried Lizzie, aghast at such doctrine, "Miss Morton must not make pets; it would never do at all," looking at me searchingly as she spoke. "The Coles are quite stuck up enough already. I do not care for them at all. I think there is something very unsatisfactory about them; and the way those children are dressed is absurd."

"Is it?" asked Lady Challoner innocently. "Their colours are always harmonious. Mrs. Coles has very good taste. Both she and her husband are terrible invalids; that is the only unsatisfactory thing I know about them. But then I do not pretend to be acquainted with the ins and outs of the village people as you are. All I know is that Mr. Coles' father and grandfather worked on the Cappers estate, and Sir John tells me they were always very respectable people. Now for the pretty room, please, Miss Morton. Good-bye, Lizzie; *au revoir* to-morrow. Mind you come," and, following Arthur's lead, Lady Challoner rose and swiftly passed through the door towards my sitting-room, leaving Miss Bostock standing in the school-room.

"I am afraid the room is not very tidy, Lady Challoner," I said, feeling annoyed at the way she had taken it for granted that she was to see it, and also at her covert impertinence to and dismissal of Miss Bostock.

"All the better," she answered. "I abominate a very tidy room. Why, this is surely not," as I opened the door—"yes, it is, though—the same as Miss Jones had. I should not have recognised it." Then, after a pause, "You have made it perfectly charming."

From this moment Lady Challoner's manner changed to me. She was often cold, often capricious, but she never again patronised me; was never impertinent, as I had already discovered she could be; and at times I am certain she felt sorry for me. I think my little room told her more about me, personally and individually, than volumes of words could have done. Bit by bit she took it in, glancing at each piece of furniture, each picture, in succession; and then, with a smile at my pots of ferns and vases full of golden buttercups and ladycow parsley, "How pretty they look!" she murmured, as she sank into my one armchair; "you only want a sofa to make the room quite complete;" then turning suddenly to the children, who had crowded in after her, "Now, children, take Duke outside," she said, "and run up and down with him whilst I have a talk with Miss Morton."

"I shall stay with you, mother." This from Gwen.

"But, dear," impatiently, the worn fagged look stealing over her countenance, "I want you to go out. Don't be tiresome, Gwen," as the child's face grew sullen and overcast. "Ah! Miss Morton, how you can endure thirty or forty children about you from morning to night, I can't think; it would kill me in a fortnight."

"Gwen," I said, leaning towards the girl, who drew herself up and looked at me with a world of haughtiness in her big dark eyes for daring to call her by her Christian name, "I wish you would go out, and help look after Duke. I am so afraid the two boys may excite him, and make him wild amongst the school-children as they go home. Will you go, and see that they don't, dear?" She turned slowly, and went out of the door without a word, and Lady Challoner smiled.

"I see," she said wearily, "that you understand children."

"I am very fond of them," I answered.

"Then perhaps you will not be offended at what I am going to ask you."

"Certainly, I shall not."

"How do you know that?"

"Because I feel sure that you will not say anything that could offend me," I answered gravely, for I meant her to understand that I would not put up with the caprice of manner, not to say quiet impertinence, she had so lately displayed in my presence towards Miss Bostock. I think she comprehended me, for she looked at me with an amused smile.

"You are right," she said; "what I am going to ask you, need offend no one, only—begging your pardon—some people are touchy, and others are not. The fact is, I want a little help in the tuition of my children; they are growing so big," with a sigh, "and are getting beyond me. Are you inclined to come up to Cappers of a day, between hours, and teach them history, geography, that detestable writing, and arithmetic?"

I was standing by her side, looking down on her white handsome face, on the lines drawn on her forehead and round her mouth, and a great pity rose in my heart for her, although she was not a person who specially attracted me. She was growing prematurely old, and why? But she was looking at me eagerly for an answer, and I had to give one.

"And music?" I queried with a smile, for I had foreseen and rehearsed this conversation in my own mind many times since I had sung to Sir John, and it almost seemed as though the force of my own will had brought it to pass. How her face lighted up!

"Would you, indeed, teach music?" she asked. "If so, you will add ten years to my life, which, by the way, is a very doubtful kindness."

"Yes, I can undertake the music, certainly," I answered. "But perhaps," colouring in my usual stupid way, "you would rather hear me play first?"

"No, indeed. Did I not hear you play the organ on Sunday? Besides, I know nothing of music really. I take it for granted that you understand the piano."

"It is very kind of you to say so, for of course the organ is no criterion of the piano. But I think I can confidently undertake to teach it, for I have been very well taught myself."

"Oh! I am perfectly satisfied on that point. Now, will you please name your own terms and hours? If the former are too high, and I cannot afford them, I must go without you, that is all," but she looked at me eagerly, for all her nonchalant manner.

I made a rapid calculation (for that, too, I had rehearsed) and then I named a sum, as low as I dared without offending her. Her face fell.

"That is so very moderate," she answered, "that I fear you only mean to give me one hour before lunch, which you will of course take with us?"

"If I may, I should prefer having my dinner at home," I answered, "returning three times a week at four-thirty, and staying there as long as you like."

She stared at me in amazement. "You don't really mean that?" she asked.

"Yes, I really do."

"Would you stay until seven, or is it asking too much?"

"No, I will willingly stay until seven; I am so fond of children and teaching."

Her face became radiant. "You do not know what a relief this is to me," she said; "I am so tied with Sir John that I have no time to educate the children, and they are growing so wild. When will you begin?"

"To-morrow if you like."

"That is indeed good of you! Will it be a long or a short day?"

"A long one. I have the organ and choir this evening."

"Then that is settled," she said with a sigh of contentment, and rising from her chair. "Now I must really go home to Sir John; you do not know how grateful I am to you. Good-bye till to-morrow," and smiling her nicest smile, Lady Challoner passed out of the room, and calling her little flock around her, was soon slowly breasting the hill to Cappers.

I turned from the window, and sat down in the chair she had just vacated. What I had wished and planned had come to pass. No fear of not being tired when I went to bed now. Should I be able to do it all, and do it thoroughly, I wondered. I thought so. In former days, in the name of pleasure, I had gone through greater exertions than I was undertaking now for duty. And was it not worth any amount of fatigue to be able to conjure up that glad smile on Lady Challoner's face? Ay, indeed.

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

SUPERSTITIONS REGARDING CHILDREN.

ONE Sunday afternoon a few weeks ago the writer and a friend were coming home from a short walk, in the course of which they had perambulated sundry old-world thoroughfares, formerly of fashionable resort, but which are now relegated to the poorer classes and to those who pursue philanthropic labours for their improvement and elevation. We had passed through these, and were walking up a quieter street, when we saw coming quickly towards us two women, one of whom carried a "long baby," a *very* long one. There was scarcely time to notice the spotless whiteness of the baby's robes, and its veil, and the bunch of snowdrops pinned on somewhere, when one of the women produced a small parcel, and, pressing it into my friend's hand, gave vent to an excited oration, the only intelligible words in which were "Baby's christening-cakes—please accept—old Scotch custom." Before she had time to recover from her astonishment, they were out of sight, and we were greeted by a roar of laughter from loiterers on the neighbouring doorsteps. The parcel, which was neatly done up in white paper, contained a scone, two square inches of plum cake, and a piece of cheese. The sight of these did not add to my friend's comfort, and her one thought now was how to dispose of the "cakes," for carry them home she would not; and although it seemed certain that

some accession of good luck was connected with their acceptance, we did not think it a necessary part of the programme for the recipient to eat them. The children we saw all looked so respectable that we were afraid of insulting them by offering them the obnoxious packet, and it was not until we had gone some distance that we found some little ragged hatless specimens of humanity, to whom the contents were only too great a treat.

What the meaning of the above episode was, and we were sure it had a meaning, remained a mystery for some time. At length, after some research, we have found an explanation of it, and the following is a brief account of this and other superstitions respecting children. The subject is an exceedingly interesting one, and deserves considerably fuller treatment than comes within the scope of the present paper.

It is said to be lucky for a mother or nurse, on taking a child to church to be christened, to give bread and cheese to the first person she meets, to insure prosperity in the after-career of the infant. The "first-foot," on receiving the bread and cheese, is expected to turn and walk a short distance with the child to show his good-will. Sleeping on the "children's cheese" is supposed to have much the same virtue for predicting future events as sleeping on bride's cake has.

In the East, children, even those of wealthy parents, are often kept untidy and dirty, in order to avoid attracting the attention of the dreaded Evil Eye, which, it is feared, may do them some harm; whereas, if they are dirty and untidy, it may overlook them, or turn from them in disgust. It may not be known to all that in this country a similar result is attained by simply holding the child by the dress with its head downwards for a few seconds every morning! The spell of the Evil Eye may also be removed by the mother borrowing a sixpence from a neighbour, putting it in a basin of water, and then washing the child with the water so charmed.

Some very curious superstitions with regard to the ailments of children are believed in implicitly in some parts of the country. In the Isle of Man it is thought that they may be preserved from disease by placing them in the hopper of a water flour-mill while the wheel makes three revolutions; and in order to prove efficacious, this ceremony must be gone through at a time when the ministers of the district are preaching in their pulpits; consequently Sunday is the day most frequently chosen to do it on. Mrs. Ewing mentions this superstition in her charming tale "Jan of the Windmill." Little Miss Amabel Adeline Ammaby had whooping-cough, and after every heard-of cure had been tried, "even to a frog put into the dear child's mouth, and drawed back by its legs, that's supposed to be a certain cure, but only frightened it into a fit I thought it never would have come out of" (p. 35), her credulous nurse brought her to the windmill in the temporary absence of Lady Louisa Ammaby, the child's mother; "for they do say where I come from, that if a miller that's the son of a miller holds a child that's got the whooping-cough in the hopper of a mill whilst the mill's going, it cures them, however bad they be" (p. 35). The miller did it with much fear and trembling, and the result was that "the baby got well. Whether the mill-charm worked the cure, or whether the fine fresh breezes of that healthy district made a change for the better in the child's state, could not be proved" (p. 37).

In Eastern lands sick children are cured by weighing them at the tomb of a saint, the corresponding weight, consisting of money, to be given to the Church.

Probably many people know the lines—

> "Monday's bairn is fair o' face,
> Tuesday's bairn is fu' o' grace;
> Wednesday's bairn is fu' o' woe,
> Thursday's bairn has far to go;
> Friday's bairn is lovin' and givin',
> Saturday's bairn works hard for its livin';
> But the bairn that is born on the Sabbath Day
> Is happy and lucky, and wise and gay."

Sleep and dreams have many curious interpretations. Amongst the ancients, sleep was depicted as a female figure with black unfolded wings, having in her left hand a white child, and in her right hand a black child, the image of death. If a poor person dreams of children, he is likely to become rich; while to dream of gooseberries betokens that the dreamer will be the parent of many children. When a child smiles in its sleep, it is said to see angels.

Sailors, who are among the most superstitious of mortals, are of opinion that to have women or children on board a ship will insure luck.

Fairies are supposed to have something to do with the welfare of children. Unless the mother is careful to nail a horse-shoe over the door, or to put a piece of rowan-tree in the cradle, they may remove the child from its cradle, substituting another one for it. In some cases, when procurable, a dose of medicine from a witch, administered to the changeling, will send it back to fairyland or to some equally unknown place to which it belongs.

Speaking of witches—a witch in Perthshire used to cure children by means of sundry invaluable decoctions, one of which, an infallible remedy, was a cake made of meal obtained from nine different women.

Many superstitions, having been handed down from father to son, are of such great antiquity that their origin cannot be discovered. Often they have acted as strong fetters, preventing the free action of men's wills. It is obvious that, although in many cases bereft of their original meaning, remnants of them still remain even in the present more enlightened age, with its progress of science, civilisation, and above all Christianity, which in reality is the only true antidote that will do away with these beliefs of the darker ages.

E. G. M.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

MAY—NIGHTINGALE.

NO new song sings the Nightingale,
And no new month she finds for singing;
She sings the sweet old song of love,
When May her fairest flowers is bringing.

HOW TO ENJOY OUR PICTURE GALLERIES.

FROM THE COUNTRY.

AMONGST the innumerable delights with which life in modern times is brightened, none can surpass for thorough enjoyment of an intellectual kind that which we find in our visits to the various picture galleries. The pleasure of studying the works of old masters and of living artists never palls; in fact, it increases as the knowledge we acquire grows deeper, as our discriminative powers are educated, as our comprehension of the truths portrayed is enlarged, and as our sense of the beautiful in art is quickened.

With the doors of the National Gallery, the Royal Academy, the Royal Institute, the Grosvenor, the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, besides the rank and file of minor exhibitions, open to us, we cannot complain of lack of opportunity for acquainting ourselves with both ancient and modern schools of painting. Unfortunately, there are thousands of visitors to such exhibitions who feel only a superficial interest in art; there is a charm in brilliant colouring, in the true delineation of nature, and of incidents of every-day life, that responds to the craving after the beautiful which is inherent in more or less degree in all natures; but with them the charm is of the most evanescent character. A hurried glance, with the thoughts wandering meanwhile, suffices to enable them to accord blame or praise to a picture that may have taken months, or even years, to execute.

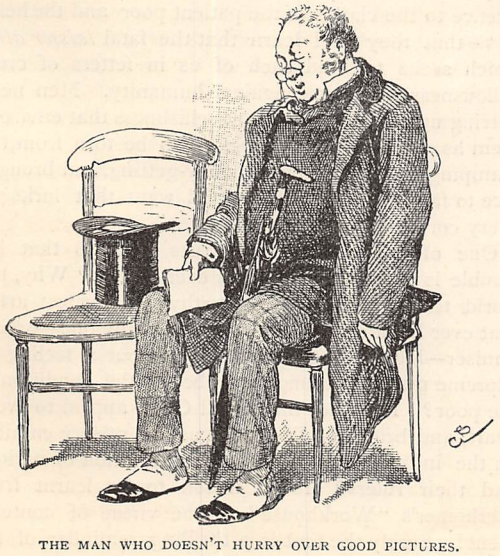
To enjoy a visit to a picture gallery in real earnest, the mind must be engrossed for the time being in the pictures; and the more we enjoy ourselves the more will our thoughts be concentrated on the subjects treated by the artists. A longing will grow within us to learn the secret meaning, to spell out the half-revealed thoughts of the painter. We shall hear the melodies which he heard whilst he painted that wild amethyst-tinted moorland, we shall feel the breezes that set the myriad tiny bells of the heather a-ringing, and we shall know that the world is fair, and that all the glorious harmonies, the splendour of the days, are showered upon the land by the Infinite, that the

love of beauty wherewith He has endowed us may be satisfied.

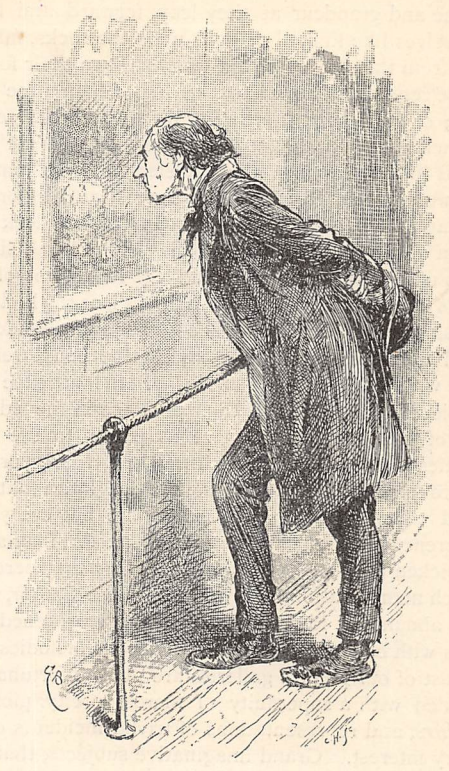
Of what use are lively imaginative powers if we allow them to lie waste? We may not have sufficient skill to enable us to put our ideas upon canvas; it takes genius to do that well; but we can all learn by sympathy to grasp the ideas of another, to enter into his feelings, and to read the truths he teaches. It is quite possible that we may credit an inferior artist with stronger imaginative powers than he actually owns, or we may be bitterly disappointed in the want of imagination he displays, and yet again, we may grieve for one who, whilst possessing the imagination, lacks the knowledge how to treat the subject, so as to bring out all the best points—just as we may pity a youthful writer who thinks out a fine plot for a novel, and wastes it through inability to make his characters live. Though we may be saddened, yet we shall be the wiser by noting the failures of others. Our education is never finished: there is always more to learn even for the cleverest, and so in a picture gallery we shall never come to the end of knowledge. New thoughts, new modes of expressing them, new stories of old sorrows and wrongs, of valiant deeds and loving sacrifices, new awakenings to the duties we owe to others, to the rights of others to freedom and happiness, new sensations of love, faith, and hope—these it is the privilege, the mission, of the artist to reveal and to kindle.

Each season our interest will increase if we watch the career of certain artists. Their successes, their failures even, will be full of importance to us; and the men themselves, though we should never grasp their hands or exchange spoken words with them, will become to us as personal friends. The comparison of their work one year with another will let us into the secret of their lives and of some of their inmost thoughts.

A true artist cannot paint a picture, any more than a poet can write a poem, without letting the world share



THE MAN WHO DOESN'T HURRY OVER GOOD PICTURES.



A VISION OF PLENTY.

the deepest feelings of his soul. The influence of men of genius is untold. They can move the hearts of millions, and by their works they can act upon the lives of generation after generation. What power is given to them! And how nobly they can use it if they choose! The dignity, the purity, the strength of their characters will be expressed in their works. They are teachers of mankind, and it behoves them to see to it that the lessons they inculcate shall be such as will make the world better, and wiser, and happier.

A hearty satisfaction is experienced in gazing at the delineation of a corn-field as it is swept like a golden torrent by the soft breezes of autumn. Is there not a halo around corn-fields, attributable to the unspeakable delight we felt as children, in the brilliant harmony of burnished gold, flaming poppies, and fairy-like corn-flowers, framed with the gorgeous autumnal tints of oak and elm, and over-arched by a sky of cloudless blue? And if it *is* only a picture we are looking at, what matters? The picture becomes a living scene as we lose ourselves in memories of the past, when to hold in our hands a poppy was to hold a vast treasure, when to feel the gentle air upon our cheeks was happiness itself, when life was one continuous bubbling stream of joy, and when our hearts unconsciously lifted up a psalm of thanksgiving to the "Giver of all." The sea-pieces hardly move us as do the studies of fair country haunts; seldom, if ever, do representations of the restless, surging ocean beget a feeling of unqualifed satisfaction. The mighty hurrying waters that gather themselves into rolling waves, growing in

volume and grandeur as they leap forward and fling themselves like hunted demons upon the rocks, falling back from the encounter but to strengthen their forces for the renewal of the attack on the adamantine fortress; or the calmer, more winning aspect of the sea in summer, when the sea-nymphs toss showers of diamonds in the air, when the wavelets look as though they were encrusted with flashing gems, when emeralds and lapis-lazuli struggle in envious rivalry to deck the bosom of the waters, when the play of light and shade keeps up a perpetual dance, and the reflections of the clouds chase each other, now dipping into the hollows, now skimming over the surface—what artist could be found with the hardihood to say that he could render these with entire realistic effect? Both landscape and sea-pieces, however, have their province in the education of mankind. They give us power to see new beauties in the world in which we live. Many persons go through life with eyes half shut to the glories that surround them. Sunrise and sunset are but every-day occurrences to them, and nothing more. Art may serve to quicken their understanding, that they may perceive in such manifestations the goodness of our Father, who, with abounding loving-kindness, has brightened our paths with beautiful sights and wondrous melodies.

Most of our picture galleries are now, unfortunately, crowded with a superfluity of merely pretty pictures *de genre*, and representations of trivial incidents of ordinary interest. Grand imaginative subjects, that tax the powers and invention of the artist to the utmost, are sadly in the minority. Even those who have attained a high eminence have fallen in with the prevailing taste of the present day, and trust to the laurels gained years ago to hand down their names to posterity whilst they paint now pleasing fanciful studies of figures and portraits.

Every one who attains notoriety—and the highest ambition of many seems to be to attain it at any cost and in any form—must needs have his or her portrait painted and hung in the Academy. Wealth has so greatly increased, and display become a matter of such vast importance, that the services of the greatest painters are continuously being demanded to present to the world likenesses of persons whom no one would have heard of but for the fabulous riches they have accumulated. And for this, sacred and historical subjects are all neglected. Occasionally we are refreshed by one or other of our masters of the brush returning for the nonce to his earlier loves, but too often they fail to reach the height where we would see them stand. Take Millais' "Black Brunswicker," for example. In the young wife's face what a tale is told of the bitterness, the pathos, of war! She can hardly let her loved one go. As her hand grips the handle of the door to detain him, a foreshadowing of the sorrow that may be in store for her clouds her sweet brow. Victory! Honour! these are vain words to her if she loses her hero, and we feel that war which parts such lovers is a cursed thing. Yet she controls her emotion for his sake, and by her dignified attitude we know that at the last she will be firm, and ready to wish him God-speed. Then take "Little Miss Muffet," a charming wee maiden, in white frock and blue bonnet, with terror and indignation struggling for mastery depicted on her countenance at the sight of the monster spider. A triumph of faultless composition and dexterous painting it undoubtedly is; but to which of the two works would the artist trust for posterity's good word, and which will remain firmly fixed in our memories the longer? We reverence the noble conception of the one, whilst we admire the technical skill displayed in the other.

Sir Frederick Leighton, no less than his clever compeer, has succumbed to the demands of the public, and has to a great extent abandoned important subjects for pretty studies of female heads: beautiful as they cannot fail to be when emanating from the pencil of such a consummate artist, they are yet far from satisfying.

Luke Fildes's "Casuals" is a picture which fully realises the principles that underlie all true artistic work. The generosity of its motive is unmistakable, seeking to arouse feelings of charity and sympathy for the outcasts of London. A Venetian girl selling her flowers is a delightful object, and in painting such great opportunities are secured for composing a glorious piece of colouring; but having shown us what he can do in this respect, we should be heartily glad to welcome another of the "Casuals" order—say, the interior of a poor curate's home. The startling revelations that have been published lately concerning the deprivation which educated men and women suffer, the pitiful penury they endure—such as the narrative of the clergyman who had spent his last shilling and was glad of old clothes to wear—might surely be woven into a magical theme that would cause a tide of righteous indignation to sweep through society at the thought that such things should be, and bring about a lasting reform. Should the graphic pen of the writer, the thrilling words of the orator, be more telling than the pencil of the artist? An artist has the power within him so to touch the hearts of men that they shall awaken to the enormity of the sin of indifference to the claims of the patient poor and the helpless—that they shall learn that the fatal *laisser aller* which seeks to bind each of us in fetters of cruel callousness is a crime against humanity. Men need stirring up out of the indolent selfishness that environs them as a golden net; they need to be torn from the cramping task of ceaseless money-getting, and brought face to face with the misery and want that lurks in every corner of our great City.

One of our well-known artists declares that his trouble is to find new subjects every year. Why, the world teems with subjects worthy the greatest artist that ever lived or shall live. Could any one—except a miser—look at the "Casuals" without a feeling of supreme pity and a longing to better the condition of the poor? Does not the "Roll Call" appeal to every heart, and bring vividly before us the misery entailed on the individual by the ruthless ambition of nations and their rulers? Is no lesson to be learnt from Herkomer's "Workhouse" of the virtue of contentment? Surely the first is a thrilling reminder of the

injunction, "Give ye them to eat," and the last a sermon—eloquent, powerful, searching—on the words, "Be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Of the sacred pictures of modern times, a few stand out as exceptionally fine, but yet it is seldom that there is that intense reverence in them that strikes us at once as pre-eminent in the paintings of the old masters. Doubtless the habits of the earlier times in which they lived whose names are paramount in the history of art, fostered in them the love of meditation on Divine things; life was to them a far quieter, calmer affair than it is now, when hurry, and bustle, and heaping up riches are the order of the day. Their "madonnas" are simply types of the women of a bygone age, but etherealised and refined by the poetic souls of the artists: ideals they are of the nobility, sweetness, and gentleness of true womanhood. In years to come some of our present-day sacred subjects may be honoured in like manner, but never, it is to be presumed, with just the same amount of admiration.

Let us seek, then, in visiting a picture gallery, to gather up with thoughtful minds and reverent hearts all the good the pictures can impart, so our aims and purposes in life will be purified and strengthened by the contemplation of higher things.

E. CROSSLEY.

CROSS-CURRENTS: A STORY OF MATCH-MAKING.

BY M. PAYNE SMITH.

I.

"YOU are such a very independent creature."

"I'm not a creature, but an able-bodied woman, with all my wits about me. Why should I make believe to be the weak-kneed specimen of feminine foolishness that is your ideal woman?"

"Oh, never mind me, do just as you like," cried Mr. Bartlett testily, as a voice from the inner room called, "What are you two quarrelling about now?"

"It is only Mr. Bartlett talking nonsense, mother," said Agnes gaily; "he thinks I can't go up to town for a day's shopping without a chaperon."

"Is that all? Why, my dear Gus, Agnes always goes about alone. Indeed, there is no one to go with her, so she has to; she has never come to any harm yet," and Mrs. Oldham looked up appealingly from her sofa.

Mr. Bartlett promptly subsided, as he always did when any remark of his had brought Mrs. Oldham's poverty into full view. Neither Agnes nor her mother ever troubled themselves about the narrowness of their income, but it was a painful subject to Gus, who would willingly have shared his abundance with them. He returned to the charge an hour later, when he and Agnes were out in the garden.

"You might let me come with you to-morrow," he said persuasively; "I could see you over the crossings, at any rate."

"Oh, the policeman does that," answered Agnes merrily. "You are dying to know what I do with myself of course, but I don't mean to encourage you in inquisitive habits, so I shall go alone."

"I wish to goodness you had some one to look after you," growled the young man. "Don't you think for your mother's sake you could put up with me?" he went on, in a pleading tone.

"That is either the third or fourth time that you have proposed to me in the last month," said Miss Oldham calmly. "If you do it again before Christmas, I will have you bound over to keep the peace."

"I wish you would not chaff a fellow so. I am quite in earnest."

"So am I! I may marry some day, but it, or perhaps I ought to say he, won't be you. So be a sensible boy, Gus, and leave off sentiment. It does not suit your figure," and Agnes laughed mischievously.

Gus was used to snubbing, and bore it with a fair amount of fortitude. He and Agnes had been playfellows since childhood, and he had, as he thought, fallen in love with her on his return from Oxford. He had lately got into a habit of proposing or half proposing to her after every one of their numerous squabbles, and always met with the same laughing, but unqualified, refusal. Agnes looked on him as a brother, and was extremely fond of him, but Gus Bartlett was not the sort of man to inspire a clever, practical woman with any very deep affection, and she could never even take his devotion seriously, which was depressing for Gus.

II.

"Florrie, allow me to introduce our squire, Mr. Augustus Bartlett of that ilk!—Miss Marsh, Gus!" and Agnes finished the introduction with a sweeping curtsey.

Mr. Bartlett looked distressed. "I did not know you were bringing a friend down," he said, "and I've only got the dog-cart here. I suppose you had better drive, and let me walk?" he added.

"Should you be very much surprised if you heard that the greengrocer's cart is waiting for Miss Marsh's luggage?" cried Agnes. "I would have told you she was coming, only you were so disagreeable yesterday. We can pack in the dog-cart all right;" and so they did.

Gus invariably met Agnes at the station when she returned from her visits to London, but on this occasion he was much astonished, for she had never brought a friend back with her before, and this friend was both pretty and charming. She very much enlivened the

evening at the cottage, whither Gus strolled as usual after dinner, and, generally speaking, made a good impression on her friends; but for all that Mr. Bartlett was not quite happy in her society. He could not help thinking that there must be something uncanny in her sudden appearance, or else (and this brilliant idea rather took his fancy) Agnes had brought her down for him to fall in love with.

"Just as if anything, or anybody, could make me give up Aggie!" he thought to himself as he went homewards. "It would serve her right if I *did* have a little flirtation;" then as a brilliant idea struck him, "I declare, I'll ask Nugent down and he can look after Miss Marsh while I take care of Aggie." Which determination was promptly acted on, for Gus wrote a letter that night and sent it off by early post as soon as he came down the following morning.

"What do you think of our squire, Flo?"

"Fine, well-grown young man, with a restful absence of ideas," answered Miss Marsh carelessly.

"He has some ideas, but they are mainly practical," said Agnes. "He is an excellent landlord, besides being a dear good boy, but he certainly is not brilliant."

"How does he come to reign all alone in this forlorn way?" inquired Florrie. "Has he no belongings?'"

"None to speak of. His mother died when he was a baby, his father three years ago. I think mamma looked after him more than any one else, though he has some aunts and cousins. He and I are just like brother and sister."

"That must be rather pleasant, as you have no proper brother. Why, surely, that is he coming up the lane? And there is some one with him! Fancy finding two young men in a country village like this!"

III.

Miss Marsh had been at the cottage three days, and was enjoying the fresh country air thoroughly; and having a keen interest in her fellow-creatures, she had been studying Gus because there was no one else to study. Now her attention was distracted by the newcomer, who was, indeed, a very agreeable and interesting specimen of humanity.

Richard Nugent had been at college with Gus, but had been far more successful in the schools, and less in the cricket-ground, than his friend. Now he was a hard-working London curate, while Gus was enjoying the less laborious position of a wealthy country gentleman, but their friendship was as great as ever.

"Mrs. Oldham, will you come up to the Grange to-morrow?" said Gus one afternoon, as he lay on the grass at her feet. "Nugent and I want to have some tennis with the girls, and you can look on and chaperon."

"Very well, I will come with pleasure, but you must send the pony-carriage for me, you know."

"Of course, send for you and send you back. You will stay to dinner, won't you?"

"You must consult the girls about that," said Mrs. Oldham, "for I have an idea that they may be busy; they are reading together a good deal, you know."

"Miss Marsh went in to write letters, didn't she? I don't know where Agnes has gone," remarked the young man, rising from his lazy attitude, and looking about him. "Oh, there she is, with Nugent, right at the end of the field. How can people be so energetic this weather?"

Agnes and Mr. Nugent did not seem to find the heat oppressive; they were strolling quietly along the shady side of the field, talking, and were so much interested in their conversation that it was quite a long time before they returned to the lawn. Agnes was hearing of a world that was new and strange to her, but which seemed the exact thing she had desired for years. In the quiet village there was but little for an energetic woman to do, but the life Mr. Nugent spoke of had opportunities for every one. Real hard self-denying labour among the poor, depressing at times, but cheered and lightened by the fellow-feeling of many workers, all struggling towards a noble and worthy aim, was the very work she would have chosen, had the choice been given her. Now she heard of it from one of the workers, and her face glowed with enthusiasm as she listened; while Mr. Nugent could not help longing to have such ready sympathy and appreciation near him to soothe and cheer him in the troubles and disappointments which were a necessary accompaniment of the work.

"Why don't you come to London and work with us, Miss Oldham?" he asked. "You have strength and energy; why waste them on trifles, when you might be doing real good with them?"

"I don't think my mother could live in London," said the girl slowly, "and we could not afford it, either. But I shall work some day, and meanwhile, I dare say, it is good to have to exercise patience. And I am young enough as yet," she added, with a smile, as they returned to the lawn to join the others.

The afternoon at the Grange was a success. Mrs. Oldham sat in a low chair under a great cedar-tree, and enjoyed herself quietly; indeed, the view and the sight of the four merry young people was pleasure enough for her. The tennis-court was a very good one, and Gus and Florrie played Mr. Nugent and Agnes with great effect. When they were tired, Florrie insisted on being taken all over the house, and gave the master of it intense pleasure by the interest she took in his old pictures, china, furniture, and curios generally.

"You can't think what a pleasure this is to me!" she said, when they were examining some exquisite wood-carving in the library. "We London people live in stucco houses, and buy our artistic properties in Regent Street; but here they are all growing, so to speak."

"Everything here has grown with the place, if that is what you mean," replied Gus. "There is nothing modern, and everything has a history. My people have lived here since Queen Elizabeth's time, and though we aren't either rich or clever, at any rate we are not mushrooms."

"FLORRIE INSISTED ON BEING TAKEN ALL OVER THE HOUSE" (*p.* 372).

"Why should you be rich?" asked Florrie. "If you were a millionaire this house would not be grand enough for you, and you would spoil it by altering it, whereas now it is perfect."

Gus was pleased. He loved his home and all his ancestral treasures heartily. He loved all the old associations which had grown up in the three hundred years since the Grange was built, and he was well aware that there were few families in England who could boast of such a line of worthy gentlemen as those from whom he was descended. Agnes did not care for any of these things, and was at that moment having a long conversation with Mr. Nugent about the evil results of foreign immigration in the East of London, a subject which interested her, but which Gus simply did not understand. He was satisfied if his tenants and labourers were well-housed, and fairly prosperous (and it must be owned that he was an admirable landlord), but the distress he did not see had no pathos for him; it was no business of his, and he lacked the imagination which brought it all vividly before the energetic couple under the cedar-tree.

That evening Agnes stood at her window and looked out on the peaceful moonlit fields, and longed to be in the busy human hive she had been hearing about. Then her face dimpled into a merry smile.

"Dear old Gus!" she said, "he has fallen into the trap, and they will be thoroughly happy. I don't think I know any one so fitted to be his wife as Flo."

Meanwhile Mr. Bartlett was thinking what a very successful day it had been, and how nice it was to get Agnes up to the Grange; and it never dawned on his innocent mind that he had not exchanged a dozen words with her the whole afternoon.

IV.

"So you really go to-morrow," said Gus, as he and his friend sat smoking, the last evening of Mr Nugent's holiday. "We shall miss you very much, old fellow, but you must come again."

"I should like it above everything," was Mr. Nugent's answer. "If I can get away for a few days in the winter, will you have me?"

"Shall be delighted; come as soon as you can, and stay as long as you can. One thing you must come for, and I hope it is not very far distant now," proceeded Mr. Bartlett, with something very like a blush.

"What is that?"

"My wedding!"

"My dear boy, I'm delighted to hear it, but I did not know you had got to that point yet," cried the clergyman, who had watched his friend's intercourse with Miss Marsh with strong approval.

"Well, that's the thing! I don't know what comes over girls, but though I have asked her half a dozen times, she has not said 'Yes' yet," replied the unconscious Gus.

"You have certainly lost no time," said his friend; "perhaps she thinks she ought to know you better."

"I don't see how she is to do that, considering that we have known each other all our lives, and lived close to each other too."

"But she only came here just before I did," exclaimed Mr. Nugent; "or am I mistaken? Don't you mean Miss Marsh?"

A sudden light glowed on Gus's face, then faded as rapidly as it had come. "No! I don't mean Miss Marsh," he said slowly. "I never thought about her; I have always intended to marry Agnes."

It was Mr. Nugent's turn to look puzzled. "I am glad you told me that," he said; "for I was entirely mistaken. I thought from your manner with her that you cared for Miss Marsh, not Miss Oldham; and it was just as well, perhaps, that you undeceived me."

"I won't spoil the dear lad's happiness," he thought, an hour later, when he was alone; "and yet, who would have guessed it? I thought she was free, and that he cared for the other girl. I suppose she was only civil to me because I am his friend," and he betook himself to bed, and after a night's tossing and tumbling, went back to London by the earliest possible train, without taking a formal farewell of the ladies at the Cottage.

V.

Agnes was angry, very angry! she had been most cavalierly treated, as she considered, and longed for some one on whom to vent her ire.

"What did he mean by running away without even a word of thanks for the civility they had shown him? He must have thought she was making eyes at him—just as if she cared a fig about him, or looked upon him from any other point of view than that of a guide to the East of London! How horribly conceited men were!—oh, there comes Gus: he might have left us alone for one day," and she went to open the door, and quarrel with her visitor if possible. Gus was a little bit cross too, for Florrie had had to join her relations in Normandy, and he and the Oldhams were left alone, and things were flat in consequence, though he fancied he should like it.

"It's very nice being together again, isn't it, Aggie?" he said as he entered.

"I don't think so at all," she answered promptly. "I dare say you don't miss Mr. Nugent, but I am very dull without Florrie, and so are you, I should think," she proceeded rather spitefully.

"I only want you, as you know," he said, not as pleasantly as usual. "Nugent has promised to come and marry us, and I really think you might make up your mind to it soon."

"Marry you! Never! I have told you so a dozen times at least" (which was an exaggeration), "and now after flirting with Florrie all the summer, you have the impertinence to ask me again, and to ask Mr. Nugent to marry us, just as if we were engaged. I don't wonder he went away! I'm not surprised at all now," and Agnes suddenly flung herself on the sofa and burst into tears.

As to Gus, he stood and gazed at her open-mouthed. For one thing, he had never seen her cry since she was a tiny child; for another, a new idea had penetrated his slow brain, and the world seemed upside down. "Florrie! had he flirted with her? No, he had only been blind. He had had a strange new feeling for some time, which had alternately made him happy and miserable, and which must have been—" Here his meditations were interrupted by Agnes, who had left off crying and recovered her temper.

"Don't stand there with your mouth open, Gus," she cried, "you do look so silly. Just make up your mind, once and for all, which of us you really care for, and take the next boat for Dieppe. The Marshes will be there till the end of the week."

Mr. Bartlett took her advice, and a few days later, Mr. Nugent, who was trying to work off his bitter disappointment, got a letter from Dieppe with the astonishing intelligence that Gus and Florrie were engaged, and that his friend's affection for Agnes was of a totally different kind to what he had been led to believe. "In fact," the letter concluded, "Agnes knew me better than I did myself, and was perfectly right when she brought dear Flo down to stay with her. Don't forget that you have promised to marry us."

Hard work was very pleasant to Mr. Nugent that winter; he threw himself into all the multifarious duties of a town parson, with an energy which had its root in a happy heart. To be sure nothing had been said or settled, but for all that he knew well enough that he would not be working alone for long, and then there was Gus's wedding to look forward to. Before the wedding came off his prospects had a very satisfactory change, and it was as vicar instead of curate that he asked Agnes to be his wife.

"We shall have work enough, and to spare," he told her, when the momentous question had been answered, "but you will not fear that; will you, my darling?"

To which Agnes answered something about working with him, which cannot be publicly repeated.

WHAT TO WEAR IN MAY.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

THE French Exhibition is giving great additional impetus to the silk trade, and never have the costly brocades shown such excellent examples of weaving and design. Large blooms, faithfully copied from nature, take a whole yard to produce the distinct pattern, and the lights and shades are so perfect that they bear the closest inspection. They are totally different from the brocades and brocatelles of last year, and are far more magnificent. The newest brocatelle is like a large-patterned matelassé covered with a design, sometimes outlined with gold thread (for tinsel, both gold and silver, is the fashion). This class of goods, however, is only suited to long purses. The silks of the year are adapted to all incomes. The latest novelty is the Impératrice silk, which has a bold close-set cord, not unlike terry velvet; it is made in all the newest and most beautiful shades, and is well adapted for dresses and mantles.

French manufacturers always bring in plaids each year, but with only a modicum of success. This season's are in soft silk of large design, and promise to find many patrons—possibly more across the Channel than in England; they blend well, however, with plain materials. Velvets are worn, and plain and striped silks are produced to go with them, the three often being employed in the same dress. Another new idea is a silk with a floral design carried along the selvedge.

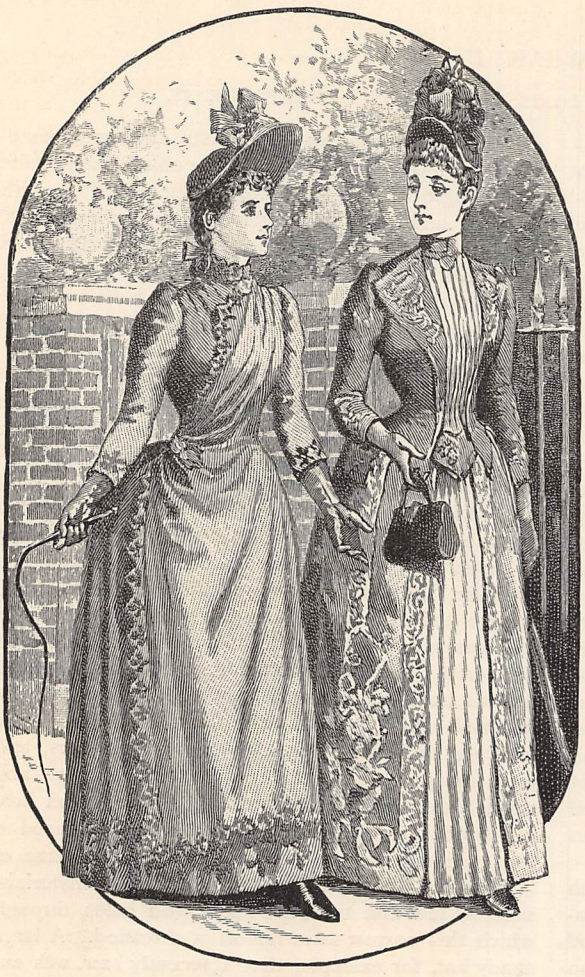
Mantles in Paris are wonderfully elaborate; they are either so long that they cover the dress, or so short that they are mere habit-shirts without sleeves. They stand up, however, very high on the shoulders, and a profusion of lace is worn, but few beads. Gimps and passementerie have superseded them and fringes. A lace circular mantle reaching to the feet is a capital idea; it is drawn into the waist at the back, and is well suited to a Frenchwoman's requirements. Wide flounces of lace are carried up perpendicularly on some of the newest mantles, forming a pleated epaulette and veiling the arm; the back and front being of more solid material. For evening, long cloth cloaks are worn; and some in crevette-pink, with gold galon, are new and distinguished-looking. They have the Medici collar, and are lined with shot silk. There are no sleeves, but the hand comes through the fronts, which are distinct from the sides, that overlap. These cloaks fit into the back. Little jackets are trim and jaunty, being made in green, heliotrope, and China blue cloth, with silk waistcoats and vests, and much passementerie. Others, in more sombre colours, and quite plain, single or double-breasted, are known as "English jackets," and much worn for less dressy occasions. Coloured silk mantles are certainly popular, and the universal green is introduced in silk and velvet, mixed with black. Travelling-cloaks have but little altered in form, and are mostly made in brocaded woollens.

Children's fashions are almost as varied as those of their elders, and bordered materials are used much in their frocks, also guipure embroidery in bordering the skirts. It is quite possible to have a most simple garment and yet be in the fashion; the skirts are often full, plain, and gathered; the bodices full, with a wide sash beneath the arm. But the modes are almost as numerous as the frocks. Draperies come from one shoulder, and form the upper portion of the skirt. Zouave and Senorita jackets form bodice trimmings; and there are yokes, and long knotted sashes, and quaint wonderful sleeves with puffs and bouillonnés. Canvas dresses have found favour for little people, and are trimmed with grey, with white worsted galons. Their hats are exceedingly large, covered with flowers, and often made of drawn tulle or crêpe. Mantles and mantelettes for children are made of cloth and brocaded woollens. Much narrow ribbon is introduced in the millinery and in the frocks, under the name of "trou-trou;" a great many trimmings and materials, such as lace and tulle, are made with holes, through which this narrow satin ribbon is threaded. A large shady hat, for example, that I recently saw, was entirely composed of coarse tulle with ribbon run through it; and a small evening frock with a profusion of rosettes showed the same treatment.

The new stockings show one or two points to note. The fronts are elaborately embroidered for full dress, or have vertical stripes to the top of the leg. Quite a novel notion is to carry embroidery or open-work round to the back of the ankle; but the notion is good when shoes and short gowns are worn.

Gloves of all colours, including red, green, and heliotrope, are to be seen; but whether they will be generally worn, remains to be proved. So many fashions emanate from the fertile imagination of a designer, who must, *nolens volens*, produce a new idea; but the ladies, it is to be feared, pass by many an introduction in fashion without adopting it.

For our initial letter at the head of the chapter, a very pretty, comfortable bodice is shown, which can be worn indoors and out; it is, in fact, a triple bodice, having a full vest, to all appearance cut in one with the skirt; and a white cloth or cashmere waistcoat, with turn-over collar, and fastened with five buttons, the rest left loose. The white cloth appears again in the cuffs, and the over-jacket is loose. The shape of the hat, turning up in front, is quite new.



"THAT WRETCHED DOG!"

The figures in the next sketch show two specially good styles for woollen and silk fabrics, and the draped bodice could easily be made at home. The skirt is full and all-round, bordered with an interwoven pattern; the bodice piece from the left shoulder forms the front drapery; the sleeves are high on the shoulders; and the hat has the broad brim in front lined with velvet. The coat in the other figure could be made in silk or wool, with a soft silk front of accordion-pleats. The simple bonnet matches the colours of the material. The single revers are carried down in a diminishing point to the end of the short jacket basque; and bordered materials or passementerie could be utilised.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

May is the month of hope, which is more or less realised as the weeks flow on. We believe that sunshine, fine weather, green trees, and spring flowers are once more at our door, and we prepare our dress accordingly; so I shall begin by telling you the fashions with regard to parasols. We are to be content with handles not more than thirty-nine inches high; drum-major bâtons, or, as they were facetiously called, "husband-beaters," are once again out of date. Much care has, however, been bestowed upon this year's handles. Some have porcelain tops, such as graced the canes of the Grand Monarque; some have metal tops, worked in designs in bold relief; others again, of natural wood, have the Louis XIV. hook, apparently a portion of the natural stick.

Every parasol would seem to be of the nature of an en-tout-cas, and somewhat severe, unsoftened by any bordering of lace. A few new parasols have insertion in treble rows let in over a coloured lining, while some have lace embroidered either in gold or in colours with Pompadour sprays.

Green is the popular colour in all departments of dress, and especially in parasols, which are often made of green China silk lined with pink, as well as of the same materials in two amalgamated tones, which appear in prominent bows on the handle. Shot silks are used also; and much white and cream in cotton, silk, and spotted net.

The new colours are decided and really pretty. The light greens are mostly of the tender tone which early spring leaves throw out. Among these are—printemps, vert tendre, perce-neige, cigale, emerald, and mousse; Empire greens are the rage, as well as the sage and olive shades. A colour which appears in millinery, and in dress, as well as in trimming, is Vandyke—a pink with a dash of drab and yellow in it. Mogul, a fashionable pinky-red; Vesuvian, which has a fiery glow in it—a pinky-apricot; Afrique, between terra-cotta and acajou; Stanley, which has a brick tinge; Hortense, nymphe, camellia, and many terra-cottas: these are the pink-red shades which are to be seen in nearly every class of dress. Art-colours and subdued tints handed down from the Louis XV. period have come much to the fore.

The blues are Danube and Espoir, but a great deal is seen of the pure tint of blue that is found in the china of the Louis XV. and XVI. periods—a time which divides the honours of modern fashions with the Empire period. Ophelia is one of the new and fashionable revivals; it is peach-colour with a dash of red in it, and the most delightful Louis XIV. coats are made of it. They are just the same style as the men wore at that time—coming to the knees, with flap pockets and gold gimp, a white silk waistcoat, and lace jabot. These coats are worn with a tricorn hat, and are becoming and not costly. Many are being ordered for bridesmaids. Coquelicot, the pure poppy-tone, is used for bonnets in velvet and silk, and also for trimmings upon bonnets; and the browns of the moment are antelope and Holbein. Those women in quest of spring costumes will not, however, do wrong in ordering either grey or drab.

The millinery novelties are great. Much pains have been bestowed on the new ribbons, which are used very narrow for strings, and very wide for all

other purposes, especially for the Alsatian bows which surmount so many bonnets just now. The shapes are flat, and set close to the head. The wide ribbons are, many of them, divided down the centre in two distinct shades, and these again are broken up into other stripes, but there is no uniformity. While one half of the ribbon may be plain or composed of infinitesimal stripes, the other shows a brocade of interlaced rings, or some other of literally hundreds of varieties to be found in the year's ribbons. As a rule, the edges have sunk into insignificance, but some have a cord laid on the surface apparently, but really interwoven, and this is of a lighter tone than the ground, and produces a great effect. Greens and terra-cottas are the leading tones; and the floral effects are tiny, and generally of the Pompadour order. Chiné and printed ribbons are quite a decided feature; and there are many quaint geometric patterns of Japanese inspiration. Speckled and marbled stripes, too, are novel. The sash ribbons are enormously wide, and generally plain. Watered ribbons are going out; but for the first time the weavers have succeeded in producing a moire ribbon.

Gauze and silk are combined in ribbons; the centre gauze, with silk on either side, and a floral spray down the middle. This is a style which is literally carried out in a number of materials used in millinery, and many lisse borderings are exquisitely worked in silks.

Another quite new idea for bonnets is the Chantilly lace aigrette, made in all colours, just like a lace fan-mount; and with a mere touch this can be converted into an aigrette, and stands up well.

The flowers used on hats and bonnets are mounted in most natural fashion, and are employed in profusion. The new shape of hat is quite shallow at the back, and has an exceedingly wide brim in front, which, on the outside, would seem to be covered by ropes of flowers and fringes of leaves. For bonnets these wreaths look preposterously large, but they fit in well on the hats. Bunches of flowers are introduced on the crowns also; and often a wreath of roses without foliage, set close together, frames the face beneath the brim. Roses are more used than other blooms; but a good deal of lilac just now, with a mass of leaves attached, is popular. And green velvet flowers and black velvet ones, though opposed to nature, are not opposed to fashion.

For evening wear, garlands are carried across the bodices and on to the skirts of dresses; and many heavy garlands, which appear to be growing, are placed high up on one side. Orchids play an important part here. Wreaths of tiny proportions are arranged on the side of the head and take the place of aigrettes. A green ribbon grass, made of some tough grass-like material, is a great deal used in lieu of silk ribbon, and blends well with flowers. Coloured straws in fancy plaits are employed both for hats and bonnets, and the straw beading is often worked up into an open guipure, which is unlined.

Cotton gowns will doubtless be worn; and the zephyrs and sateens are the one striped and checked, the other prettily printed; the lace stripes are the newest style. But soft printed China silks will be more generally in favour.

The effective dresses worn by the accompanying figures illustrate some simple and fashionable styles. The striped material, so cut as to form points in the vest, diminishes the size of the figure greatly; and the colour is introduced on the flap pockets and round the waist. The striped skirt is wide and full, with coat-tails and side draperies of the black. This would be an excellent way of renovating any black materials for those who are just emerging from mourning.

The full pointed bodice, with checked bordering, is another good adaptation of stripes. The dress is in two shades of terra-cotta, arranged in stripes, the full front in the lighter tone. The check forms the bordering to the square-cut jacket-front and the sides of the skirt, and is carried as a broad band at the foot across the lighter silk. The loops of velvet round the throat-band form a new treatment—easy, dressy, and becoming. Any woman with a knowledge of the rudimental facts in dressmaking could make such a costume. A French dressmaker would put no steels in the skirt, but in England we are not quite reconciled to the perfect flatness at the back, and a pad and a short steel may be inserted.

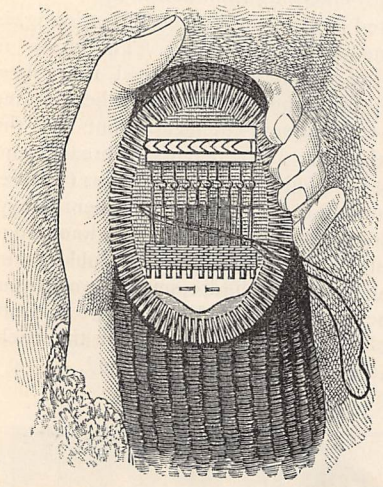
"HOW SWEET THEY SMELL!"

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

A Darning-Weaver.



A darning-aid has recently been introduced by a Birmingham firm, and is illustrated in our woodcut. The fabric to be darned is stretched over a wooden block, and a couple of hooks inserted in the work. The worsted is then laid as a warp backwards and forwards between the weaving-hooks, as shown, and the woof is put in by hand. At each lay of the woof the weaving-hooks are reversed by the finger, and the woof made fast at each end to the fabric itself. The darn which results is very close, and it is done in half the time required by the ordinary method. Tapestry, ribbon-work, and such-like, may also be executed with its help.

A Straight Railway.

The longest reach of railway without a curve is said to be a length of the new Argentine Pacific Railway from Buenos Ayres to the foot of the Andes. For 211 miles this line is without curve or cutting, or embankment deeper than a yard. The plain across which it runs is without timber, and metal sleepers have been used. The line will ultimately cross the Andes, and connect with the system of Chili.

A Perpetual Calendar.

A revolving calendar has lately been registered by Mr. G. S. Crisford, by means of which, given only the Sunday letter, the calendar for any month in any year, from A.D. 1600 onwards, may be readily found, or the day of the week upon which any given date will fall ascertained at a glance. In principle it is very simple, being, as it is, dependent upon the fixed laws which govern the construction of the yearly calendars, but it will probably astonish many people to see the extent to which these laws may be tabulated, and the clever manner in which Mr. Crisford has availed himself of them.

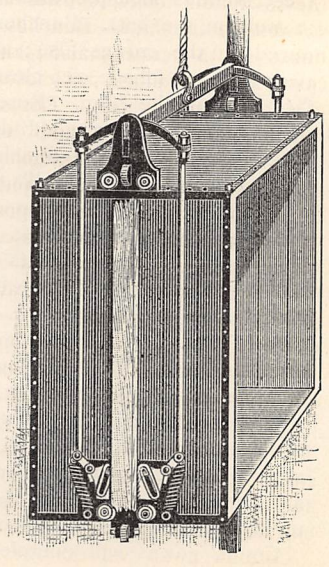
For Walkers and Standers.

People who have to stand for long periods during the day, or who walk long distances, often suffer considerably from a swelling of the feet. They would, probably, derive some benefit by using a powder which has been introduced in the German army for sifting into the stockings of the foot-soldiers. It consists of three parts of salicylic acid, ten parts of starch, and eighty-seven parts of pulverised soapstone. This powder keeps the feet dry, prevents chafing, and heals any sore spots.

Compensation Braces.

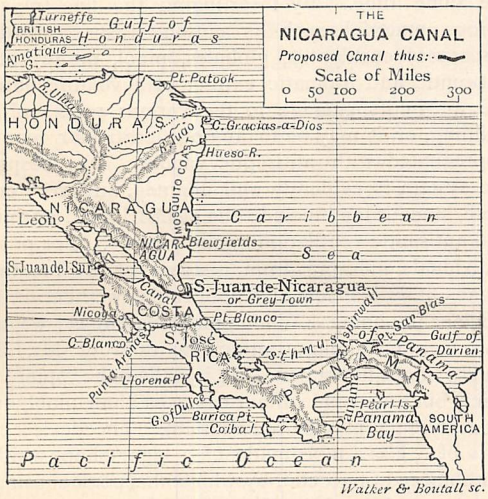
Some new braces which have been recently patented have many points about them to commend them. With their use buttons disappear from trousers, and their place is taken by narrow strips of brass which are attached by rings to the spring clips at the ends of the braces, with the result that any ungainly creasing of the cloth is avoided. But the peculiar feature of these braces is at the back, where the two shoulder-straps are joined by a tubular band of leather, upon which slides the back piece of the braces, thus allowing for free play when either shoulder is raised or lowered. There are very few men who would not feel the advantage of these compensation braces.

A Safety-Rope Lift.



Lifts actuated by ropes are again coming into favour, owing to certain disadvantages attending the use of hydraulic lifts; for example, the absence of water-power sufficient, or the necessity of sinking a well to a depth equal to the height of the lift. Mr. E. T. Cleathro has introduced the rope-lift which we illustrate. The cage is suspended by a steel-wire rope passing over a pulley on the top of the lift, and thence down to the winding apparatus, which may be situated in any convenient position. The cage

is started in the ordinary way by pulling a side rope ; and it stops automatically at the end of its range. Moreover, it is provided with a safety appliance, which prevents it dropping if the rope should break. This apparatus is shown in the figure, and consists of two toothed castings pivoted in such a manner, and held back by spiral springs, as to clear the guides of the cage. When the rope slackens or breaks, however, these castings are forced against the guides, which are caught by the teeth, and the cage is thus jammed in its passage.



The Nicaragua Canal.

The proposal to build a ship canal from Greytown on the east coast of Nicaragua, Central America, to Brito on the west, and thus enable vessels to pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific without circumnavigating South America, has at last been sanctioned by the United States Government. The total length of the route is 169·8 miles, of which 56½ miles are through Lake Nicaragua, 84½ by river and basins, leaving only 28·8 miles of actual canal. There will be six locks—three on the Atlantic and three on the Pacific portions of the canal. The San Juan River, which is the outlet of the lake on the east side, will require to be deepened, and otherwise engineered. The depth of the canal will be 30 feet, and it will be capable of carrying the largest vessels afloat. The cost of the work is estimated at 65 million dollars, and it is expected to be finished and open for navigation in 1895. The climate, though bad in the swampy seaboard, is better inland. The country is stated to be rich in minerals, and but sparsely populated with white men, Indians, and negroes.

The Preservation of Pianos.

The popular idea about pianos is that they ought to be kept very dry, but the latest statement on the subject is that this notion is entirely fallacious. It is said that cold and dampness do not injuriously affect pianos to anything like the extent that dryness does, and this is the reason. The sounding-board—the very life and soul of a piano—is purposely forced into the case, at the time of manufacture, so tightly that it bulges up in the centre. The wood of which it is constructed is supposed to be as dry as possible, but, naturally, it contains *some* moisture, and acquires more on damp days. But when a piano is situated in an over-heated dry room, all the moisture evaporates, the sounding-board loses its "bulge," gets flabby, and eventually cracks. Even if this last does not happen, the tone is said to lose its resonance. The proposed remedy is to have a living barometer in the room in the shape of a growing plant : while the plant thrives, so will the piano, since the plant is bound to have a necessary supply of water. Another remedy is to keep a vase, with a sopping wet sponge in it, near or under the piano, all the time that the room is heated.

Agatised Wood.

A block of agatised wood weighing 4,200 lbs. was recently on view in New York. It measured 33 inches by 34 inches by 4½ inches, and came from the petrified forests at Chalcedony Park, Arizona, near Corriza. This petrified wood is now used to make table-tops, mantelpieces, and so forth, in America. The polished surface resembles a black and yellow marble, but the stone is, of course, much harder than marble.

A New Library Indicator.

Mr. Bonner, of Ealing, has devised an indicator for showing subscribers to a library and the librarians the books in or out on inspection. It consists of a frame in which little blocks of wood having the numbers of the respective books are inserted. Fig. 1 illustrates a block, having its five sides coloured respectively black, red, blue, green, and brown, from left to right, and the number of the book printed on each. Fig. 2 shows a part of the frame with the blocks in their receptacles, and the corresponding names of the books on the left. Now, if a blue side is shown to the public it signifies that the book is in the library ; and the librarian sees this also from the black

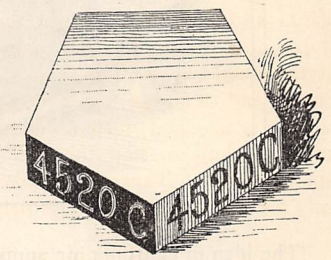


FIG. 1.

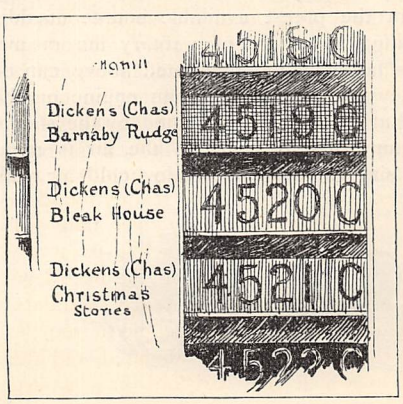
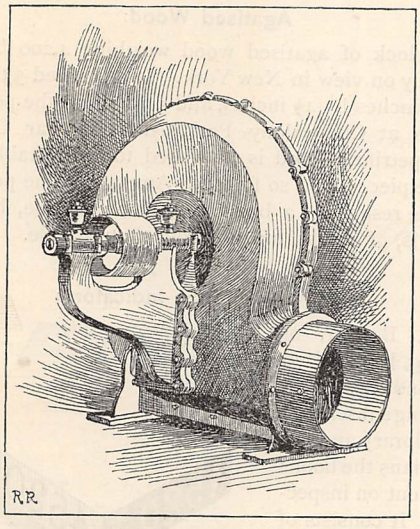


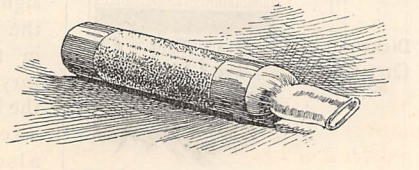
FIG. 2.

side of the block being exposed on the left of the block behind the frame. Again, if a red side is shown to the public it tells that the book went out the current week, and the librarian knows this also from the brown side being shown on the pentagonal block behind the screen. In this way the four weeks of the period allowed by the library are indicated. In place of the usual ticket, Mr. Bonner proposes to have a "form" pasted in the cover of the book, with the subscribers who have read it entered there, so that a history of the book's movements may be preserved. An indicator such as we have described is a saver of time, and likely to be useful in these days of public libraries.

Antiseptic Ventilation.



The idea of charging air supplied to buildings with antiseptic vapour is due to Mr. Burroughs, who has recently appiled it to the ventilation of premises in Snow Hill Buildings, Holborn Viaduct, where it can now be seen at work. The method of ventilation adopted is that of Mr. B. F. Sturtevant, introduced into England from America, where it is already largely employed. It consists in forcing fresh air from the purest available source outside, into the building by means of a rotary fan or air-blower. This fan, which is illustrated above, can be driven by the waste steam from an engine on the premises, and at the same time heated by the steam. The temperature thereby given to the air is regulated by the simple device of mixing cold air with it in the proportions required. Flues or pipes convey the warmed air to the various parts of the building where it is required; and the outflow from the pipes is controlled by simple regulators. Thus both the temperature and supply are under the complete control of the persons in the building. The advantage of forcing the fresh air into the building under a slight pressure are that cold draughts from without are excluded, and the vitiated air is forced outwards by every available opening. In a building supplied with electric lighting apparatus, the waste steam of the dynamo engine is utilised to warm and ventilate it at the same time. By inserting in the flue trays of porous material such as cotton waste, soaked in essence of eucalyptus, globules, pinol, or any other antiseptic and aromatic extract of a volatile nature, the air in its passage to the various rooms of the building, or it may be to any one particular room, is impregnated with antiseptic vapour. For hospitals the system is evidently well adapted, and very complete, since it may include the electric light, warming, and antiseptic ventilation in one process. For private individuals suffering from diseases of the breathing organs, it is also equally applicable, whether in the office or the home. While upon this subject we may also mention the antiseptic respirator of Mr. Burroughs, here illustrated. It is called the "pinol inhaler," but of course, other essences than pinol, such as eucalyptia, may be used with it. The device consists of a glass tube made of a cigar shape with a mouthpiece at one end, by which the person using it sucks in each breath. We may also call attention to the "tabloid" system of taking medicines, introduced by Mr. Burroughs. Medicines of all kinds are prepared in the form of small dry tabloids or "drops," each being a dose. These tabloids can be arranged in portable cases; and we may add that Mr. H. M. Stanley was provided with such a medicine chest on his last journey to relieve Emin.



AN ANTISEPTIC RESPIRATOR.

A Simple Binder.

A new binder has recently been brought out by a Lancashire firm, which seems likely to prove very useful, especially for the preservation of manuscript notes and sheets of music. It is made in various sizes, but the principle of action is the same throughout. Fitted in the back of the stout cloth cover is the binding rack, which consists of a series of parallel grooves, in which fine cords are strung. Each cord is knotted at the top, and the knotted end is turned down behind the rack, and held securely between it and the back of the cloth case when the locking clips, attached for that purpose, are closed. To insert a new sheet in the binder all that is necessary is to open the clips, lift one of the cords, and pass it over the sheet; then fold the end of the cord behind the rack, and fasten the clips. One great advantage that this binder offers is that any single sheet may be removed, without disturbing the rest, and replaced with equal ease in its original position.

An Engine-Room Telegraph.

An electric engine-room telegraph of a successful kind has been invented by Mr. J. B. Wallis, and introduced on a number of H.M.'s ships—*Camperdown*, *Rodney*, and others. The apparatus consists of a dial with a hand, which is moved to the points on the dial representing the orders to be transmitted to the engine-room. This dial stands on the bridge, and is under the control of the officer on duty. The movement of the handle by him rings an electric bell in the engine-room to call the engineer's attention to another similar dial which is provided for him, on which he reads the order transmitted to him. By an ingenious arrangement the engineer signals back that he has understood the order correctly, and the officer acknowledges the message by again ringing the bell. A similar apparatus has also been devised by Mr. Wallis for telegraphing from and to the engine-room the number of revolutions which the screw is making a minute : an indication of the speed useful in evolutions at sea. The same principle has further been applied by the inventor to the construction of a steering telegraph, by which the commander can direct the man at the wheel.

An Electric Blow-Pipe.

It has long been known that the electric arc light between two carbon rods, + and —, Fig. 1, can be drawn out to a point at right angles to its former direction by bringing a magnet near it. This fact has been applied by Prof. S. Sheldon, of Harvard University, to produce an electric blow-pipe for metallurgical purposes. An electro-magnet is used to deflect the arc; its north pole, N, being brought very near the latter. The pole drives the arc, A, away from itself to a fine point of "flame," which instantly fuses copper wire and other metals.

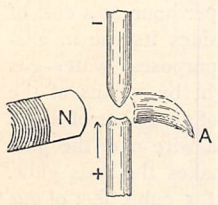
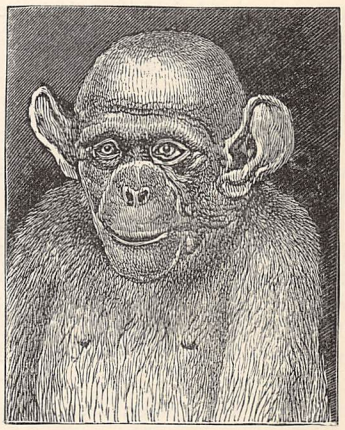


FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

The current flows from the + to the — carbon, in *the direction* of the arrow. While on this subject we may also describe the portable blowpipe shown in Fig. 2. It is a brass tube ten inches long, with a cock at one end to regulate the supply of air. The flame is fed by benzoline, which is filled in by the nozzle. With this appliance a flame can be obtained twelve inches long. The apparatus can be worked in any position, and is likely to be useful to engineers and others. A pilot light always burning renders it available for intermittent work.

The Bald-Headed Chimpanzee.



The Zoological Society has recently acquired a young specimen of the bald-headed chimpanzee (believed to be the *Anthropopithecus calvus* of Du Chaillu). The well-known chimpanzee "Sally," already in their collection at Regent's Park, is a larger specimen of the same species. The skin of the face is clay-coloured, and the ears naked, large in size, and standing out, as represented in the accompanying sketch of the animal's head and shoulders. The body and head are scantily covered with blackish hair. There are also specimens of the orang, and silvery gibbon, now at the Zoological Gardens.

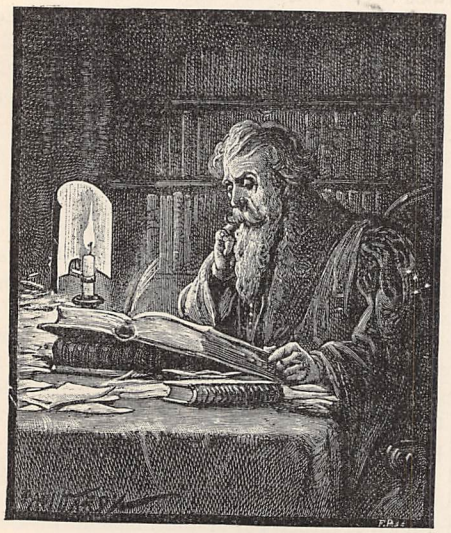
A New Mincing Machine.

The "Rex" chopper is the name of a new mince-meat machine, which a Gorton firm has lately patented. In outward appearance the "Rex" does not differ materially from former machines intended for household use, and it does its work by means of a single screw feeder working against a thread of rather different angle, and forcing the meat through a perforated plate at the end of the machine, which would seem to be one of its distinctive features. Several of these plates with different-sized perforations are provided for different classes of meat and suet—which last, by the way, the machine chops admirably. The minced meat is turned out of the machine in a loose pile or shower, and not in a caked mass, as is sometimes the case. An attachment is provided which adapts the machine for use in sausage-making, and altogether the "Rex" machine is one of the strongest and best-finished machines of its kind we have seen.

Sunlight and Trees.

The latest report of the United States Forestry Department gives some interesting particulars as to the influence of light on trees. Light is necessary for the development of the chlorophyll, or green colouring

matter, and for the life of all green plants, especially trees. Trees nearly always develop best in the full enjoyment of light; but their capacity for growing in shade varies considerably. Yew will thrive in the densest shade, whereas a few years of overtopping will kill larch. The beech will grow in partial shade where the oak would languish and the birch die. When planted in moist places all species are less sensitive to the withdrawal of light. In the open, maples, elms, and sycamores grow well and make a good shade, while in a dense forest they thin out and show a scanty foliage. Conifers, such as spruces and firs, have the greatest capacity for growing in the shade, and preserve their foliage in spite of the withdrawal of light. It has been found that those leaves which develop under the full influence of sunlight are larger and tougher, besides having a larger number of stomata, or breathing pores, than those less exposed to light. Experiments are to be carried out on this subject in the United States. We may also mention here a novel mode of studying timber, which has been introduced by Mr. R. B. Hough, of Lowville, New York, U.S.A. He employs frames of cardboard containing three thin slices of the wood, each 2 inches wide by 5 inches long and from $\frac{1}{80}$ to $\frac{1}{200}$ inch thick. These show the wood along the grain, across it to the heart, and tangentially. The effect of light coming through the thin slip is to show the structure and quality of the timber, even better than if one were looking at a mass of it.



A Reflector for Candles.

The figure illustrates a useful little reflector that can be readily affixed to a candle, so as to direct its light, and also shield the eye from the flame while using it. For reading music, chess-playing, and many domestic purposes, the reflector should be of good service.

A Simple Knife-Cleaner.

A simple knife-cleaner has recently been patented by Mr. C. David. It consists merely of two oblong blocks; one, rather longer than the other, is screwed to a board, and the second is loose. The fixed block is covered with kamptulicon, and upon it the blade of the knife to be cleaned is laid, and rubbed with the loose block, which is covered with buff leather, coated with a patent preparation. The kamptulicon on the fixed block serves to prevent the knife from slipping, while the leather of the loose block carries the plate powder with which the cleaning is accomplished. This simple knife-cleaner has one obvious advantage over many of its predecessors, in that it allows the side of the blade which is being cleaned to be seen during the operation.

India-Rubber Pavement.

India-rubber as a paving material has been introduced into Hanover, where it is used in paving the Goethe Bridge. The Berlin Corporation have also tried it in that city. The new pavement, of which the particulars are not disclosed, is stated to combine the elasticity of india-rubber with the resistance of granite. It is less slippery than asphalte, and said to be unaffected by heat or cold.

Water-Gas as a Power.

Water-gas is now used as a motive-power at the Leeds Forge, and found to be economical. The generators employed are capable of producing from 17,000 to 18,000 cubic feet of gas per hour, at a cost of 4s. 4d. per 1,000 cubic feet. Besides its use in gas-engines, and for metallurgical purposes, water-gas can also be made to yield a light by means of the Fahnejelm comb, which consists of a number of small rods of magnesia suspended by a wire over the gas-burner. The flame of the gas makes the rods glow. At Leeds Forge a consumption of 5 cubic feet of gas per hour yields with this burner a light of 22 candle-power. As there is no free carbon in the gas, less heat is given off than with ordinary coal-gas, and the furniture of a room suffers less. To detect a leakage of the gas it is mixed with an odoriferous gas, being itself odourless.

Buoyant Woodite.

A new form of woodite, capable of floating in water, has been brought out as a substitute for cork or cellulose. It is even lighter than cork, and non-absorbent of water; moreover, it will not take fire under the action of bursting shells, hence it is believed to be well fitted for use in filling the water-tight compartments of ships. On December 13th last thirteen rounds of 6-pounder shells, each containing a half-pound bursting charge, were fired by the Naval Construction and Armaments Company at half a ton of the material. Three rounds burst within the mass, but there was no sign of heating or ignition of the material.

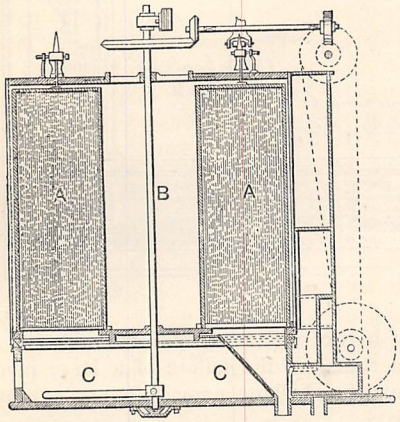
Meteoric Diamonds.

According to a statement in a recent number of the *American Naturalist*, Professor H. C. Lewis exhibited, at a meeting of the Philadelphia Academy of

Natural Sciences, a specimen of meteorite containing diamonds. Carbon in a crude form has been reported in meteorites before now, and there need not, therefore, be anything incredible in diamonds being discovered in one. Recent experiments of Mr. Norman with carbon rods heated to a high temperature by the electric current under pressure in a closed cylinder, resulted in the formation of a grey dust harder than emery, and scratching glass, which appeared to be a form of diamond.

A New Dust-Collector.

The Ince dust-collector for purifying the air of flour, paper, and other mills, is illustrated herewith. The machine consists of a rotary drum, having its



circumference divided into segments, each covered with cloth, and at some little distance from its neighbours. The drum rotates on a vertical axis, as shown in the figure, which represents a section through it; A and A being two of the cloth-covered segments, and B the axle. A chamber, C, beneath, sucks in the dusty air which passes up through the revolving drum, where it is filtered by the cloth, and delivered by means of hoppers to be thrown outside. The machine is made in different sizes, the smallest occupying a floor space of 3 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 10 inches, and the largest 10 feet by 10 feet 10 inches. The height of the latter size is 10 feet.

A Giant Tree.

An enormous specimen of the *Sequoia* is reported from California, where some explorers found it in the Kameah Valley. Not having a measuring line with them, the exact circumference could not be ascertained, but it was measured with a rifle about 4 feet long, and was found to be about 176 feet in girth as far above the ground as could be reached.

Some Tasty Dishes.

Our lady readers will remember our references to former works on different branches of cookery by Mrs. De Salis, and they will doubtless be glad to join us in welcoming the two latest additions to the series of handy little manuals, which is now complete. "Puddings and Pastry à la Mode" is the title of one, and "Cakes and Confections à la Mode" of the other, and both are published by Messrs. Longmans. The recipes are evidently intended primarily for those whose tables are well supplied, but most middle-class housekeepers might glean with advantage from them.

Three Favourite Books.

Among the latest additions to Cassell's "Red Library" is the ever-popular "Ingoldsby Legends," which certainly makes one of the most attractive volumes in the series. Harrison Ainsworth's "Tower of London," and Fenimore Cooper's "The Pioneers," have also been added to the list. Until this volume came into our hands we had not seen Harrison Ainsworth's story for many years, and a hasty glance at its pages has recalled several old acquaintances, notably the dwarf Xit. If there are any of our readers who do not know Xit, let us recommend them to make his acquaintance without delay.

"The England of Shakespeare."

As Mr. Edwin Goadby says in his preface, "No adequate biography of Shakespeare is possible, and hence the general craving for a study of his surroundings, which shall be faithful without being tedious, and historical without being ordinary history." This is what Mr. Goadby's little work, "The England of Shakespeare" (Cassell), is intended to be, and no lover of Shakespeare will complain that it does not succeed in meeting a want that was generally felt. The present edition is accompanied by a number of illustrations that serve still further to explain the real condition of our country in the poet's era. Probably few general readers have any idea how vast are the changes which England has undergone in all its aspects, but to rightly understand the poet's work it is well to realise them, and this Mr. Goadby makes easy.

A Book about Wales, by a Welshman.

Woe betide the unhappy man who dares to speak in the presence of Welsh people of Wales as a mere appendage of England! or to judge of Welsh folk and Welsh ways by English standards! What differences between the two peoples still exist, or did exist quite recently, may be learned from Mr. T. Marchant Williams's proudly-titled story, "The Land of my Fathers" (Longmans). Professedly written with a variety of purposes, the work can only give very sketchy pictures, even of the limited portion of Welsh life it attempts to portray. Whether a story is the medium best adapted for the discussion of the vexed problem of "payments by results" is, at any rate, open to question. Judged simply as a matter of story construction, "The Land of my Fathers" is not successful, for the narrative, especially in conversational passages, is jerky in the extreme. But, if only to make acquaintance with the schoolmistress, Enid Vaughan, the book is worth reading.

WE give our readers this month a reproduction of the Certificate of the National School of Housewifery, as filled up for one of the successful candidates in the Household Routine department.

This Certificate was awarded in the first section of this department. The award in the second section follows these notes. The judges regret that many of the competitors failed to grasp the requirements of a *series* of bills of fare, notably in the matter of variety. This accounts for the failure of a large number of those candidates whose names do not appear in the Pass List.

In our next number we hope to be in a position to announce the award in Department V. (Household Accounts), and we would remind our readers that in the Hand-Labour Department all entries must be made not later than the last day of June.

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE (SECTION I.).

PART II.—BILL OF FARE.

The First Prize* of One Guinea is awarded to Miss CLARA THORNHAM, Studley House, The Park, Hull.

CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR.

Name.	*Address.*
Beck, Elizabeth B.	Grays, Essex.
Jones, Maude D.	Wrexham.
Silverwood, Lucy	Crouch End, N.
Thomas, Sarah	Bristol.
Wood, Miriam	Bulwell.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Browne, Emily J. B.	St. Germans.
Byron, Edith	Leyton.
Clarke, Eliza	Wingham.
Compton, Annie	Bath.
Daniel, Ada M.	Hanley.
Gardiner, Florence M.	Leicester.
Gurney, Clara J.	Faringdon.
Hume, Edith	Basingstoke.
Jones-Henry, E. A.	Brentwood.
McCulloch, Ethel	Glasgow.
Porter, Charlotte A.	Bridlington Quay.
Railton, Florence A.	Manchester.
Read, Emma S.	Chatham.
Taylor, Alice	St. John's Wood, N.W.
Thornton, E.	York.
Thornton, Fanny	York.
Whitaker, Agnes F.	Batley.

* The Second Prize is not awarded.

The successful candidates may have their Certificates posted to them, on their sending to the Editor a fully-addressed label, together with two penny postage stamps, to defray cost of postage and roller. The Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage to Certificates in the post, nor can he answer inquiries respecting unsuccessful work.

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

A GIRL sat writing busily by a small table. A pile of books and papers lay by her side, a few loose sheets of manuscript had fallen to the ground at her feet. She had an earnest, purposeful, and yet calm face. Her age might have been twenty—she was very upright and fairly good-looking. Her name was Helen Channing, and a few of her companions were fond of calling her strong-minded. She certainly looked like one who had never known a moment's indecision in her life. All the lines about her face were good, although a very careful and acute observer might have said that by-and-by, if this girl did not take care, she might become hard, she might be in danger of subduing heart to intellect. This possible future might come to her, but it had by no means yet arrived, for her deeply-set grey eyes, when for a moment they were raised from their occupation, revealed a kindly and generous spirit, and all the curves about her firm lips were sweet.

Helen Channing was the happy possessor of a small London flat, which she shared with her sister. The rent of this flat was always paid punctually, and the furniture and surroundings were kept as sweet and clean, as lady-like and pretty, as heart could desire. The flat consisted of three rooms: a bed-room, sitting-room, and kitchen. Helen and Dorothea kept no servant, cooked their own meals, cleaned and tidied their own rooms, were always bright and neat and presentable, and in consequence, because nothing was wanted, nothing stolen, nothing bought that was not absolutely necessary, their small earnings went a long way, and no real money cares had yet brought wrinkles and anxieties to their faces. Helen paid twelve shillings a week for the snug little flat, a good-natured aunt had presented them with the furniture, and now, as Dolly, who was merrier and less staid than her sister, often remarked, they might with justice consider themselves comfortably started in life.

Helen wrote on, for she was copying a manuscript against a given date for a well-known author. The work might have been tiresome to eyes less young and a heart less hopeful than hers, but her quick and capable fingers showed no sign of weariness, and sometimes a pleased smile played round her lips.

"When I have completed this it will just bring in the necessary money for Dolly's fees for her next term," she murmured once under her breath. "Never fear, I will have it all ready to send off to its owner to-morrow morning, if I sit up to work at it all night. I think," concluded Helen, pausing for an instant to pass her white hand thoughtfully across her smooth forehead, "that I like this out-of-office work, this unexpected toil, the best of all. It means all kinds of possible surprises and all kinds of happy possibilities, and it always comes when I begin to be anxious—something that I did not look for, like this—for I will own—yes, I will own, now that I am certain of the money, that I was a wee bit puzzled how to provide the necessary fees for Dorothea for next term."

Here she smiled, scolded herself for wasting a precious moment even in such pleasant reverie, and resumed her interrupted task. The pages of manuscript became thicker on the floor; another hour passed by, then eager steps were heard in the stone passage outside, the small hall door was opened with a latch-key, and Dorothea, the object of Helen's meditations, entered quickly. There was nothing slow or meditative or careful about Dorothea: she was apt to come into a room something like a whirlwind—her sweet voice was inclined to give forth very rapid utterances—she was also prone to be somewhat untidy, to forget that there was a bed-room somewhere with an orthodox wardrobe wherein to deposit her hat and jacket—her hair was frizzy, and would never stay smooth, her eyes were dark and dancing, her cheeks had a wild-rose bloom about them—she was fascinating, wilful, the pride and joy of Helen's heart.

"There you are at the everlasting grind, you dear old soul!" she exclaimed, rushing up to Helen, and kissing her with effusion. "Oh, Nell, I have brought such news to you!"

Helen laid down her pen, stooped and picked up the scattered sheets of manuscript, and said, in a quiet voice—

"Dolly, I'm so hungry; will you get the tea?"

"Oh, of course—but my news!"

"Tell it to me at tea."

"You are such a dear old slow-coach, Helen; I am absolutely stifling with the desire to unburden myself. Is it part of your training for me, darling, that I am always and always to suppress myself?"

"No, Dolly, only I am hungry; I want my tea, and time is so precious."

Dolly pouted, her rosy cheeks grew a shade redder,

but finally she darted away into the kitchen, was very busy and noisy there for the space of a quarter of an hour, and at the end of that time returned to bear her sister off to a cosy little meal, always partaken of, for economic reasons, in the room where it was prepared.

"Now, Nell the prudent and the wise, I may tell my news."

"You may, Dorothea; and I intend to reward you by saying I am intensely curious."

"You are? That is delightful! Helen, what do you think? Emmy Thorn has come to town!"

"Emmy Thorn? Away from her mother! oh, I suppose just for a short visit?"

"No, to live—to earn her living, I mean. I met her to-day, she ran after me; poor Emmy, darling Emmy!"

"But Emmy can't earn her living, Dorothea: she has not been educated; and she—why, poor little Emmy—she will be lost in London."

"That's what I said. She almost cried when she saw me; she is in horrid lodgings, all by herself. I expect she will be awfully imposed upon. Helen——"

"Well?"

"I promised, poor little thing, she seemed so utterly lonely and crushed—I promised that you and I would go and see her to-night, and cheer her up."

"Oh, Dolly, that was inconsiderate. I must finish this work."

"Yes; but Emmy is so lonely."

"I am sorry for her from the bottom of my heart. She did a very foolish thing in coming to London. I would recommend no girl to take such a step unless fully prepared. I thought, too, she was engaged to be married?"

"I did not like to ask her about that; her cheeks have grown so pale, and her eyes so wistful; but for all that, she is still the prettiest creature in the world."

Helen poured herself out another cup of tea; her serene face looked decidedly disturbed.

"Where are Emmy's lodgings, Dolly?" she asked at last, in an aggrieved voice.

"Off Tottenham Court Road, in a horrid part. I told her how very snug we were on Campden Hill."

"And she really expects us to-night?"

"Yes, she is full of it; she begged us so hard to come. Oh, Helen, if you had seen her dear little lonely face, you could not possibly have refused her."

Helen's clouded brow cleared.

"You are right, Dolly," she said. "I expect there are many forms of selfishness, and one of them is the desire to absorb oneself too much even in one's own necessary work. I will spare one, two, three hours, if necessary, to Emmy Thorn. Now, how soon can we be off?"

"In three or four minutes; just give me time to wash up the tea-things. There, now, we are trim and nice once more. Oh, Helen, it is so sweet to live in a flat!"

The time was the end of June, and as the two girls hurried down the hill to catch an omnibus, the spirits of both were high, and both felt happy and well pleased. Helen was never a great talker, but Dolly chattered enough for both, talking eagerly about her art and her coming holidays, and the chances she had of winning a silver medal by-and-by.

"And I heard another piece of news," she said eagerly; "only Emmy Thorn put it out of my head; another piece of beautiful news—selfish, but still beautiful. Mr. Marton has found some new pupils for me, and I am to have them next term. How busy I shall be; how happy I shall feel! Why, you dear old Helen, you look almost sorry, as if you did not wish me to help you in earning the bread and butter."

"I want you to help me by-and-by, Dorothea. I don't want you to over-work yourself now. You have great talents: they must not be strained or worn out with petty work. I would rather you did not—it would pain me greatly to see you working too hard, dear."

"I will not, I promise you; I don't think I could over-work, I never know what it is to be tired. I have no aches nor pains, and my time at the Academy is simply a delight: with the pupils—ah! the pupils will be the needful discipline."

The girls had now nearly reached their destination, and a moment later they rang a bell, which emitted, in some distant region, a very feeble sound; the bell belonged to a shabby hall door, the hall door to a grim and decayed-looking mansion.

"What a house!" exclaimed Dolly. "What a street! Does not it make you shiver to think any one you cared for should live here, Helen? Oh, poor Emmy Thorn!"

The weak and feeble bell had to be pulled twice. Some time after the second summons a dirty little maid-of-all-work put in an appearance, and in process of time the girls climbed up interminable stairs, and found themselves in Emmy's presence.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

MRS. THORN was a widow in very poor circumstances—she had scarcely anything to live on, and she had a large family to keep. She was very gentle, very sweet, very brave; and Emmy, the eldest girl, took after her in all these particulars.

"Emmy," said her mother one day, "come here, darling—sit by the fire. I want to talk to you, Emmy. I have come to the end of my resources."

"Oh, no, mother; surely not?"

"Yes, dear, it is true. I cannot clothe and support three boys and three girls any longer on one hundred and fifty pounds a year. The rent of our cottage is low—this is a very cheap neighbourhood—still, I cannot do it. What is to be done?"

Emmy paused, and thought, and wondered. She was too young to know anything of despair. When her mother spoke, the girl's pulses beat quickly. She had an ardent desire to take some of this burden, and lift it on to her own young shoulders.

"I am nineteen," she said, after a pause; "quite grown up, am I not, mother?"

"You are my strength and support, Emmy. Quite grown up?—poor darling! You seem quite like a child to me still, Emmy."

"Freddy is fifteen," continued Emmy; "Bertha thirteen; and then there are the three little ones. Fred and Bertha must not leave school. Perhaps they don't get the best instruction, but they get some. Mother dear, it all seems perfectly plain to me—I must do it. Just give me a night to think over it, mammy dear."

Emmy went away, performed her many small duties quietly and calmly, as was her wont—she was not an impatient girl, and she was quite accustomed to the petty worries of a large family. When the children had at last gone to bed, she went up to her room, and prepared to think over her great problem—how was she, an ignorant, uneducated girl, to add to her mother's income?

"I *must* make money for my mother," she soliloquised; "I *must* lighten her cares. It is not that I want her to be rich; but I want her not to be worried. I have seen for a long time that she was breaking down, but she shall not break down—not quite—not while she has got me, Emmy, to lean upon."

Emmy Thorn was slight, and small, and fragile-looking; her cheeks were almost always pale, her pretty soft brown eyes were not remarkable for either size or brilliancy. They were just sweet eyes—the windows through which a true and unselfish soul looked out. The rest of her features were insignificant, and yet people who knew her well always spoke of her as lovely. She was unquestionably lovable, and without appearing to do so, exercised a genial influence over all those with whom she came in contact.

"Now," thought Emmy, "I've got to earn money for mother. I've got two years to do it in—only two years—after that——" Here she smiled and blushed, and looked down at the ring which adorned the third finger of her left hand. It was a plain gold ring, with one beautiful diamond in the middle. "I have got two years; after that, Frank will come home, and then—but I must think of mother now."

She sat by her window for a long time, then undressed slowly, and got into bed. By the next morning she had made up her mind.

"Mother, can you spare me for a couple of hours to-day?"

"What, this morning, Emmy? But I wanted to get Bertha's new school frock finished. Poor child, she needs it so badly."

"I will help you this afternoon, mother: I want to go up this morning to see Frank's father."

"To see Sir Percival Redfern! My dear Emmy! he is so disagreeable, so unjust to us."

Emmy coloured. "I did not hear from Frank by the last mail," she said; "there may be news of him. You don't mind, do you, mother?"

"Not if your heart is really set on it, my pet. Put on your best dress and your brown hat, Emmy. I can't bear that horrid Sir Percival to look down on you."

"Oh, he doesn't, mother; he couldn't, really. I don't believe in one person looking down on another. I think he is better than you imagine him to be, mammy. You are vexed because he does not make a fuss about me, and—oh! yes, I know there is another reason."

No dwelling in all England could have presented a more unpretentious appearance than Mrs. Thorn's cottage. It stood back in its tiny garden, surrounded now by gay flowers, by roses in all their June glory, by jasmine and clematis. The little porch was a bower of flowers; and though the place was humble, it looked sweet and home-like. Emmy, in the simplest of summer dresses, soon made her appearance in the porch. She fastened a couple of deep red roses into her belt, and started off for a somewhat long up-hill walk, which would lead her through a lovely country, to the grand residence of Sir Percival Redfern.

Corcastle, a grey old pile, stood on a rising eminence, overlooking many miles of country. It was a large place, but a good deal decayed now, and not kept up with any attempt at style. The present owner was very eccentric, and both his sons were away. He was, however, a very distant cousin of Emmy's, and it was on this account, not because of her relations to Frank, that she ventured to call to see him that morning.

"Was ever anything more unpleasant?" thought the young girl, as she walked quickly up the steep avenue. "What would Frank say if he saw me?—shall I ever have courage to tell him? Well, I do this for mother's sake, and as a last resource."

The hill up which Emmy was climbing was quite steep in parts, and as she pressed on and on, she smiled to herself once or twice, and began to compare it to the enterprise before her.

"The Hill Difficulty," she murmured. "Yes, but I *will* reach the summit, and I *will* believe, come what may, that the lions are chained."

The long winding avenue up which the girl walked showed many signs of neglect—its borders were not trimly kept, and on its margin many weeds appeared, and it was very scantily gravelled.

At last Emmy came in sight of the house—a long, low, rambling building, with wings at each end, and a castellated tower from which it took its name. The pile looked grey and hoary, and in keeping with the avenue. In front of a wide oak door which was protected by a low porch, but stood grimly shut, with a forbidding expression about it, two or three dogs, all thoroughbred, and ranging from mastiff to terrier, lay at full length in the sunshine. They rose in a body as Emmy appeared, and prepared to meet her with a volley of barking.

"I am Emmy—Emmy Thorn, Jasper," sang out the girl in her clear voice, and instantly the old toothless mastiff ran up to her with a glad sniff of recognition. The other dogs followed suit, pawing her clean washing dress, and yelping joyfully.

"Good Jasper!" said Emmy, looking into the old dog's tawny eyes, and patting his great head affectionately. Then, still holding his collar, and surrounded by all the other dogs, she went up to the wide oak door, and pulled a bell which hung at the side.

Her summons was not attended to for some minutes, then shuffling footsteps were heard crossing the hall, chains and bolts were withdrawn, and an old servant, with a dirty mob cap and wrinkled and forbidding face, put her head round the door.

"No one ain't at home," she muttered, glancing right over the head of the visitor, and preparing to shut the two or three inches of door she had opened, with a bang.

"It's I, Hepsibah," explained Emmy, in her sweet voice. "I want to see Sir Percival—I want to see him so badly, and you know perfectly well that he is at home."

"Oh, come now, Miss Emmy Thorn—oh, come now, miss. I didn't know as it were you—I never looks when folks call; I just open the door so much, and put out my head and shut my eyes, and sing out, 'Nobody's at home.' Them's general orders, and I has got to obey them, and there's no manner of use in your trying to wheedle me round, Miss Emmy."

"You promised," said Emmy; "you promised Captain Redfern. I said I would never come unless it was really necessary—and then, you know, you promised faithfully."

"And it's awful to go back of a promised word," muttered Hepsibah. "Dreams come of it, and bad nights, and a burden upon the conscience. The captain he stood by me, and 'Hepsibah,' he said, 'you be a friend to Miss Emmy when she needs you, and if she needs you. She's not the kind of young lady to be troublesome, Hepsibah, but a time may come when she'll need you, Hepsibah, and then you'll think of me who am far away.' Come in, my dear Miss Emmy Thorn; I'm not the one to forget the captain's words, as took the last bit of sunshine out of the old place away with him. I'm not the one to forget, and if you must—you must; so come in, and let me shut and bar the door, for Sir Percival is getting up, and he'll be coming down presently, and he's sure as sure to smell the fresh current of air, and to ask what business I had letting draughts into the house. He have took it into his head, Miss Emmy, as certain as certain, that fresh air wears things out, and since then he won't have a window opened."

As the old woman uttered this last remark she took hold of Emmy's slight arm and drew her into the house, and pushed her down to sit on a small stone bench.

"There, miss," she said, "there you are, and it's the captain's wish, or you'd never have set foot inside this house. And now, how are you to see him?—for he's worse than ordinary this morning; grumpy is no word for him to-day—maybe it's the letters he has had, or maybe it's another bout of gout coming on, but whatever it is, he's a'most past bearing, and if you think, Miss Thorn, that now I have let you in, I'm going to take you to him, why, then you're fine and mistaken, for that I wouldn't do—no, not for twenty captains."

It was very dark in the large stone hall, for the fanlight over the door was veiled by a thick blind—it was very dark, and dull and dusty, and Emmy's little figure, in its light summer dress, with the red roses in her belt, and the trustful look on her young face, would have been a dim and startling vision to any one who happened to see her. No one more utterly out of keeping with her surroundings could have been found at that moment than Emmy, for she ought to have been afraid, and she wasn't, and she ought to have been impressed and startled and subdued, and she was none of these things; on the contrary, her face looked quite bright, and taking Hepsibah's withered old hand in hers, she said, in an eager affectionate voice—

"Dear Hepsibah, it was good of you to let me in, particularly when it frightened you so dreadfully, and when I write to Captain Redfern, I will be sure to tell him how kind you've been; and now you may run away to your kitchens, or wherever else you like, and leave the rest of the matter to me, for I'm going to find Sir Percival myself."

Old Hepsibah held up her hands in wonder and admiration; Emmy smiled at her, and flitted away at once down a long passage which led directly from the square stone hall. She knew her way, and went on past closed doors, treading on very dusty and worn matting, and once or twice almost gasping at the stale and unrefreshing atmosphere of the deserted house. It was a great place, with corridors, and tall mullioned windows, and high doorways, and splendidly carved ceilings. There were oak wainscots, and here and there little warm shafts and rays of colour caused by richly painted glass, but dust and decay lay everywhere, and Emmy sighed, and put her hand to her forehead, and did not wonder in the least at Captain Redfern going away.

"And Frank will never come back, either," she soliloquised. He never could come to live in such a dreadful place as this—oh, why can there be such a bad man as Sir Percival?"

She ran on, ascending at last a broad flight of shallow stairs, and pausing before a very thick oak door. This door was concealed by a curtain of thick velvet, and was further made secure and air-proof by a felt casing all round its sides.

Emmy was a brave girl, but when she pushed aside the curtain, came to the oak door, and prepared to tap gently for admittance, she found that her hand was trembling.

"I can't do it—I must go right in," she murmured. "The door is so thick, and my hand feels so absurdly weak, that if I were to knock all day he would not hear me. Now, now, have courage, Emmy; don't forget that the lions are really chained."

Then she turned the handle, pushed back her hat a little nervously from her brow, and entered.

The room in which she found herself was very dark, for by a whim of its owner the three tall windows which should have made it bright and brilliant with light and sunshine were kept shuttered, all except their topmost panes. Thus, what little light there was came from above, and came in slanting bars, golden and beautiful in themselves. The walls of the rooms were covered with book-shelves, but the shelves

were empty, the books themselves having been long ago taken away. There was no carpet on the floor, which was of oak, nearly black with age, and very uneven in surface. A high arm-chair, a couple of hundred years old, a worm-eaten writing-table, and a high footstool by the side of the chair, completed the furniture of the room. There was no second chair—inhospitality was written all over the grim apartment. Emmy found her heart beating as an old man of great stature, with a snow-white beard and a green shade over his eyes, rose at her approach. She found herself standing in one of the bars of light, and the owner of the apartment, dim as his eyes were, could see her distinctly.

Sir Percival had been sitting half-dozing in his chair; he started up now, trembling violently.

"Who are you? Has Hepsibah forgotten? You must excuse me, young lady, I am not well—I never see visitors. You have come to me through a mistake. May I ask you to go—to go at once?—there is the door. Go—do you hear me? Go!"

Sir Percival's voice had risen with each sentence—at the end it almost resembled a roar, and Emmy certainly did not feel reassured.

"I have come to see you, Cousin Percival," she said; "and now that I have found you, I must say what I have come to say before I go away. You don't know me?—Perhaps not, but you ought to be ashamed to say so, for I am the child of your cousin—I am Emmy Thorn."

"Of all people," muttered Sir Percival—"of all visitors to admit her! Hepsibah shall be dismissed for that. Most certainly she shall be dismissed. Well, child," glancing from head to foot at the small pretty little figure—"do you hear me—are you going?"

"I will, as soon as ever I have told you what I have come to say."

"'GO ON, CHILD, SAY YOUR SAY QUICKLY'" (*p.* 390).

Sir Percival uttered another groan. "I can't turn her out," he muttered. "This is odious—this is past bearing—but Hepsibah shall suffer—oh, yes, Hepsibah shall suffer. Well, child, say your say and have done with it."

Sir Percival sank back again into his high arm-chair—partly turning his back, and not offering Emmy any seat. There was no second seat in the room—he reflected on this fact with a certain morose satisfaction.

"Go on, child, say your say quickly—I am an old man and not well, and Hepsibah shall suffer severely for having me interrupted."

"I will not keep you long," said Emmy; "I have come to know if you will let me have one hundred pounds of my mother's money?"

Sir Percival uttered a roar. "What next?" he exclaimed. "Your mother's money? I have not a farthing belonging to her!"

"You have—you have five hundred pounds—you know that perfectly; I want you to give me one hundred."

Sir Percival turned round in his chair. "I am a dangerous man when I am roused, Miss Thorn; you had better leave me, and at once. I say this for your own sake."

"I am not afraid," said Emmy, her cheeks flushing. "You could not possibly harm a girl like me; no man would do it. May I have a hundred pounds of my mother's money, Cousin Percival? I would not come to you—I would not, really, if my mother's need were not very great."

"Mrs. Thorn has sent you, of course?"

"My mother has not sent me. I told her I was coming to see you, but she never suspected my errand. May I have the money?"

"You are a bold girl, upon my word; did I not tell you that I had not a farthing of your mother's money?"

"You said so, Cousin Percival, but I don't believe you." Emmy came near now, quite close. "My mother is very poor," she said, "and I want to help her before her strength quite breaks down. One hundred pounds will save her. It is her own. May she have it?"

Emmy looked quite pleading, her soft eyes had tears somewhere near them, her voice shook. Her softness, however, these signs of emotion, only roused old Sir Percival to added fury.

"Look here," he said, "you must go. I am not a man to be moved by a foolish child's pleading, particularly when she tells me to my face I am a liar. Go, child, go! I have no other answer to give you. I don't possess any of your mother's money. I am not moved by your tale. I don't pity: I never pity. I don't know the meaning of the word. Go, Miss Thorn, and at once; you have no right to force yourself upon me: you have no right. Ah! what's that—what's that, child?—show me your finger!"

Sir Percival had caught the gleam of the large diamond in Emmy's ring.

"I know that ring," he said. "How did you get it? How dared you steal jewels from my house? This ring belongs to the Redferns."

"It is mine now," said Emmy, turning pale, but holding out her hand for the old man to clutch. "It is mine now; your son gave it to me."

"My son! Which of my sons?"

"Frank."

"But this is—this is a betrothal-ring. Are you engaged to my son?"

"I am, Sir Percival."

This news seemed to have the most extraordinary effect upon the eccentric owner of Corcastle. He sat perfectly still for the space of nearly five minutes, not offering to touch Emmy's hand, nor again glancing at the diamond ring. When he spoke, after this brief silence, his manner had altered.

"Frank had no right to go away to India without telling me this," he said; "such news told by another comes as a blow, Miss Thorn; what you have said alters the relations between us. Go away now, for I must think; but I will see you to-morrow. Come to me again to-morrow, and I will be prepared to consider any reasonable request. If I find you worthy of help, you shall be helped; but not from your mother's money, of which I do not possess a farthing, but from my own. Go; I will see you to-morrow."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THAT evening, when the children had gone to bed, Emmy coaxed her mother out into the little rose-covered porch, and told her something about her interview with Sir Percival.

"I knew you could not do it, mother," she said, in conclusion; "for it would have been impossible for you, my own mother, to be just brave for yourself alone. You have always held Cousin Percival in great awe, and you would have found it difficult to say to him what I said. After all, the courage required from me was not so very great. I had just to remember that bitter words cannot really hurt, so I told him what I have long wanted to tell him. He knows what I want him to know now."

"And what is that, Emmy?" asked Mrs. Thorn, turning a very sweet and slightly-worn face towards her young daughter.

"He knows now, mother, that *we* know that when he acted as your trustee, years and years ago, he kept back part of your money: he knows that, and he also knows something else." Here Emmy blushed, and turned her face away. "He has found out through the accident of my wearing Frank's ring that I am engaged to him."

"Found out *now* that you are engaged to Frank, Emmy? Do you mean to tell me that Captain Redfern kept this information back from his father?"

Emmy's cheeks flushed painfully.

"Don't blame Frank, mother; you have not seen Cousin Percival for years. You can scarcely imagine how terrible he looks, how fierce, how vindictive, how cruel he can be."

"And my poor little girl encountered him all by herself to-day?"

"That is nothing; he did not hurt me, he scarcely frightened me. Mother dear, I asked Sir Percival to give me one hundred pounds of your money: if he does so—and I think he will now—we shall be able to plan everything so nicely. I can go to London, and you can allow me so much a week for a time; you can do that out of part of the hundred pounds, and the remainder can be put in the bank, and you can draw on it whenever you are badly pinched; you can go away sometimes for a couple of days' holiday, mammy dear, and you can have nourishing food, and enough of it; and then, oh then, you won't break down."

Mrs. Thorn pressed Emmy's arm, and looked into her face with a loving glance.

"A little money in the bank would be a great relief," she said. "Come and let us walk up and down in the moonlight, Emmy. See how bright it is, almost like day! So my little girl really wants to throw herself into the battle-field? You really want to go up to that terrible London, and to—why, Emmy, when *I* knew London, years ago, no girl of your age would have been allowed to visit it alone."

"But times are changed, mother, and so are the girls. The girls see now that they must put their shoulders to the wheel and not be frightened, and they see, too, that they must try to do this while they are still young and full of energy—they must not wait until they are middle-aged and broken-down. Girls see this, and other people see it for them, and no one is surprised now at a girl going to London and working for her living. You know the Channings, mother; you know how fond you have always been of Helen and Dorothea. They are in London, and they are doing well. I shall see them, and I will promise to take their advice. Oh, I shall get on, never fear; only, mammy dear, you must promise just at first to let me have fifteen shillings a week out of your hundred pounds. I will promise not to ask for it a day longer than I can help."

"But Frank, Emmy—Frank—how will he like all this?"

"Frank quite agrees with me about girls helping themselves. We have talked the matter over heaps of times, and he thought it so brave of the Channings to go to London. Oh, there is no fear of what Frank will say. You know there is no chance of our marrying for some years, and before that time comes, I hope to have made my own dear mammy very snug and comfortable."

Emmy talked on, and Mrs. Thorn listened. It was always pleasant to hear Emmy talk—her voice was set in so sweet a key, her words were accompanied by such pretty and vivacious little movements, such expression came into those true eyes of hers, such curves played round her lips. Mrs. Thorn felt soothed, amused, and cheered as the innocent girlish talk flowed on. The talk was very innocent, sadly inexperienced; but it also contained a quality which raised it above the commonplace. The young speaker knew nothing of the world into which she proposed to enter so slenderly equipped for the battle; but she was all in earnest, she was full of faith, she was influenced by the purest love in the world—intense and passionate devotion to her mother.

Mrs. Thorn was nearly as innocent, and quite as inexperienced as Emmy. As she listened to the eager impulsive girl she believed in her. Emmy, after all, should save her family from the hopeless ruin and despondency into which they were sinking; Emmy should lift them above the commonplaces of grinding poverty; Emmy, being the eldest, should go first into the battle—she should lead and prepare the way for the others to follow. It was all right, and as it should be. In one sense Emmy was a slight and ignorant girl; in another she was a knight errant going forth to conquer and to help.

Early the following morning a messenger arrived on horseback from Corcastle. He stopped at Mrs. Thorn's cottage, delivered a note for Emmy, and rode on. The note was enclosed in an envelope, which was carefully sealed. It was presented to Emmy by her sister Bertha, who felt herself devoured with curiosity to know its contents. They were few and meagre enough:—

"Sir Percival Redfern would be glad to see Miss Emmy Thorn at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning (Thursday)."

"Why, this is Thursday," said Bertha. "You are to go there this morning, Emmy. Oh, are not you frightened?"

"No, Bertha; if I got over yesterday I need not fear to-day."

Bertha had heard the story of yesterday from Emmy's own lips. She now kissed her sister, and ran eagerly to help her to prepare breakfast.

When Emmy reached Corcastle, the sun was shining brilliantly; but the dogs were none of them to be seen, and Emmy was surprised to perceive the oak door standing open, and Hepsibah, in a clean cap, waiting for her. Hepsibah's eyes were red, as if she had been crying hard, and she greeted Emmy with a very forced attempt at a smile.

"Why did you come, Miss Thorn?" she said. "Why did you mind his note? He's in an awful taking—an awful taking; and if I was you, miss, I'd turn round and go back now, I would indeed. He has no call to frighten you into your grave, whoever else he sends there. If I were you, I'd go back, miss. He expects you, to be sure, and has had the dogs tied up, and bid me be ready; but what of that? he can't guess as you has come and gone away again. You go home, my dear Miss Thorn; I ask you for Captain Frank's sake."

Emmy smiled. "I'm not going to be afraid of Frank's father," she said. "I did not greatly fear him yesterday when I was not invited, and to-day he has asked me to come—it cannot be half so bad to-day."

"Ay, but it can be worse to-day," murmured old Hepsibah; "he can strike through the heart, and he will. You has given him a handle, my dear young lady, and you may believe my words."

"Still I must go to him," said Emmy. "Thank you, Hepsibah, for being anxious about me, but nothing can really happen. Good-bye—I know my own way."

She tripped down the corridors, and up the dismal forsaken stone stairs, and presently found herself at the door of Sir Percival's sitting-room. She was drawing back the dark velvet curtain which concealed the door, and preparing to knock with more courage than she had possessed yesterday, when she was startled to find the door itself wide open, and Sir Percival, very tall and gaunt, and with the shade pushed back from his eyes, standing on the threshold.

"Come in, Miss Thorn; I've been expecting you," he said, and holding out his hand, he led the young girl into the room, shutting and bolting the oak door behind them.

Some small preparations had been made for Emmy Thorn's visit. A second chair had been brought into the apartment, and one shutter belonging to the tall mullioned windows had been partly opened, so that a full ray of light fell upon the young girl when she seated herself. Sir Percival himself sat with his back to the windows, and was in complete shadow.

"I have sent for you," he said, "for two reasons. I wish to talk about my son Frank. I wish also to inquire what reasons you have for asking me for one hundred pounds. Pardon me," for Emmy had opened her lips to speak, "I know you want to repeat the false statement you made yesterday; to that I will not listen. I do not owe your mother money—you are both possessed by a fallacy. I neither owe your mother money nor will I discuss the subject, but I do not say that I will not help you. If on questioning you I find there is any likelihood of your using the required sum in a worthy manner, I will let you have it, or some of it, on my own conditions."

Here Sir Percival paused, and looked hard at his young guest. Emmy, who had been anxious to speak, was now absolutely silenced; her eyes sought the ground, and the colour was in her cheeks. Sir Percival Redfern looked at her from head to foot, then he said abruptly—

"You would like to know my conditions for helping you?"

"EMMY TOLD HER SOMETHING ABOUT HER INTERVIEW WITH SIR PERCIVAL" (*p.* 390).

"I don't want your help at all," said Emmy stoutly, "unless the money belongs to my mother. Do you think I would take *your* money and come and beg for it? No—I am a poor girl, but I am my mother's daughter, and my mother's daughter is much too proud for that."

Sir Percival smiled quite benignly.

"Bravo, little lady! you are coming to your senses. You are almost admitting the falsehood of that stout statement of yours yesterday that I owed your mother money. Now listen to me. You say you are engaged to my son Frank?"

"I am engaged to him, Sir Percival. I am his promised wife."

"Ah, yes—a boy and girl attachment. I know the sort of thing—it never lasts. Why, my lad did not think it worth while even to mention the fact to me. Frank is in India, and will not return for several years. When did you hear from him last?"

The tell-tale colour came and went on Emmy's cheeks; her sweet dark eyes grew big and round, she was awfully afraid of tears filling them. She remembered old Hepsibah's words: "He will pierce you through your heart to-day." He should not; she would show him she did not care.

"Sir Percival," she said, rising suddenly to her feet, "I know you are going to say something unkind

—please don't say it. Frank and I fully trust each other, and are perfectly happy about each other—please don't go on with what you were going to say."

"I asked you a question, Miss Thorn; will you be good enough to give me an answer? When did you hear last from my son, Captain Redfern?"

"Not for a mail or two, but that is nothing; he is often prevented writing."

"Ah, quite so; he never fails to let me have a letter. I heard on Tuesday, as usual; the young fellow is happy and gay, and having a good time. These boy and girl attachments are never thought twice of, Miss Thorn, when a man goes out into the world."

Emmy clasped one of her hands very tightly, the other hand held the back of the chair against which she slightly leant.

"Listen," said Sir Percival, "I wish to speak quite plainly. I don't want my son to marry you. I have my reasons for this, and my reasons are strong. I will tell you some of them; I won't mention them all. My son Frank is, for his position, a poor man; his wife, therefore, must have money. My son is also extremely well connected; he must marry in his own rank of life. Thirdly, at this present moment there is in prospect for him a match exactly after my own heart. Miss Thorn, you have neither money nor position, and you are not after my own heart, therefore I do not wish Frank to marry you. I am not going, however, to act the proverbial inhuman father, and to say that if he does unite himself to you I will cut him off with a shilling, or any humbug of that sort. But I do maintain that I don't wish for the match, and I have also reasons, strong reasons, for adding that I believe Frank is tired of it also. My son is too honourable to write to you to ask you to break off your engagement, but I have no doubt he would be much relieved if you would propose this thing yourself. I have sent for you to-day to give you the opportunity of doing so. If you will give up Frank, and promise me to cease to think of him as a future husband, and if you will return to me that diamond ring which I now see on your finger, I, for my part, will undertake to pay your expenses in London, and I will do what lies in my power to start you in any profession you may choose to adopt. Pray don't give me an answer on the spur of the moment. Girls are hasty creatures, and young blood is apt to be hot. Go home and think the matter over quietly; consult your mother, please, and send me or bring me an answer to-morrow. Pray reflect well on the liberality of my offer, and believe in the integrity of my motives and my sincere wish to serve you, for I have good, the best, reasons for knowing that at this present moment my son, Captain Redfern, would be only too glad to be free of his engagement. May I show you the door, Miss Thorn?"

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

ON that same evening, as old Sir Percival Redfern sat in the dismal library which contained no books and no comforts of any sort, Hepsibah came into the room and handed him a letter.

"From Miss Thorn, sir," she said; "but there is no answer—the messenger would not wait."

"Fetch me a light," said Sir Percival. "What do you mean by wax candles, Hepsibah?—and a pair? Have I not told you over and over that such strong light is destroying my eyes? Light one candle and place it there. Now you may leave me."

Hepsibah beat a hasty retreat, as Sir Percival opened the envelope of Emmy's little letter. Its contents were very brief:—

"SIR,—I cannot listen to your proposals, nor accept any help from you. I absolutely refuse to give up Captain Redfern until he himself asks me to do so. I have perfect faith in his love for me; and the cruel words you have used to-day have failed to shake my trust.

"I am, Sir, yours obediently,

"EMMY THORN."

"So! saucy little thing," said Sir Percival, flinging the letter on the floor, "so it is war between us? Spirited little mite, too! I fancied I'd made an impression, and shaken her, and yet she had a daring look in her eyes—I could not help admiring her courage. If she were not her mother's daughter, and if she were not absolutely penniless, I might—who knows? As it is—impossible!"

Sir Percival thought for a long time, burying himself in such deep meditations that he never noticed that the solitary candle was burning to one side, and so that awful sin of sins in his category—waste—was being absolutely perpetrated under his very eyes. He thought and thought; then a light came to his wicked old face, and, rising, he walked across the room, opened a small cupboard in the wall, and took from thence some writing materials, and laying them on the old worm-eaten table, began rapidly to place on paper the following epistle:—

"Corcastle,

"June.

"DEAR SIR,—I am anxious that you should execute a commission of some delicacy for me. I want the affair concluded with the least possible delay. For reasons of my own I am anxious to do a kindness to a young lady in this neighbourhood. She is the daughter of that Mrs. Thorn whose name you doubtless remember in connection with—but I need not go into that old affair. I wish Miss Thorn to have one hundred pounds, and I want that sum to be conveyed to her without her having the least idea or even suspicion who the real donor is. If she imagines for a moment that I have sent it, she will not touch the money. I want her to receive one hundred pounds, and I want this gift to come to her in such a way that she will find it absolutely impossible to refuse it. I leave it to your ingenuity to discover ways and means.

"Yours faithfully,

"PERCIVAL REDFERN.

"James Dodd, Esq., Lincoln's Inn Fields."

The letter was dropped into the post, and as soon as possible the following answer was received:—

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,

"June.

"DEAR SIR PERCIVAL,—I can easily arrange what you wish. It shall come in the guise of a small legacy.

"Yours faithfully,

"JAMES DODD."

When Sir Percival read this reply, he rubbed his hands with glee.

"Now to bribe the post-mistress—a matter not impossible," he said to himself; "and I think, my son

Frank, you will not long remain engaged to such an insignificant little person as Emmy Thorn."

Sir Percival lived such a retired life at Corcastle, he arose so late in the day, and spent so many dreary, useless, and monotonous hours in his library, that when the next morning he ordered his brougham and took a drive, Hepsibah, and another old servant who kept her company in the kitchen, expressed considerable surprise. Inside and outside, Corcastle was going to ruin and decay, but one or two horses were still to be found in the stables, and when Sir Percival chose to drive, a very tumble-down and shabby brougham awaited his convenience. He drove out on this special morning a little before noon, and was away for two or three hours. The coachman, when questioned, said that Sir Percival had driven to the nearest town, had put up at the White Horse Inn, and ordered a chop for his luncheon, and finally had paid a somewhat lengthened visit at the village post-office on his way home. He had left the post-office in apparently the best of humours, and had then driven straight back to the Castle. The servant had nothing further to relate, and the house once more returned to its accustomed apathy. The doors were again barred and locked, the fresh air again shut out, and Sir Percival once again sat down in his bookless library with the shade over his eyes, to meditate.

"Twenty pounds!" he murmured; "twenty pounds to her, and one hundred pounds to Emmy Thorn. It is a fearful risk, a fearful loss to incur, and I—I—anything but a rich man. I who have toiled and struggled, and saved, putting by a penny here and a penny there, putting down unnecessary luxuries, refusing to pander to any of my own selfish wishes, and all because—because—I love those boys, and I want them to enjoy the fruits of my love by-and-by. Frank marry a penniless girl, after this lifetime of saving on his father's part? No, no, not if I, Percival Redfern, can prevent it. And now, my son Frank, I will write to you, and put another spoke in the wheel of that pretty little bright-eyed girl. Pretty and bright, but no wife for you. And now, Miss Thorn, I hope you will make the most of that lucky legacy, which will soon be yours."

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

EMMY THORN had no idea how to set about finding London lodgings, which should at once be cheap and cheerful. She had written to an old servant who used to belong to her mother's family, and this woman had recommended rooms in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. The rooms in Charlotte Street were not expensive, and Emmy paid seven shillings a week for a large attic, which was to combine in itself both bedroom and drawing-room. The attic was furnished, not severely, for there were a great number of untidy curtains and valences about, but with a general eye to dowdiness. The whole effect was faded, the windows emitted but a dingy light through their dirty panes, the wall-paper had long ago refused to disclose anything but the dimmest outline of its original pattern, the paint on the doors was faded to a dim and dirty lemon, still the room which the two Channing girls now entered had scarcely a dull effect; some rays from the setting sun were pouring in through one of the dirty windows: these rays fell full upon Emmy's fresh young figure, her nut-brown hair pushed back from her broad brows, her lips slightly open, an eager expectant light filling her widely-opened eyes. The room in itself was horrible, ugly, repulsive, but touches of Emmy's presence redeemed it here and there; even the washhand-basin was full of country flowers; some bright blue vases of the commonest description, which adorned the mantelpiece, were almost hidden by the roses and rose-leaves which had been brought from the country cottage-garden, the air was sweet with the perfume of these roses, and Emmy herself was quite enough to make any room look charming.

She uttered a cry of delight at seeing Helen and Dorothea, and, rushing forward, kissed them both with great warmth.

"Dolly said you would both look me up," she said. "I've been in such a state of excitement ever since."

"Come and sit on the sofa, Emmy," said Helen; "we can spare just half an hour; we are very busy, at least I am, and I don't like Dolly to go about by herself at night; we can only spare you half an hour. I was so surprised when I heard you had come to London."

"You thought me very foolish, didn't you, Helen?" said Emmy, glancing at her friend's rather severe young face with a slightly comical expression. "You thought me very foolish, Nell, and you said to Dorothea, 'Has Emmy Thorn taken leave of her senses?'"

At this speech Dolly Channing began to laugh.

"What fun you are, Emmy!" she said. "It will be awfully jolly for us now you have come to town."

"Only I *did* think you rather foolish to come, dear Emmy," continued Helen. "You know you have never been educated—I mean you have never been educated in such a way as to give you a chance of earning your living. In these days amateurs are nowhere. There are professionals ready and willing to occupy every empty niche, and as that is the case, amateurs have no chance."

"I know that," replied Emmy, in a grave voice. "It was because I intended to become a professional that I wished to come to London."

"What will you take up, Emmy?" asked Dorothea, in an eager tone. "Painting?—art in any other branch?—have you a talent for art?—are you artistic, dear?"

"I like to arrange flowers," said Emmy. "When I have nowhere else to put them, I call the washing-basin into requisition—" here she laughed. "There end my art capacities," she concluded, with a sigh.

Dorothea now looked mournful, but Helen took Emmy's hand, and pressed it affectionately.

"Welcome," she said, stooping forward, and pressing a kiss on her forehead—"Welcome, if you are going to join the noble band of workers. I thought

you were coming up to play, to make a faint little ineffectual struggle—to write some nonsense which you call poetry, or some utter rubbish in the form of a would-be novel, which was to go the rounds of the publishers. Forgive me; that is what amateurs and uneducated girls are always trying to do, and are always failing over, and you, Emmy, you have always seemed to me such a child—I did not know it was in you to take a brave step of this kind. If you are going to be a professional, you have all my sympathy, and I will give you what help I can—there!"

"You are made now, Emmy," said Dorothea—"when Helen takes a girl up, things are sure to go well with her—she is at least one strong piece of consolation to rely upon—Helen never lets go."

"I shall tie a string round you, and keep you to my side," said Helen, with a low laugh.

"Listen, girls," said Emmy, springing suddenly to her feet. "I was left a fortnight ago a legacy of one hundred pounds. It was left to me by an old cousin, who we never thought had money to give to any one—just one hundred pounds—a large, delightful sum; half of it goes to mother, to help her in her difficulties—the other half is mine. Can I learn a trade?—can I learn anything by which I can respectably and comfortably make money just with fifty pounds? for I don't mean to spend any more."

"It's a lot of money," said Dorothea, who never kept the family purse, and therefore knew nothing.

"Fifty pounds will go a very short way," said Helen. "Fifty pounds is a very small sum to achieve so large a purpose."

"It is all I've got," said Emmy stoutly, "and it must be made to do—I won't touch mother's fifty—it is to give her comforts—a holiday now and then, a feeling of rest always. I must sink or swim with my own fifty—the other I no longer regard as my own."

"Bravo!" said Helen. "You are appearing before me in a new light, Emmy—I respect you—you shall succeed."

"But, Emmy," said Dolly, in that full rich voice of hers, "I did not know that you were going to join the band of single strong-minded women—I thought you were engaged to be married."

"So I am," said Emmy, the colour coming into her cheeks. "I'm going to be Frank Redfern's wife, and this is his ring which I wear on my finger. Is not it a beautiful diamond?"

"Then you will leave us?" said Dorothea; "just when you are beginning to be a credit to us all you will go away, and think of no one but your husband and your house and your servants, and what is the very nicest thing you can give that good man for dinner."

"How sweet that day will be!" said Emmy, her eyes shining—"I long for it, I am impatient for it, but I won't go away from you—no, no. Why should not a woman who has a husband help others and do good? Oh," she added suddenly, the bright look leaving her face—"that day is a long, long way off—don't let me think of it to-night, or I shall get impatient and discontented."

"And that would be the height of folly," said Helen, almost brusquely. "Sit down, Emmy, and let us talk; I have just five minutes left, and we have a great deal to say to each other."

END OF CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

"GOING TO THE SOUTH POLE."

"A WALL OF ICE A HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET HIGH" (*p.* 399).

THE fact that the Australians have asked the help of the Mother-country in preparing an expedition to the South Polar regions, has been welcome alike to zealots for science and lovers of adventure. Whether we believe that much can be done, or little, we must agree that ours is the nation to do it, as it is also the nation that has done almost all which has as yet been achieved in Antarctic regions.

The way to the North Pole lies along the shores of countries which, though inhospitable enough, are not wholly uninhabited, and the southern parts of which

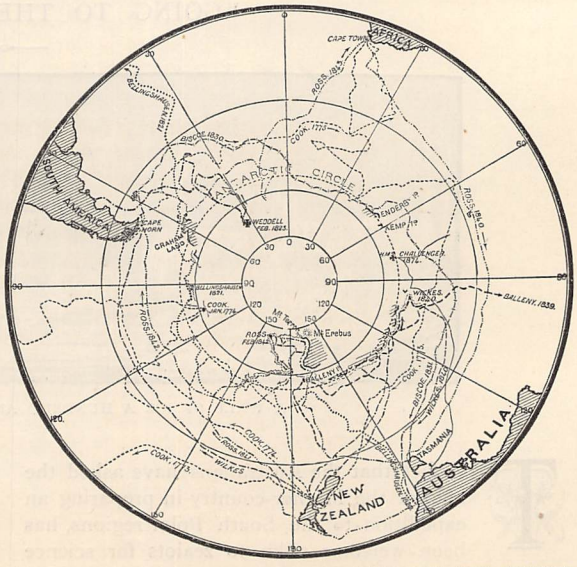
THE PASSAGE OF THE "EREBUS."

join on to the lands where our civilisation took its rise, and where it prevails at present. But the South Pole is separated from the rest of the world by a waste of waters a thousand miles wide; and the shores which these waters wash have never, so far as we know, been inhabited by civilised races till modern times. For though the old story of the Phœnician voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, which Herodotus doubted, is probably true, and although certain discoveries in South Africa seem to show that some parts at least of the Dark Continent have not always been so dark as we fancied, yet neither there, nor on the bleak rocks of Cape Horn, nor by the desolate shores of Australia can we suppose that any people has ever lived, of power and ambition enough to defy the icebergs of the Antarctic seas. And it is therefore much less strange that the first Antarctic expedition should have sailed only about a hundred years ago, than that the last should have sailed more than forty years ago, especially since this last had results of an exciting nature.

We are now so well used to the knowledge that the greater part of the world's surface consists of water, and that what land there is lies mostly in the northern hemisphere, that we do not easily understand why our fathers were so slow to believe it. Seeing that, as a matter of fact, the South Pacific does not, at any rate in habitable latitudes, contain a "Terra Australis Incognita," we wonder why our ancestors should have been at the trouble of putting one in their maps. It did, however, strike them as strange that what was known to happen in one hemisphere could not be found to happen in the other; and in scientific circles during the last century there prevailed a strong belief, that beyond the untravelled regions of ocean some vast body of land must exist, which should act as a counterpoise to the continents of the northern world. Three hundred years ago, the islands now called the New Hebrides were supposed by their first discoverer to be the northern edge of this great south land; and even the famous voyage of Abel Tasman, who in 1642, coming from the west, landed in Tasmania and saw New Zealand, left it uncertain whether a great continent did not exist in the South Pacific, far beyond the eastern limits of Australasia. It was to settle this question that the prince of navigators, Captain Cook, sailed forth on his second voyage.

It is well known that James Cook, an English sailor of the prosaic eighteenth century, who began life as a collier's apprentice, was regarded as a god in the remote Pacific, where such traditions of him have lingered to these days that, only a century after his death, the modern traveller Baron von Hübner calls him a "legendary person." Certainly, few heroes of legend have performed a harder task than the great navigator and his sailors in searching the edge of the south polar seas for land.

Cook seems himself to have had no great expectation of discovering a Terra Australis. For on his former voyage, that which revealed New South Wales, and which may be said to have given Australia and New Zealand to the English nation, he had sailed through so much of the ocean as to have made quite sure that there could be no southern continent large enough to counterbalance the northern, and seeing that there was no reason for any he began to suspect there might



MAP OF THE SOUTH POLAR REGION, SHOWING THE ROUTES OF VARIOUS EXPLORERS.

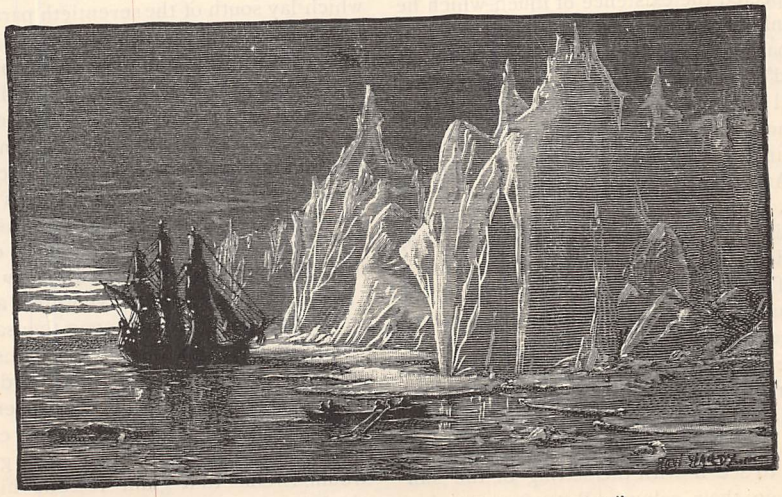
be none. He sailed from the Cape, then a Dutch possession, and, much to his surprise, was among icebergs and in a temperature below freezing-point before he had made twenty degrees of southing. He kept, however, on his course, thinking that the innumerable penguins which swam after his ship and waddled on the ice-floes, could not have come very far from some land, and on January 17, 1773, the Antarctic Circle was crossed for the first time in history. Soon afterwards, however, Cook was turned back by a vast ice-field, and though in cruising for hundreds of miles to the eastward, along the sixtieth parallel, he endured storms and cold of frightful severity, he made no nearer approach to the Pole till the following year, after refreshing himself and his crew among his cannibal friends in New Zealand. In this next season the weather was much less severe; and on January 30, 1774, in about 110° of west longitude, Cook reached the latitude of 71° 10', which for fifty years remained the highest attained by man. At this point thick ice barred his way, and, though ready "not only to go further than any one had been before, but as far as it was possible for man to go," he was obliged to finish his researches after the fabled south land in warmer waters.

We need not follow Cook farther. During the voyage his crew had been continually discovering islands, which turned out to be icebergs; coast-lines, which were found to be fog-banks; mountains, which resolved themselves into clouds. Cook, unlike some that followed him, would not let himself be deceived by these phantoms, and claimed only to have arrived at the edge of ice which he believed must extend to the Pole. "Yet, I think there must be land behind it!" he concluded; and theory as well as observation justifies his conclusion. Huge icebergs, such as those of the southern seas, rising two or three hundred feet from the water, can only, it is believed, be formed on land, such a glacier-covered land as Greenland in the Arctic Ocean. The home of the Antarctic icebergs remained to be found.

HUNTING.

The whalers and sealers who alone came to haunt the southern seas, before Australia's pastoral wealth was made known, or her mineral wealth suspected, found indeed many desolate islands, the haunt of the albatross and penguin, which, like the dreary Kerguelen Land, described so often by travellers, are generally considered as Antarctic, though they really lie often as far from the South Pole as England from the northern. It was a Russian, Bellinghausen, who in 1821 first found land within the Antarctic Circle, in about latitude 68°. It was a tiny island; but for twenty years it was the most southerly land known to man.

Two years after its discovery, our countryman, Weddell, made the first advance beyond Cook, reaching the latitude of 74°, not very far from the meridian of Cape Horn. And in 1831 and 1833, Biscoe, commanding a whaling vessel of the well-known merchant Enderby, discovered, almost on the Antarctic Circle,

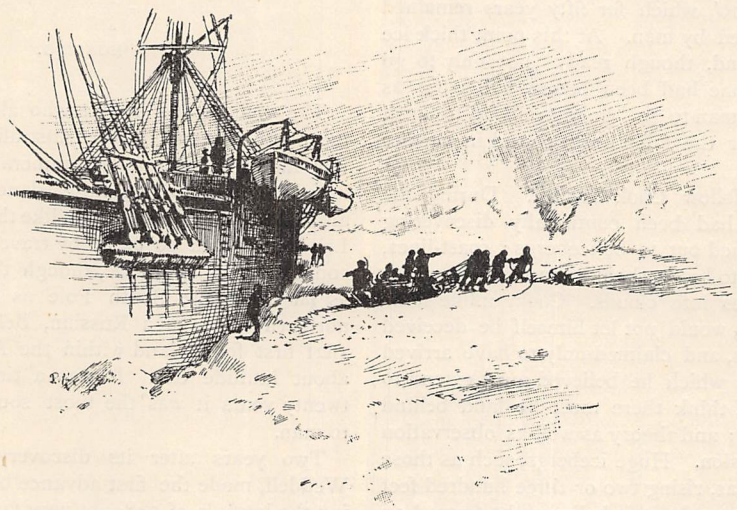


"ISLANDS WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE ICEBERGS."

Enderby Land, and Kemp Land, in the longitude of Madagascar, the extent of which countries is still unknown.

The golden age of Antarctic discovery arrived when Captain, afterwards Sir James Ross, was despatched from England in 1840, to fix the position of the south magnetic pole, and any other position he could discover on the way there. Before Ross could reach the scene of his labours, other explorers, English, French, and American, were busy forestalling him. Of these the first was the Englishman, Balleny, who sailing in Enderby's ship the *Eliza Scott*, discovered in 1839 the islands which bear his name, and which lie almost under the Antarctic Circle, and almost due south from New Zealand. Balleny could not land on the islands, but he made sure of their existence, and afterwards, sailing far to the westward, he saw many more signs of land, and suspected the existence of much which he could not certainly vouch for. What Balleny thought he saw was probably much what the French expedition under Dumont d'Urville actually did see in the following year, several long lines of coast, which might be joined to one another, and might even run on to join Enderby Land in the west, and if so might certainly be parts of the Antarctic Continent that D'Urville was anxious to find. Not less anxious was Wilkes, the leader of the United States Exploring Expedition, who, only a month after the Frenchman, arrived within a degree or two of the Antarctic Circle, to the south of New Zealand, and after seeing land where Balleny had certainly seen it before, began to fancy that he saw it also where none had seen it before, and, unfortunately, where no one has seen it since. For some days, indeed, Wilkes doubted whether what he beheld were mountains or clouds, objects which his crew watched eagerly, to see if with the setting of the sun they would change their colour. But after running westward along the edge of the pack for a few days, he made sure that he now saw land, and somewhat inconsequently assumed it for certain that what he had seen before was land also. The discovery of an Antarctic Continent was announced as a certainty ; a very large land, with a barrier of ice before it, and a range of mountains upon it, was laid down on the map ; and a copy of the map was handed by the rash but generous explorer to Ross, who left Tasmania in the autumn of the same year to look for the magnetic pole, with the two ships *Erebus* and *Terror*, which afterwards bore Sir John Franklin to his fate at the other end of the world.

Ross had so little doubt that the Antarctic Continent was discovered already, that he seems to have been almost disappointed when his way to the magnetic pole was barred by an unknown land. Yet this land, which lay south of the seventieth parallel, and eastward of Balleny's Islands, was the most southerly hitherto seen in the world, and on it rose mountains thousands of feet high, plain and mountain alike robed in stainless snow, except on the cliffs by the shore, where the black rock came out. The coast ran almost due north and south, and along its eastern face Ross advanced steadily till he had beaten Cook's record and also Weddell's, and gone further south than any before him. But he could find no landing-place on the mainland, so choked was every inlet with snow and ice ; only on a small island were the adventurers able to touch Antarctic earth, a few men among thousands of screaming and biting penguins. Fresh mountains came constantly into view as they moved southward ; at last one in latitude 77°, over which what seemed a cloud of snow was blowing ; but when they came nearer they saw that the cloud was smoke, and gave the name of Mount Erebus to a giant volcano higher than Etna, which belches forth smoke and fire in a land where all



A SLEDGE EXPEDITION.

things are frozen. Before Mount Erebus lies Cape Crozier, and round Cape Crozier, Ross hoped to find a way to the westward, so as to reach the magnetic pole by the back of the new land he had found. But as they approached they saw stretching from Cape Crozier "as far as the eye could discern to the eastward," a "low white line," the nature of which they did not understand till they came close enough to see the truth with their eyes. It was a wall of ice a hundred and fifty feet high, without break or slope, but one glittering perpendicular steep, through which, as Ross said, one might as easily pass as through the cliffs of Dover. Along this gleaming rampart Ross ran eastward for 250 miles, and in the succeeding year, 1842, for 200 more without coming to its end, on both of which occasions he reached the high latitude of 78° south, which has never since been approached by any man.

Such is the famous barrier of perpetual ice which guards, and perhaps will ever guard, the secrets of the great southern continent. Only in one place was it possible for those on the mastheads to see what was on the top of it, and the surface appeared to be "an immense plain of frosted silver." That anywhere behind it there may lie an ice-free land with vegetation upon it, such as Nordenskiöld sought vainly in Greenland, but such as Greely's party did actually find in Grinnell Land, it is easier to hope than to believe.

Ross had discovered the Antarctic Continent, in which men still believe, and it remained for him to disprove the existence of that in which they had then begun to believe. After leaving the barrier for the first time, he sailed westwards till he saw Balleny's Islands, and then, with Wilkes's chart before him, he looked ahead to catch sight of Wilkes's land. But, though officers and men crowded into the mastheads of the *Erebus* and *Terror* tney could see nothing, and when they had crossed the place of the ice-barrier described in the chart and were sailing along the mountain-chain, they understood that there was nothing to see. Thirty years later the *Challenger*, during her famous cruise round the world, ran up to within a few miles of where the further or western end of Wilkes's land should be, but her crew saw no land nor any trace thereof. "Termination Land" therefore disappears from the map, as a false creation of clouds and fog-banks.

Space does not allow a description of Ross's further adventures, of the collision between his ships in a sea of heaving ice, or of the perilous passage of the *Erebus* between two huge meeting icebergs, like the Wandering Rocks of the old Greek legend. It must suffice to say that, circumnavigating the globe, he found yet more land to the south of Cape Horn, where some had been seen and named by French explorers before; but this land lies not much beyond the Antarctic Circle, and its full extent is unknown.

For though this "Graham's Land" was visited by a German vessel some years ago, it does not appear that since the days of Ross any new discovery in Antarctic regions has been made. "No man has ever wintered there," no one has carried on the researches into the earth's magnetism which Ross then made. The Australian Committee has ascertained that the whalers and sealers of the Antarctic never venture into high latitudes, fearing the rough seas and fields of ice. But the Australians, as is natural, look with the more interest towards that unknown country, where the Glacial epoch still reigns, the home of the cold wind and the icebergs, which an Australian poet calls—

"The white south land
Alone with God and silence."

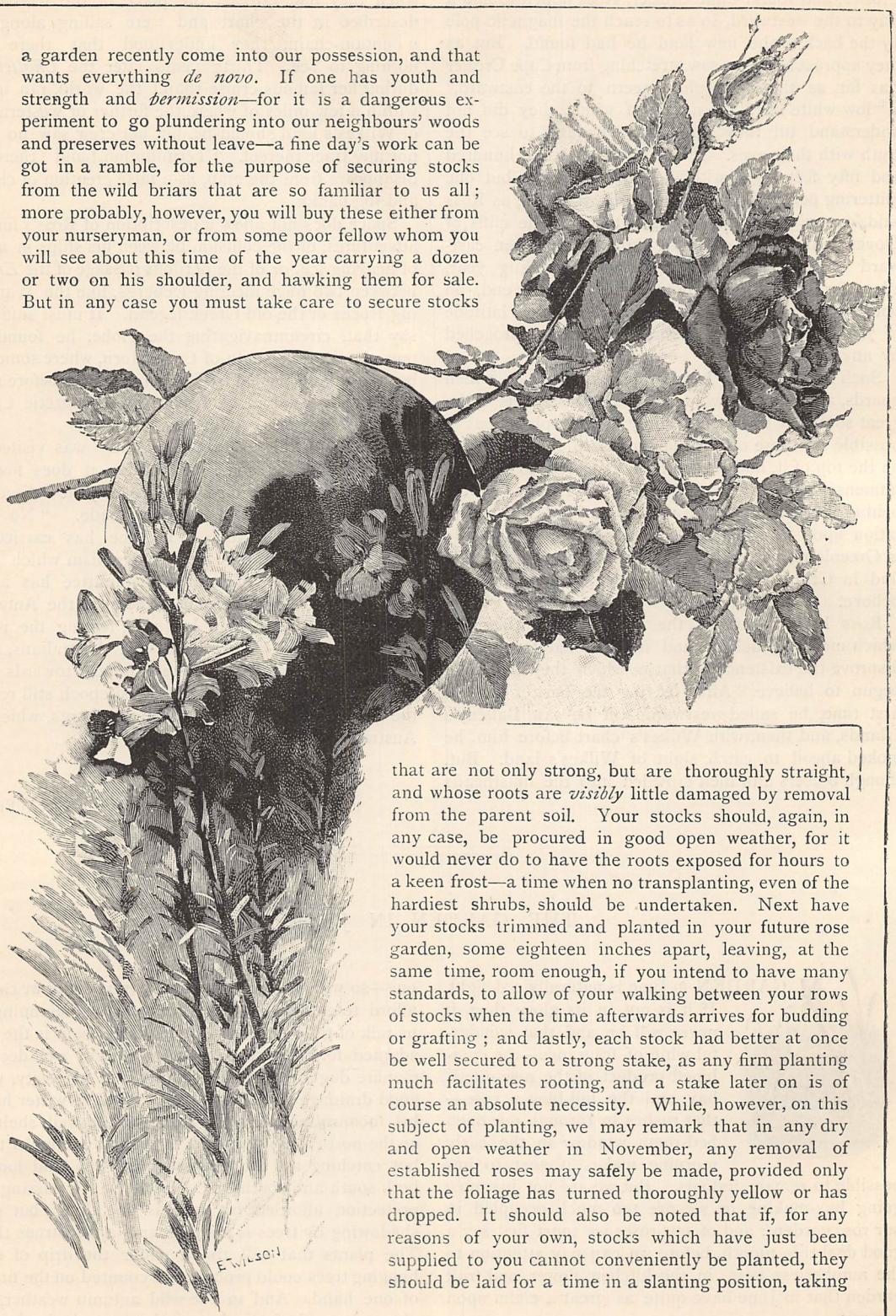
E. J. WEBB.

THE GARDEN IN JUNE.

GARDEN in June is naturally a delight. If it is not in its glory then, it never will be, and that wonderful whiff of fragrance—the combined product of the new-mown hay and the full-blown rose—that rushes in through our open bed-room window in the early morning makes it next to impossible to remain indoors. But we are not just now going hay-making, or we are too much occupied in our rose garden; and of our roses we must first say a good deal this month, before we can pay attention to the numberless items in the kitchen, flower, and fruit garden that in June have quite as great a claim upon our care.

And the subject of the cultivation of roses is a wide one—so wide a one that into elaborate detail we cannot afford to enter. To begin then at the beginning, let us talk of the soil first. A good deep loam is the best adapted for rose-growing, and plenty of well-decayed manure dug in about November is a necessity, while good drainage is certainly another. The writer has in his memory now a lovely rose garden, well sheltered on the north and north-west by a small avenue of trees, but catching all the early morning sun, and looking both south and south-east. Let us say in passing that protection afforded by trees is one thing, but overshadowing by trees is another and a disastrous thing. The plants that will thrive under the drip of overhanging trees could probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. And in the wild autumn weather, say about the end of October, we begin to look about us for stocks—for we are just now supposing the case of

a garden recently come into our possession, and that wants everything *de novo*. If one has youth and strength and *permission*—for it is a dangerous experiment to go plundering into our neighbours' woods and preserves without leave—a fine day's work can be got in a ramble, for the purpose of securing stocks from the wild briars that are so familiar to us all; more probably, however, you will buy these either from your nurseryman, or from some poor fellow whom you will see about this time of the year carrying a dozen or two on his shoulder, and hawking them for sale. But in any case you must take care to secure stocks



that are not only strong, but are thoroughly straight, and whose roots are *visibly* little damaged by removal from the parent soil. Your stocks should, again, in any case, be procured in good open weather, for it would never do to have the roots exposed for hours to a keen frost—a time when no transplanting, even of the hardiest shrubs, should be undertaken. Next have your stocks trimmed and planted in your future rose garden, some eighteen inches apart, leaving, at the same time, room enough, if you intend to have many standards, to allow of your walking between your rows of stocks when the time afterwards arrives for budding or grafting; and lastly, each stock had better at once be well secured to a strong stake, as any firm planting much facilitates rooting, and a stake later on is of course an absolute necessity. While, however, on this subject of planting, we may remark that in any dry and open weather in November, any removal of established roses may safely be made, provided only that the foliage has turned thoroughly yellow or has dropped. It should also be noted that if, for any reasons of your own, stocks which have just been supplied to you cannot conveniently be planted, they should be laid for a time in a slanting position, taking

care, however, that the roots are well covered with mould. But, probably, our rose hints will be more useful if we follow up our observations by giving those which each month in the year consecutively calls for.

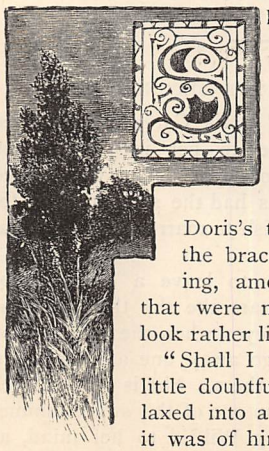
December and January are mostly periods of rest for our roses; perhaps the only thing necessary then is to attend well to the security, more especially of old-established roses. These often have long straggling branches that sway about in the wind, and in a gale are likely to break off and damage your standard. Where, then, very large growth has been made, the longer branches had better, in open weather, be a little shortened, though not yet pruned. February we may perhaps pass by, but March in the rose garden is a busy month. In March, the general pruning is given to all our roses, and this operation requires some little judgment; get off first the thin and what we may call spindly branches, and then prune, having some regard to the form you wish your standard to take. The further back you cut, the stronger will come the shoots afterwards; yet it is not advisable, perhaps, to prune too closely. And in March, the first spring month of the year, you will have to watch closely any buds that will begin to break out in all directions along your stock; these, as they appear, must be carefully rubbed off. And next you will notice sprouting up, at and round the base of your stock, some healthy and vigorously-growing shoots, called *suckers;* these must be at once grubbed up by the root, as they and the constantly pushing growth along your stock will exhaust the buds which you so carefully inserted in the preceding summer, and of which process we must presently speak. The way to get a sucker properly off is first to gently remove the earth down to the spot where it joins the root, and then and there cut it off close, and at once replace the soil.

And next, by the end of this present month of June, and indeed for the next two months, the interesting process of budding may be carried on. This, let us say, is best done in the evening of the day, in thundery weather, rather than in those long, cloudless, hot days, but never under a boiling-hot sun. First, it is best to go to some nurseryman, and then make your selection of buds. At the *base* of the leaf is a small bud, which, upon the fall of the leaf, would eventually become a branch. Now, by taking a leaf off with part of the bark, this little bud comes with it; and by inserting this bark under the bark of our wild stock, a union is formed, and the choice rose that you saw at the nurseryman's will in time thus make its appearance on your stock. You will know if your stock is fit to bud upon by ascertaining if the bark is easily raised with your budding-knife, and this, by the end of June or early in July, in a favourable season, is always the case. With your knife make an incision in the branch on which you are about to bud, and in the form of a cross, merely cutting through the bark *only;* then, with the ivory or thin wood handle of your budding-knife, gently raise the bark on either side; next, shave out of the little bud in your hand a very thin piece of the wood, beginning half an inch below the leaf, and taking your knife along to come out half an inch above the leaf. Then you insert the bud under the raised bark, taking care that the leaf, which is where the bud is, comes exactly where the cross-cut is, and next tie carefully round with worsted so as to secure the bud in its place, leaving only the leaf and bud exposed, bringing the worsted round several times. A small bunch of damp moss tied round afterwards is a good plan in a warm season, as the bud would, in great heat, or in the absence of moisture, be necessarily burnt up.

"NOBLESSE OBLIGE."

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.



"SHALL I wear it, or not?" said Doris Carew.

She was standing in her dressing-room, and in her hand was a plain gold bracelet, on which was engraved the motto "*Noblesse oblige.*" It was Doris's twenty-first birthday, and the bracelet had come that morning, amongst the numerous gifts that were making her dressing-table look rather like a stall at a fancy fair.

"Shall I wear it?" she repeated, a little doubtfully, and then her lips relaxed into a smile. "How extravagant it was of him to buy it! but I suppose the motto tempted him. I wonder if he remembered the night when we were all choosing mottoes, and he and I both fixed on that? I wonder——"

"Doris," said Lady Carew, now coming into her daughter's room, "are you not ready? There are carriages coming up the drive, and Sir Philip Chisholm has been here nearly half an hour."

"But that is his own fault, if he chose to come before the time," said Doris, with unanswerable logic.

She clasped the bracelet on her arm, and followed her mother downstairs, and out into the garden, where the freshly-marked tennis-courts shone in the afternoon sun, and Sir Philip Chisholm, a tall, soldierly man, with iron-grey hair and a keen, bronzed face, was walking rather disconsolately by Lord Carew's side.

Another man was there also, a young lieutenant, whose face brightened at the sight of Doris, and then

relapsed into a gravity born of the fact that his regiment was under orders for India, and that this would be his last day at Undercliff, or, indeed, in England.

It is permitted to a man to look sad when he is looking his last on "England, home, and beauty," and though Wilfrid Lyle wore a brave enough front all day, when at last he found himself standing by Doris on the verge of the cliff, and gazing down on the sea that was to bear him away from her to-morrow, the face the girl saw in the luminous June twilight was very grave and sad.

Doris herself was conscious of fighting against similar feelings, but the consciousness only made her anxious not to betray them.

"Every one is going in now," she said suggestively, looking towards the house.

"Is that any reason why we should?" said Mr. Lyle quickly. "My last night, Doris; and if we wait a few moments the moon will be up. I should like to see it rise once more, with you."

The sea lay full in front of them, the water looking dark and still in the evening light, and the waves breaking in soft little ripples on the beach below. Overhead the sky was palely blue, with stars faintly flickering here and there, but almost as he spoke it seemed to widen and brighten, and a streak of gold gleamed on the water's edge.

"There it is!" said Doris, under her breath—"Oh, Wilfrid, how lovely it is! When one sees anything so beautiful as that, doesn't it seem as if all one's life must be nobler and better for having seen it?"

"Yes," assented Mr. Lyle, in a tone of deep conviction. But he was looking at Doris, not at the moon and sea.

If he had only been rich—as rich as Sir Philip Chisholm, for instance, who had come back from India with a lac of rupees and a K.C.B.—what might he not have ventured to say to her now? But what right had he to speak of love to this proud young beauty, who could as little mate with a poor squire's son as if she had been a princess of the realm? There was some distant cousinship between them that gave him the *entrée* of the house, and the right to call her "Doris," but he told himself bitterly that Lord Carew would as soon think of giving Doris to his footman as to him.

And Doris? This was the question which had been shaping itself on his lips all day, but which, it seemed to the penniless lieutenant, honour forbade him to ask of Doris to-night—Doris, who had smiled on him, he knew, but whose smiles were like the sunshine, and fell equally on the evil and the good—or, at least, upon Sir Philip Chisholm and himself.

There was, perhaps, not quite the equality he imagined; but Wilfrid Lyle was humble in his love, as all men are who love worthily and well. But humble as he was, and sternly as he had told himself that it would be a base requital of Lord Carew's hospitality to make love to the young beauty, who was destined for so much more brilliant a match, Wilfrid Lyle felt his resolution almost overthrown as Doris moved her arm, and the moonlight glittered on the bracelet he had sent her that morning. Would she have chosen that of all others to wear to-day, if she had not liked him a little?

But that did not alter the fact that he had no right to woo her; and was not the legend on the bracelet he had chosen for her "*Noblesse oblige*"? Would she ever guess all that it meant to him, and all he was to surrender for it?

He stood so long silent that Doris glanced shyly at him, and then looked away as silent as himself. Something in his face made it impossible for her to speak.

She stood by him with half-averted face, looking at the smooth summer waters, and listening to their plash upon the beach. Suddenly he moved a little forward, with a quick, impatient gesture.

"Do you know what I should say to-night if I were a rich man, or—or a cad!" he asked abruptly, coming so close to her that their shadows blended on the narrow pathway behind them.

Doris did not answer; what answer could she make? She stood quite still, the colour mounting in her face, and her heart beating till she thought he must hear it as plainly as she did herself. Her fingers plucked restlessly at the flowers that lay against the slim white throat, and he laid his hand on hers.

"Don't," he said. "Give me one instead. It is all I ask, Doris: all I dare ask before I go."

Doris hesitated, for the flowers were, as Mr. Lyle knew well enough, forget-me-nots, and Doris Carew was not a girl who gave flowers for the asking, least of all flowers like these. But at last she took one, and held it shyly towards him, and the long fingers closed on hers.

There was a silence that seemed vocal to both, and then Wilfrid loosed her hand with a long-drawn sigh.

"There is a motto," he said, touching lightly the golden circlet on which the moonbeams glittered cold and bright, "that every gentleman, however poor, may take for his own. It is mine, Doris, though it means the surrender of all that could make life worth having. I cannot tell you what I would to-night, for both of us have duties, and the motto we both have chosen is, '*Noblesse oblige*.'"

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

IT is three years later, and Doris Carew is unwedded still. Lovers have come to her in plenty, men who wooed her for her money, and men who wooed her for herself, but she has had the same answer for them all. She does not wish to marry, she says, or at least *not yet*.

The words might seem to leave a loophole for hope, but no one who hears the shy thrill in Miss Carew's voice, or sees her eyes when she utters them, ever hopes again. They go away, one after another, and Doris does not regret them. She is content, well content, she tells herself, on one of the sweet summer evenings that always bring Wilfrid to her mind, as

"SHE IS LOST IN THOUGHT, IN MUSINGS THAT ARE NOT WITHOUT SWEETNESS."

"*NOBLESSE OBLIGE*" (*p* 403).

she sits on the branch of a great tree that grows conveniently low, and looks straight before her with eyes that are wistful rather than sad. And then she smiles ever so little, and whispers again, "Well content—to wait!"

She has come out to gather flowers, and the size of her basket bears witness to the magnitude of her intentions; but the basket is empty, and the flowers bloom ungathered at her feet. She is lost in thought, in musings that are not without sweetness, but that give a pensiveness to her face that was not there three years ago, and which end at last in a long-drawn sigh.

It is just three years since Wilfrid Lyle went to his man's life of circumstance and change, with its rare touches of memory and feeling, and Doris was left to a girl's life of memory and feeling, with its infrequent touch of circumstance or change, and she has scarcely heard of him since. Sometimes she sees his name in the papers, and once or twice her father has heard from him, and that is all. There was a letter yesterday, stiff and formal, as a man's letters are apt to be when the thought that may not be spoken outruns the commonplace civilities that may.

"*Remember me to Doris, if she has not forgotten me*," Wilfrid had written, and Lord Carew, reading nothing between the lines, had read it out before them all.

"No, I have not forgotten him," Doris said quickly, but with such a sudden flaming blush that Sir Philip Chisholm, who was dining at Undercliff, asked in a startled voice of whom they were speaking.

"Who? *who*, did you say?" he stammered, looking at the foreign letter in Lord Carew's hand.

"Wilfrid Lyle, a sort of nephew of mine, in the Rifles, you know. Don't you remember he was down here two or three years ago?"

Sir Philip did not remember it, but the name fixed itself now in his mind for ever—the name at which Doris had blushed. It had come to be patent to every one that Sir Philip Chisholm was paying his addresses to the stately young beauty who had sent away so many younger men, but though he owned, with a sigh, that he had never received anything that the most sanguine man could take for encouragement—nothing but those pleasant smiles which Doris accorded to all, and which, as Wilfrid Lyle had said, fell equally on the evil and the good—he had always comforted himself by the reflection that if she showed him no preference, he could certainly point to no one more favoured than himself.

And now, here was Doris blushing like the morn! Was it wonderful that he felt he should never forget the name of Wilfrid Lyle?

He did not hear it again at Undercliff, but some months later he was dining at Parkhurst, and the name smote his ear at mess. There was the clatter of many tongues, and Sir Philip was a little deaf, but he caught Mr. Lyle's name, and it seemed to him that it was a wedding they were talking of.

"Did I understand you that Mr. Lyle is *married?*" he asked his neighbour, a very unfledged lieutenant, who seemed to have almost lost his normal shyness in speaking of the event that might mean as much to Colonel Sir Philip Chisholm.

"Yes, last week," answered the boy readily. "He married a cousin of mine, an awfully jolly girl, and I've just come back from the wedding. They met on the steamer coming home."

"Was his name *Wilfrid?*" asked Sir Philip very anxiously.

"Yes, I think so. But Katie was shy, and always called him Mr. Lyle."

"You're not sure about the Wilfrid, then? I should very much like to know. I—I fancy he may turn out to be an old friend of mine," said the colonel mendaciously.

He looked so anxious and disturbed, that the young man said he believed he had one of Lyle's cards in his room, and would look for it after dinner, and Sir Philip took care that the promise was kept.

Before he rode home that night he had seen the card, and the name upon it was "*Wilfrid C. Lyle.*"

Sir Philip Chisholm felt that the oblong little bit of pasteboard was a trump card for him, and played it the next time he went to Undercliff; but he knew very little of Doris if he expected her to show an outward wound. Just for a moment her lips were white, or he fancied so; the colour was in them again so quickly, he could not be sure. Perhaps he did not wish to be. To pain Doris was not his desire, only to let her know that the man at whose name she had blushed a year ago could be nothing to her now. And as he looked at her, he began to think that it was all a mistake, that the blush at which he had so disquieted himself had meant nothing. If it had meant all he fancied, could she have looked as she did now?

"I wonder Wilfrid did not tell us?" said Lord Carew. "But I have not heard from him for a long time now. He has left off writing, I think."

"Yes," said his wife, glancing a little anxiously at Doris, and looking as quickly away. "Are you sure, Sir Philip, that it is the same Mr. Lyle?"

"It is Wilfrid C. Lyle; that is all I know," said Sir Philip; and Doris said in a voice that was only a little clearer and sharper than usual—

"Yes; Wilfrid Carew. That is his name, I know."

"You know more than I do," laughed her father. "He never uses the 'Carew,' and I had forgotten all about it."

And then the talk fell on other matters, and Doris joined gaily in it. Whatever she might think of the news Sir Philip had brought, she heard it and made no sign. Other women might have betrayed themselves in so sharp and sudden a shock, but "*Noblesse oblige*," and Doris Carew only smiled in her pain.

Sir Philip went home walking on air, and before Wilfrid Lyle's honeymoon had well run out he had asked Doris to be his wife, and Doris had consented.

"I know I am not worthy of you," the chivalrous soldier said; "but if you could try to like me, Doris! Could you learn to like me—in time—do you think?"

"How can I tell?" said Doris, with a sad little smile; "how can I tell?"

It seemed to Doris that she had done with love for ever. Once she had thought, whispering it shyly to herself among the summer flowers, that she loved Wilfrid Lyle, but if she was sure of anything now, it was that this was no longer true. She, Doris Carew, love a man who had trifled with her, and wedded another woman! The wild pain that tore her heart at the thought was indignation, contempt, hatred—anything but love.

"I cannot tell if I shall ever love you," she said to Sir Philip now. "I only know that I do not love any other man, and that I never shall."

"Then I am not afraid!" said Sir Philip, and he bent and kissed the fair, proud face that turned so pale at his touch.

When he looked at her again, there was a strange, sombre scorn in the sweet, dark eyes; but it was for herself, not for him. For in the second in which Philip Chisholm held her in his arms, and pressed his lips to hers, she knew—and hated herself for the knowledge—that she would gladly have given all the years of her life if it could have been *not* Philip Chisholm, but Wilfrid Lyle. And so she stood leaning against the heavily-mullioned window, curiously agitated and disturbed, and Sir Philip thrilled with a pleasant sense of power.

She would not have trembled in his arms, and been so agitated by his kiss, he told himself, if she had not been much nearer loving him than she knew.

Suddenly Doris lifted her head, and spoke.

"There is something I ought to tell you," she said, in tones that were low and faint with effort; "and perhaps you will not care for me when you know."

"Perhaps not!" he said, smiling. But his smiles died out under Doris's strange looks.

"I did not tell you quite all the truth just now," she whispered, and her eyes were so full of pain that he caught her hand, and held it, as one holds the hand of a friend under the surgeon's knife. "I—I *did* care for some one else—once."

Sir Philip drew a long breath of relief.

"Is that all?" he said kindly, with the serene acquiescence of age in the inevitable follies of youth. "My dear Doris, men of my age do not expect to be a girl's first love."

Doris felt as if she had subjected herself to an unnecessary humiliation. Her face crimsoned as she answered rather coldly—

"Perhaps I need not have told you. But I was advised a good while ago to take '*Noblesse oblige*' for my motto, and I have."

"You have done all that is noble and right," said Sir Philip, "and believe me, I appreciate your confidence. But if you can assure me that you care for no one else now, it is all I ask. You do not love this other man—whoever he is—still?"

"Still?" she flashed out indignantly. "*Still?* Am I not Doris Carew?"

But when Sir Philip had gone, Doris crept away to the grassy verge of the cliff, and threw herself on the soft turf in a passion of shame and pain. It might be true, it *was* true, she told herself vehemently, that she did not love Wilfrid Lyle now—her marriage would prove that to every one, even to him, even to herself; but not the less was earth desolate, and heaven far.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

"DORIS!" called Lord Carew; "Doris, where are you?" There was disturbance and a sort of excitement in his tone, and as Doris opened the library door, and came into the wide sunlit hall, he looked at her with almost comical consternation. It was the day before her wedding, and Doris had been writing farewell letters all the morning, and looked tired and pale, but Lord Carew was too perturbed to notice his daughter's looks.

"The strangest thing has happened!" he said. "You remember Wilfrid—Wilfrid Lyle?"

"Yes," said Doris, steadying herself against a marble table, and feeling that she could not have uttered another word to save her life.

"He has come into a fortune, it seems. His father died last year, and an uncle and cousin since, so Wilfrid has come in for the Deerhurst estate."

"Yes?" said Doris, in tones that tried to be indifferent. Why should her father tell her of Wilfrid's good fortune, or assume that it could be of interest to her? She drew herself up, and her brows contracted; but Lord Carew was more embarrassed than herself.

"Well, he is a rich man now, and—and the long and the short of it is, Doris, that it must have been all moonshine about his marriage. He *can't* be married, for he doesn't seem to have heard of your engagement, and he writes to ask me for your hand—he does, upon my honour! Poor fellow, I'd no idea he'd ever thought of you; but he says he has for years, and didn't like to speak till he had something to offer you."

Doris did not speak. What was there she could say? But the table against which she leant was hardly colder than the hand that rested on it.

"The curious thing is that he doesn't seem to have much doubt of his answer," pursued Lord Carew. "He says he is coming for it himself, and will be with us this evening. It's awkward to know what to do—and Chisholm coming to dinner too! 'Pon my life, it's quite a little comedy."

Doris set her teeth, and her eyes flashed.

"Yes," she said; "I dare say that is the best way of looking at it."

"It won't be Wilfrid's way, I'm afraid," said her father. "He seems desperately hard hit."

"Does he?" said Doris, with a curious little smile. "He will get over it. That sort of thing doesn't kill people, papa."

She went away, with the young life pulsating fiercely in her veins, a girl whom "that sort of thing" had not been able to slay, and her father looked after her with some perplexity.

"She takes it very coolly," he said, glancing again at the letter in his hand; "but, Wilfrid? I'm afraid he'll feel it very much. And the post gets in here so late, there's no time to stop him: not even if I tele-

graphed. Poor fellow, I shan't know what to say to him. I shall have to break it to him as best I can; but I'd rather face a cavalry charge."

And, indeed, Lord Carew felt a tightening of his throat, and a mistiness in his own eyes, as he told the disappointed suitor he had come too late. Wilfrid heard him with a dreary patience, bearing it as such men bear adverse fate—composed enough to outward seeming, but with a bitterness in his heart that was like the bitterness of death. Lord Carew seemed, indeed, the more moved of the two, but he understood the other's stern self-command, and when Mr. Lyle asked to see Doris, he did not know how to refuse.

"It can't hurt you to say a civil word to him," he said, when Doris shrank back; "it isn't as if *you* had cared for him, you know."

"No," said Doris faintly.

"Then go to him, my dear. He will say nothing to pain you; he is too much a gentleman for that. And, after all, it is not your fault, you know. You have no cause for self-reproach."

"Does he know about to-morrow?"

"Of course, of course. I told him everything, and he only wants just to say 'Good-bye.' You can't refuse him that, poor fellow, if it's any consolation."

No; Doris felt that she could not refuse. She went into the drawing-room where Wilfrid was waiting, telling herself proudly that she should, at least, know how to meet him as Philip Chisholm's bride—she, Doris Carew!

But the proudest women sometimes overrate their strength. She had not realised what it would be to stand face to face with him once more, to feel her hands in his, to meet the eyes and hear the voice for which she had hungered so long in vain. She stood mute and pale, unable to utter a word.

There was a cloud of pain and wonder in Wilfrid's eyes, and his face was almost as white as her own.

"Doris," he said, "Doris!" There could be no pretence of commonplace greeting between them, but till she heard his voice she did not realise how much better it would have been that there should have been no greeting at all. She looked up, too shaken and agitated to speak, but perhaps her silence seemed to both more natural than speech. In that supreme moment of meeting, neither thought of conventional civilities, neither thought of anything but the other. Neither of them even saw that a gentleman in evening dress had come in unannounced, and was standing just within the door as if turned to stone.

"Doris," said Wilfrid, "I will not take your father's tale without a word from you. Is it true? And is this thing of your own free will?"

She bent her head silently, and he let her hands fall.

"And I thought such different things," he muttered. "Did you not know how I loved you? Doris, did you not know?"

"How could I?" she whispered, in a flat, toneless voice. "They said—they said——" Her voice faltered, and trailed off into a despairing silence, but Mr. Lyle understood.

"They told you I was married? Your father had heard some foolish story about that. I suppose there was some confusion with my cousin Charlie, who was married a little while ago; but surely *you* might have known!"

"It was *Wilfrid*," she interrupted: "Wilfrid C. Lyle."

"Of course—Wilfrid Charles: We call him Charlie, to distinguish him from me, but he is always called Wilfrid at home. Was that the dreadful mistake that robbed me of you? Oh, Doris, Doris! how could you believe it—*you?* Had you forgotten that last night, and what you gave me then?"

She hid her face with a sharp and bitter cry, and the man who was watching them, himself so unthought of and unseen, scowled fiercely, and clenched his hand as he looked.

"Did you not care for me when you gave me *this?*" said Wilfrid, and his tone compelled her to look up. He held out an open pocket-book, and on it lay a small withered flower, scentless, and brown, and dry. "Did you not care for me *then?*" he repeated; and Doris could not speak, could not even control the trembling that shook her from head to foot.

"You loved me, *then!*" he cried, with swift conviction; "and, Doris, my Doris! I believe you love me *now!*"

A moment Doris bent her head on her clasped hands, and then she stepped back a pace, and looked at him, and trembling as she was, her gaze neither shrank nor wavered. Her face was set and pale, but there was something so noble and lofty in her look, that both the men held their breath.

"Dear," she said, "this is the last time I shall ever see you, and if it is any comfort to you to know that I love you, take it! But even for you I cannot go back from my word, or wrong the good and noble gentleman whose wife I shall be to-morrow. Did you not yourself teach me '*Noblesse oblige*'?"

Her tone and look went to Wilfrid's heart, and not to his only. Sir Philip Chisholm strode suddenly down the room, and fronted them with eyes that held a great sorrow and a great resolve.

"Miss Carew," said the grey-haired soldier whom Doris had called, not untruly, a good and noble gentleman, "Miss Carew, I have come to bid you good-bye. I love you too truly to sacrifice your life to mine. Yes, Doris, my darling! I know that you were willing. I know that you would have kept your word and done your duty—and broken your heart in doing it! Do you think I will let you do it, or that an old soldier shall be outdone in heroism by a girl? I, too, have a duty to perform, and that is to set you free. I, too, have a watchword, and it is, like yours and his—*Noblesse oblige.*'"

The Two Gates.

Words by EDWARD OXENFORD. *Music by* CHARLES WILLIAM PEARCE, Mus. D. Cantab.

TENOR.

PIANO.

Tempo di valse.

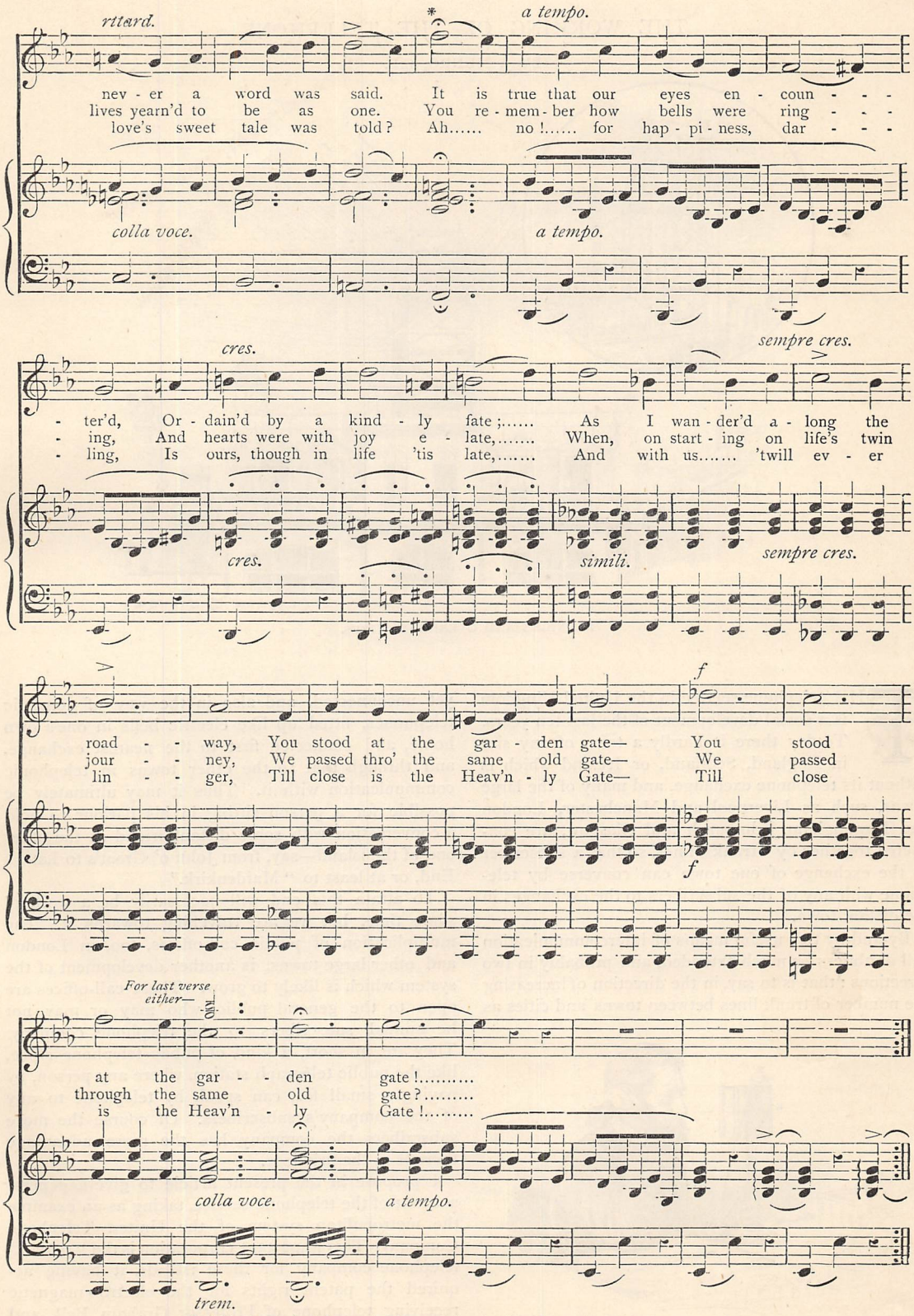
p *cres.* *dim.*

1. It is ma - ny a year a - go, dear— Ah me! how the
2. As the brook - let will seek the sea, dear, As flow'rs ev - er
3. Now that sil - ve - ry strands have come, dear, And ta - ken the

cres. *dim.*

p

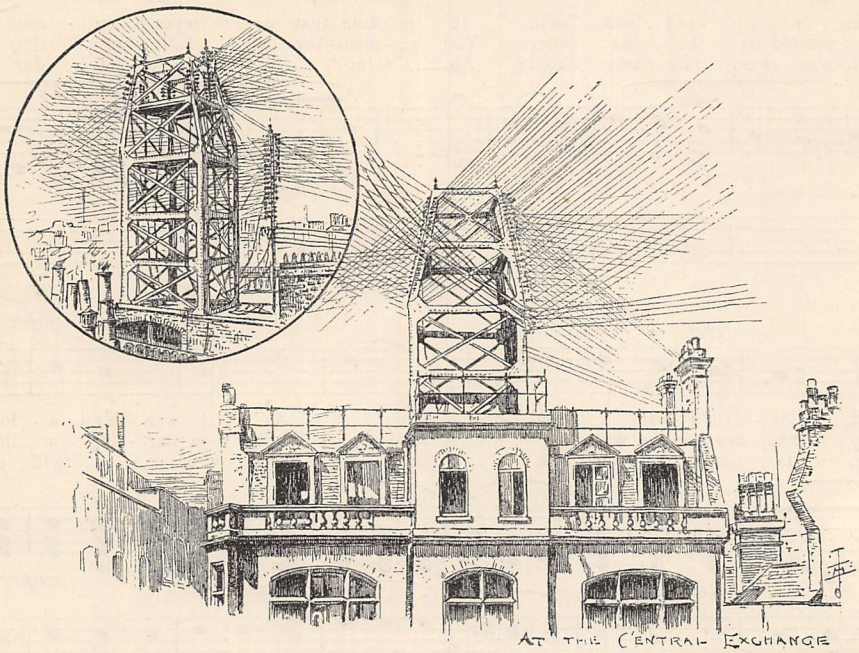
time has fled— Since we met on a morn in sum - - mer, And
hail the sun, As the song - sters all crave for spring - - time, Our
place of gold, Do we ev - er re - gret that sum - - mer, When



* *This pause had better be observed in singing the 2nd and 3rd verses only.*

THE WORKING OF THE TELEPHONE.

BY J. MUNRO, C.E.



DERRICKS AND OVERHEAD WIRES.

THE telephone service in the United Kingdom is a social development of the last ten years. To-day there is hardly a town of any size in England, Scotland, or Ireland which is without its telephone exchange, and many of the large towns, such as Liverpool and Manchester, London and Birmingham, Edinburgh and Glasgow, are connected together by "trunk" lines, so that a subscriber to the exchange of one town can converse by telephone with any of the subscribers to the exchanges in the distant town.

By-and-by this useful means of intercommunication will doubtless be much extended, and probably in two directions : that is to say, in the direction of increasing the number of trunk lines between towns and cities as yet unconnected, and also in the way of domestic telephones, fitted up like electric bells in one's own home, and connected first to the nearest exchange, and through that to the other towns in telephonic communication with it. Thus it may ultimately be possible for a person sitting in his parlour to hold a conversation with some distant friend at the other end of the island—say, from John o' Groat's to Land's End, or at least to "Maidenkirk."

A SUBSCRIBER.

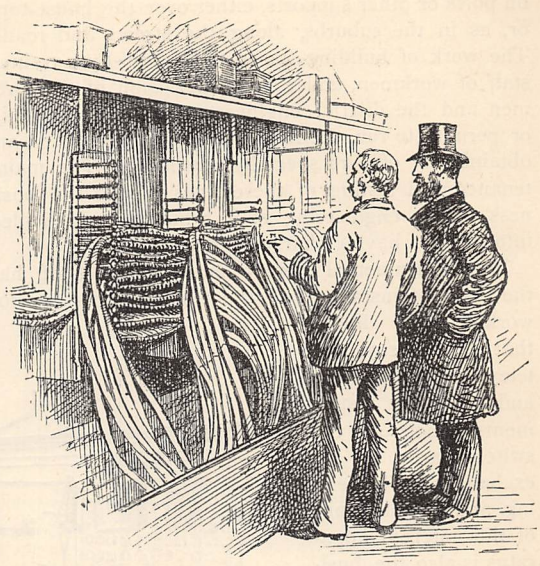
To attain this end will necessarily be a work of some time, but we are travelling towards it. The multiplication of public call-offices, too, in London and other large towns, is another development of the system which is likely to grow. These call-offices are open to the general public, who may or may not be annual subscribers to the telephone company. They are, in short, a kind of public telephone office, like the public telegraph station, where any person, by paying a small fee, can speak by telephone to any of the company's subscribers. Of course the more subscribers the company has the more advantage there is in the privilege.

I propose in the present article to give a general account of the telephone service, taking as an example the metropolitan system of the United Telephone Company. This important corporation is the "parent" telephone company for these islands, it having acquired the patent rights for the electro-magnetic receiving telephone of Professor Graham Bell, and the carbon transmitter of Mr. Edison.

A number of subsidiary or affiliated companies were formed under the rights of the United Telephone Company, to work the provinces. Thus, for example, the Manchester and Liverpool system is operated by the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company. The Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and other systems in Scotland are the work of the National Telephone Company. In Ireland, too, there are local companies charged with the telephone service. The United Telephone Company reserved to itself the metropolitan district, including all Middlesex, and as much of the Home counties as comes within the twelve-mile radius. There is an ample field for effort here, the population forming, as it were, a nation of itself, and the commercial interests being enormous.

During the last ten years the company's system has been spread out like a network over the whole London area, and extended far into the suburbs, not to speak of the trunk lines to Brighton, Birmingham, and other centres without the limits. Telephone exchanges, as well as call-offices, have been opened in every part of London, and a large number of private lines have been run. There are nearly 5,000 subscribers to the exchange system, any one of whom can speak by wire to all the rest, if he wishes, by night or day, either from his own office or home, or from any of the public call-offices in the streets, if he should happen to be out in the town. Moreover, any of the general public, on payment of a small fee, can communicate with these 5,000 subscribers.

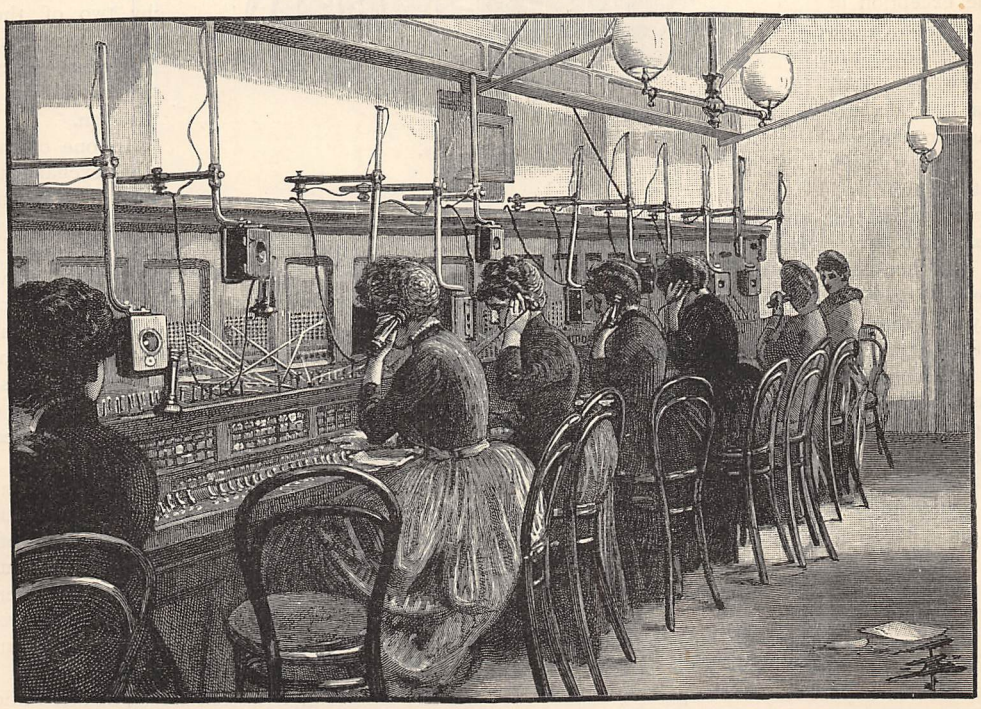
The working of the company is, of course, carried on by division of labour, the whole staff being



THE WIRES AT THE BACK OF THE SWITCH-BOARD.

divided into several departments. One of these is concerned with the purely business portion of the work. The others have to do with the construction and maintenance of the lines and apparatus, and the working of the exchanges.

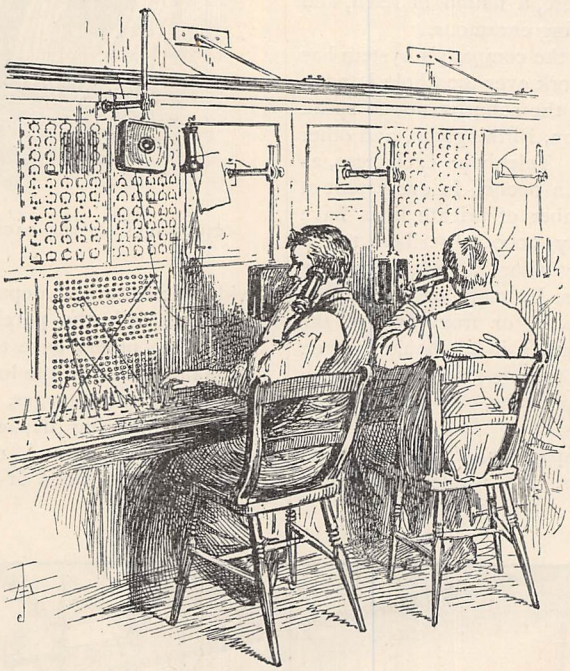
The engineering department is directly charged with the erection and maintenance of the lines. These consist of wires of iron, copper, or bronze run



TRANSMITTERS' ROOM AT THE QUEEN VICTORIA STREET EXCHANGE.

on poles or other supports, either over the house-tops or, as in the suburbs, along the streets and roads. The work of building the lines is done by a trained staff of workmen, under the supervision of the foremen and the district engineers. The "way-leaves," or permits to run the lines over private property, are obtained by officers specially appointed. The maintenance and testing of these lines is also the business of the engineering staff, which is sub-divided into sections having charge of certain districts.

The instrumental department of the staff has the duty of installing all the indoor apparatus for working the lines: that is to say, the telephones, batteries, and accessory instruments, such as the switch-boards in the exchanges. The testing and maintenance of this internal apparatus is also the business of this department, which, in addition to periodical examiners, includes a special band of what the Americans call "Trouble-men," who are prepared to attend at once to sudden calls for assistance due to unforeseen accidents. The operators, who, with the exception of a few exchanges worked by boys, are all young women, form a separate department, under the governance of a lady superintendent and her deputy assistants, who visit the exchanges. In each exchange, moreover, there is a lady clerk-in-charge, with her assistants, who take turns in superintending the operators while on duty.



BOY OPERATORS.

The young lady operators belong to a very good class of society. They are mostly the daughters of professional men, or the higher members of the middle class; and a number of them have entered the service from the desire of having an occupation, in preference to being idle. They are as a rule intelligent and well-bred young ladies, and they perform this work, which indeed seems adapted to them, with a deftness and skill which is highly pleasing.

The duty of each consists in sitting at her particular section of the switch-board, watching for the call signal from some subscriber, then speaking to him by telephone to ascertain whom he wishes to be put in communication with; and finally connecting his wire on the switch-board with that of the person he intends to speak to. This is done by means of two brass plugs, joined by a flexible conductor. The operator thrusts the plugs into holes corresponding to the "telephone numbers" of the two subscribers, and leaves them to talk until the signal is given that they have "finished." In the "multiple" switch-board, which is now used in the best exchanges, the whole of the subscribers' wires are brought to every section of the board, so that each operator can join any two subscribers together without moving from her place, or asking the help of any other operator. This arrangement, while it complicates the rear of the board with a multiplicity of connecting wires, is well calculated to expedite the correspondence, and a quick silent manipulation of the board.

The lady operators have different hours of duty. Some begin at 9 o'clock in the morning, and leave off at 5 o'clock in the evening. Others go on at 10 a.m., and off at 6 p.m. Others again at 11 a.m. or 12 noon, and finish at 7 or 9 p.m. Then there is the night work, which is attended to by one operator in each exchange, from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. next morning; but this is taken by two of them on alternate nights during a week at a time, the others taking it in rotation.

In one of the London exchanges there are as many as twenty-five lady operators; and in some others, seventeen to nineteen.

Candidates for the service are taken on without any preliminary training in the work; but they require, of course, to have good manners and education. They receive a small weekly wage to begin with, which is gradually raised as they improve in skill or advance in the service. If the work does not offer a career for women, it at least provides a neat and lady-like employment.

At all of the exchanges there is a luncheon-room, where the girls can retire to their meal, be it luncheon or tea. They are allowed a sufficient time off duty for this purpose, and can either go out and purchase what they want, or bring it with them when they come. Their tea, of course, is made on the premises.

A telephone exchange in full operation is an interesting sight, and quite as worthy of an artist's pencil as the bead-stringers of Venice, which Mr. Fildes has travelled so far to paint. The graceful and busy

movements of the girls, the different types of face, and variety of character, would afford material for a picture, apart from any touch of romance that might be added; and behind it all would be the invisible presence of the great world to whose affairs these sisters of the wire were ministering.

MIND YOUR STOPS.

PARAPHRASING an old copy-book maxim of my childhood, I am strongly minded to say, "Punctuation is the soul of style." It is true that the ancient literatures got along very well without it; and I have heard an ingenious argument to the effect that the very absence of any such aid to the reader strengthened the fibre of his understanding, inasmuch as it compelled the exercise of a vigorous common sense; and the smallest schoolboy who has gone as far as Cæsar's "Commentaries" begins to have an inkling of some such idea as soon as he has found out that the principal verb —this being one secret of the great leader's emphasis of statement—is generally to be looked for at the end of the sentence. Commas, colons, and semicolons would have been useless to the Roman writer, the elegant terseness of whose language, which by means of its terminal forms infallibly indicated the arrangement, needed no hedging and fencing round about with parenthetical marks and boundaries. He depended for the security of his meaning on the mere virtue of his exquisite syntax. This would have been thrown out of gear, its whole sense destroyed, or —still worse—disturbed, unsettled, and perverted, by any miscollocation (had such been possible) of related words.

We owe punctuation—all of it except the full point, which closes and seals a sentence—to Faust and Gutenberg. The innovation is due, that is to say, to the far grander innovation—printing. And that same full point, or closure of a sentence, by-the-by, in writing—as afterwards in early printing—was not a round dot, but a downward line, usually sloping towards the left. But this is a trifling detail. First introduced, punctuation was an aid to logic; and as no logic at all is better than false logic, no punctuation is better than false punctuation. Lawyers have a terrible logic at their command, but punctuation, true or false, they discard altogether. Are lawyers, then, not sensible to the luminous effect of a comma happily placed? Yes, answers De Quincey, they *are* sensible. But also they are sensible of the false, prejudicating effect of punctuation carelessly and illogically managed. "Here," says the ratiocinative rhetorician, "is the brief abstract of the case. All punctuation narrows the path, which is else unlimited; and, by narrowing it, may chance to guide the reader into the right groove amongst several that are not right. But also punctuation has the effect very often —and almost always has the power—of biassing and pre-determining the reader to an erroneous choice of meaning. Better, therefore, no guide at all than one which is likely enough to lead astray."

Punctuations in written and printed language answer in some degree to vocal inflections and cadences. They avert, or should avert, frequent recourse to loud underlinings or italics. These are the forcible feeblenesses of a nerveless, flabby style; and they are almost invariably characteristic (if such things can be associated in any way with character) of persons who punctuate badly or not at all. "One of my correspondents," said a man of affairs to me once on a time, "is a patent and portentous bore: a fellow who is not only a bad punctuator himself, but sneers at good punctuation in other men."

Such cases are by no means uncommon. There are writers who glory in putting themselves outside law. *Hamlet* says something about accounting it "a baseness to write fair"; and there is a false nobleness now, as there was in days gone by. Superfine folk, writing for publication, seldom or never trouble themselves about stops, but "leave all that to the printers." This is exactly what the paradoxical Jacob Briant seems to have done; and a pretty mess the printers in Jacob Briant's time have made of Jacob's paradoxes! Exact Monsieur Guizot abhorred looseness of punctuation, and mildly rated his daughter for her indifferently pointed letters.

Two of the most careful and characteristic punctuators of our time have been Carlyle and Landor. Carlyle's manner consequently makes itself *audible* from the page; and as for Landor, I myself have seen him positively furious about a semicolon which ought to have been a colon. He was left alone, and in most beaming mood, in a room of the old *Leader* offices, and the next person who entered found him foaming. He had merely in the interim looked over his proof!

Shakespeare, as I have all but verified to my own satisfaction, at least, punctuated with the decision which we now look for—not vainly—in a Tennyson, a Ruskin, or a Kinglake. I have here named three perfect punctuators. My verification, or *almost* verification, of Shakespeare's own decisive pointing has been attained through the careful study of many passages in a no less authentic edition than "the famous folio of 1623." Here we get back near enough to the original hand and the master mind to form a fair

judgment on the subject. It is a firmly pronounced, articulate punctuation, such as no editor, however "judicious," could easily have supplied. For let no one imagine a printer's law of punctuation that is adequate to the demands of a poet. *He* surely must know his own meaning best, and he alone feels, as well as means, what he says. It is this feeling and this true significance which he who makes the language can best impart by modulations of his own.

My view is that the various forms of punctuation accompanying rhetorical composition are like the notes of music, which none so well as the composer himself can properly value. He hears, as he pens, every point. So it must seem to every appreciative reader, say, of "The Life of Henry the Fifth." Take especially three speeches of the king. First, the warmly pulsating address to his friends : "Once more unto the breach," concluding with the line, "Cry, God for Harry, England, and St. George !" Next, the rebuke to Westmoreland, who has wished for ten thousand idle men from England ; with the spirited continuation of the speech, "This day is called the Feast of Crispian"; and thirdly, the passionate outburst :—

> "I was not angry since I came to France,
> Vntil this instant. Take a Trumpet, Herald ;
> Ride thou vnto the Horsemen on yond hill :
> If they will fight with vs, bid them come downe,
> Or voyde the field : they do offend our sight.
> If they'll do neither, we will come to them,
> And make them sker away, as swift as stones
> Enforcèd from the old Assyrian slings."

Not only is every point in those speeches adjusted to the maintenance of a true balance, being in no one instance too strong or too weak, but the actual breaks and pauses of the voice are so nicely indicated—especially in the "Crispian" speech, though scarcely less in the compelling earnestness of the invocation, "Once more unto the breach ! "—that he must indeed be dull of ear who fails to catch the poet's own inspiration.

In noticing the punctuation of the MS. by Thomas à Kempis in the Brussels Library, Mr. C. Ruelens, the keeper, remarks : "If we listen to a Netherlander reading a passage from the "Imitation," pronouncing the Latin according to the usage of his country, and following the rhythm marked by the accentuation, we recognise at once the existence of a decided melody, sought after by the author, and full of charm." He proceeds to show that this might well have been discovered from evidence which is as old as the work itself, but hitherto unexplained. There is a manuscript of the "Imitation" in the Brussels Library, dating from the fifteenth century, entitled thus: "Hic est libellus qui vocatur musica ecclesiastica."

The slips which are inevitable in daily journalism are sometimes attributable to erroneous punctuation. I remember an instance which led to the alarming apparition of a lawyer's letter. In reporting a trial at the Central Criminal Court, one of the newspapers had this equivocal sentence : "The prisoner said the witness was a convicted thief." Now, the prisoner had made no such bare-faced assertion ; and the report should rightly have run thus : "The prisoner, said the witness, was a convicted thief"—which makes all the difference. A comma too much or too little may be the dire cause of an "effect defective" that shall set in motion the engines of the law ; as that innocent newspaper found out when it incurred a chastening admonition by dropping commas altogether. There is in question at this very time a grave doctrinal issue which turns solely upon a comma. The omission of that little point from the Church Catechism completely alters the sense of an important passage, and Convocation has called serious attention to the subject.

In no written language more than in the English is the right use of the hyphen desirable : yet the most heedless and inconsistent people regarding the hyphen are ourselves. So common, even in the best—or, at least, second best—authorship, is the intrusion of a hyphen between an adverb and the adjective which it is intended to qualify—as, for instance, finely-drawn, nearly-connected—that protest seems unavailing. Indeed, the author may not always be responsible, and, I suspect, seldom is. But while we see hyphens intruded where their presence is impertinent, we often miss them from places in which they ought invariably to be found.

In the formation of compound words, either by the juncture of two substantives, or by qualifying a substantive with a prefix which is not a regular adjective, the hyphen in English is always necessary ; but here is just where we frequently look for it in vain. The German language is distinguished by the continuity of its compound words, and the French by a different method of forming them. Now, in English, let us suppose we are about to write of a dancing-master. To express our meaning accurately, we must use a hyphen, or else an equivoque or confusion of ideas is at once set up, and we might be misunderstood as referring to any kind of master who is in the strange habit of dancing. So likewise a mad house and a mad-house are distinct ideas. The German in either case has one word—*Tollhaus ; Tanzmeister*. The French arrangement, again, differs entirely. It employs the preposition *de ;* so that neither French nor German has nearly as much need of hyphens as English. The genius of our language is concerned, therefore, in preserving them to their fit service.

GODFREY TURNER.

FIRST CRITICS.

'TWAS the pleasant hay-time :
Sate the critics three
Throned on perfumed cushions,
Earnest as could be.
Winnie, wise and elder,
Brown-eyed Ruth, and Grace—
While their victim meekly
Took the lowest place.

"Read it," was the order ;
Trembling fingers ran
O'er the precious pages,
Shaking voice began.
Winnie's small fair forehead
Wore judicial frown,
Grace, with rigid fingers,
Stroked her dimples down.

Glanced the little author
As she turned a page,
Something of her verdict
By the way to gauge.
Was the frown relaxing ?
Ruth's brown eyes were bent
In a fixed attention ;
On she read, content.

Closer leaned the faces,
Not a word was lost,
As, amid the story,
Light and shadow crossed.
Triumph filled the author,
(Mixed with ne'er a pain)
When they cried, entreating,
"Read it once again !"

KATE THOMPSON SIZER.

YOUR "LITTLE AILMENT."

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

THERE is one particular proverb which in these papers I believe I have made use of more than once; but, as a good hint cannot be too often given, here it is again: "*In medio tutissimus ibis.*" The words might be paraphrased or freely translated by another proverb which brings us nearer home: "Ca' canny an' ca' lang," *i.e.*, "Drive with caution and you may expect to drive a long time." Scotland being a very hilly country, it is pretty certain that if every old farmer were to drive his old mare at a gallop, soon there would be no old mares left, nor old farmers either. So in "the land o' cakes and brither Scots," you frequently hear that pithy wee morsel of advice given, "Ca' canny."

The gudewife is constantly giving it to her gudeman, the mother to her son. Perhaps the son is only going to drive to the neighbouring market town, but "Ca' canny, laddie," is the caution that comes from the maternal lips as he mounts the dog-cart. Perhaps he is going to college, or is about to leave auld Scotland to push his fortune in foreign climes; in either case, almost the last words he hears from his mother are, "Ca' canny," and his father repeats them. "Aye, Robbie, man, mind what your mither says: 'Ca' canny, and ye'll ne'er gang wrang; ca' canny, and ye'll ca' lang.'"

I greatly fear that a very large majority of us drive too fast nowadays, simply because our neighbours do so, and we want to get ahead of them, and beat them in the race of life. Perhaps lawless necessity compels us to keep up a good pace, and when we break down, or come to grief, it is more our misfortune than our fault. But necessity compels no one to drive recklessly, and those who do so, even if they do not fall by the way, come to the end of their tether before they know where they are; for time does seem very short when it can only be measured by retrospection. Besides, what do the luckiest of men gain by the acquirement of wealth, which perhaps they have paid for with years of precious life and health? They certainly do not gain the power of enjoying happiness and calm in the afternoon of their earthly existence. Too often, indeed, there is no afternoon, only a brief tropical twilight, succeeding to the fierce fever-heat of mid-day, then—night.

Life at high pressure, or living on the wear and tear system, is in many respects analogous to living under the constant excitement of what are called stimulant narcotics. Both systems are whips to time. Under the influence of either, days fly past like hours, weeks are gone and we wonder where they are, birthdays come and go and we will not believe we can possibly be getting old. But as after the use of stimulant narcotics, so after life at high pressure a reaction comes, and this reaction is depressive; the fact, therefore, that men of business often live but a short time subsequent to their retirement, is easily accounted for.

But apart altogether from the work and wear of busy life—which, by the way, may be greatly neutralised by living temperately and hygienically, and taking recreation and a complete holiday whenever needed—there are a host of minor ailments that tend to debilitate the frame, and pave the way for troubles of a far graver character.

We must not be constantly doctoring ourselves—that were indeed foolish. Nature knows a deal more about our internal economy than we can ever do, however wise we may be; and sometimes in attempting to dictate to her, our meddling puts everything wrong, and throws the anatomical and physiological machine completely out of gear.

Let me say a few words about some of the most common of these "little" complaints. I use the word "little" because it is so commonly applied to the ailments to be considered. It ought not to be forgotten, however, that a little spark may kindle a great and grave fire, and that the thin end of a wedge is its business end.

"I've just caught a little cold," some one tells me; "but," he adds, "that will soon be all right; I have a marvellous constitution, and a cold does not last long on me."

It is really surprising, the number of men one meets every day who are possessed of "marvellous constitutions," and who pride themselves on their strength of system and recuperative powers. If you question some of these, however, you will be almost sure to elicit the fact that they do get or catch a little cold every spring regularly, and though they seem to throw it off easily, it leaves them a trifle weak and pale for days. The worst of it is that the mucous membranes get thickened after a time, and year after year they become more and more subject to these little colds, which finally are entitled to the name of "winter cough," and very likely end in chronic bronchitis, debility, and a break-up.

We must guard against these little colds. But if we are to do so, we should, first and foremost, know something about the causes that induce them. Unhappily these are only too numerous. On the other hand, they nearly always attack one when the system for the time being is below par. This is a truth which points to the means of avoiding them.

Again, spring is the time they are most likely to occur, so one should be prepared to face the dangers of this inclement season. Light, warm under-clothing out-doors and in should be worn; and when one has occasion to walk out while a cold high wind is blowing, he or she ought invariably to wear a light non-waterproof ulster, *and button it.* A frosty, sunny day,

without any wind, hardly calls for such precaution, as the natural warmth of the body is not stolen from it. It is the wind that robs one of heat, and blows it into space as soon as generated. The body is consequently chilled, the blood may be driven inwards, causing slight congestion of, and increased mucous flow from the lining membrane of the lungs, ending in the irritation of that surface and consequent cough ; or there may be simply sluggishness of the whole system. This last state is often sought to be remedied by inducing too quick a reaction. Nothing could be more unwise. We should no more rush into a hot room and breathe hot air, or drink hot drinks, when chilled by exposure to cold or wet, than we should run and hold frost-bitten fingers to the fire. Reaction after a chill cannot be too gradually induced, if we would avoid colds. To give a simple illustration : Take a flower from the garden, say a small plant of myosotis, that has been exposed to hard frost for a few nights, and place it in a hothouse ; do you think it will live? No ; if but left to recover in the open ground, it really is but little worse.

There is one very common cause of "colds," which I have never yet seen noticed, even by my own profession, namely, toxæmia, or blood poisoning by natural secretions which have not been removed from the blood. Some of the great organs, say the liver or kidneys, are out of order, and nature endeavours to expel the poison through other channels, there is a greater flow of mucus in the lungs, and consequently a tickling cough, and the sufferer puts it down to cold or chill. If now he attempts to cure his so-called cold by coddling himself, and taking hot stimulating drinks, he but increases the evil. Cases of this sort are often completely cured by an antibilious pill at night, followed by a glass or two of Friedrichshal water before breakfast. Indeed, almost all colds are benefited by a gentle opening of the system.

"I'm a little billious to-day." The man with the marvellous constitution will often tell you that. His eyes are muddy, his tongue is rough and perhaps furred, his appetite poor, he has a creepy-creepy feeling all over him ; he thinks it is much colder to-day than it was yesterday, and that this climate is a wretched one, anyhow, and life hardly worth having. But—he will go "for a spin," he says, and work it off. As often as not it would have been much better to have kept at home and done nothing in the garden. The garden is a capital place to do nothing in, one can spend a whole forenoon in it, among the flower-beds, with nothing heavier in his hand than a tiny long-handled rake. Well, he is almost sure to be hungry before luncheon-time, and if he is most temperate then, and at the dinner-hour, finishing up the day with a bottle of Vichy water and a very mild vegetable aperient, or with half a lemon squeezed into a glass of water, the other half taken before breakfast, very likely his biliousness will be nipped in the bud. He must be careful with his diet afterwards.

The custom of giving a "spurt" to liver or circulation, the day after some little excess, is a foolish one. Ten times better take the course I have recommended in a former paper, entitled "A Banian Day." The "spurt" is nearly always given by taking cordials, strong tea, or vinous stimulants.

"I have a bit of a headache this morning." It is Mr. Marvellous Constitution that is speaking again. And this bit of a headache also arises from some previous excitement and consequent depression. Well, Mr. M. C. spurts this off also. His experience teaches him that it can be so dispelled. And I am not going to deny that it can, for this reason: it is the circulatory system that is for the moment at fault. It is weak, depressed, and languid, the veins' resiliency is for the time being lost to some extent, and the head is slightly congested from the blood's stagnancy. "Stir up the heart by a stimulant," that is popular treatment ; the blood is forced through the brain and the quondam sufferer thinks he is all right now, and that he has done well. The fact is, he has erred on the side of quick reaction, and done more harm than good. Fresh air, a whole forenoon full of it, and that alone is the cure for this kind of headache, but I may add abstinence from food, except what will suffice to support life. Sleep and nerve-calm will follow this treatment, but flies before the spurting system.

"My system has been somewhat bound of late." Still another lament. Well, I fully discussed this in a recent article, only one thing I forgot to say, namely, that it has been the fashion of late years for many medical men to decry the use of even vegetable pills, while advising the eating of vegetables themselves. The abuse of either, in my opinion, is to be discountenanced; at the same time, no greater harm can accrue from a dose of *cascara sagrada*, for instance, than from an extra plate of sea-kale or Brussels sprouts ; perhaps not so much ; and here let me give a word of warning which will, if heeded, prevent many an attack of painful illness. *Never eat unripe vegetables; they are as poisonous as unripe fruit.* Cabbage, kale, and all vegetables called "green meat," ought to be ripe, and especially should potatoes. New potatoes have many deaths to account for. Those tee-totums of early potatoes look nice, and taste nice, but beware of them, or you may suffer as much as you once did when a boy, after eating a pint or two of green gooseberries.

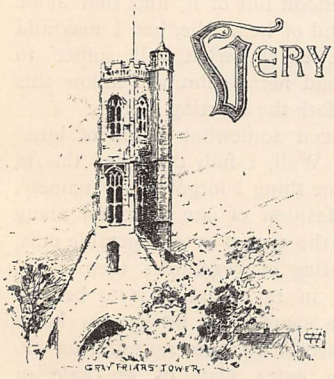
"My digestion is a somewhat slow one," says another man with a marvellous constitution, "so I go in occasionally for a course of pepsin and peptonic medicines generally." "Meddling again with Mother Nature," I reply; "can't you let the dame alone? You may manage to peptonise the food you have swallowed ; you may—mind, I only say 'may'—manage to reduce the chyle to chyme, but how are you going to enlarge your absorbent system or your thoracic duct? It is by what you digest, not by what passes into the stomach, that the blood benefits. Be reasonable, be rational, and learn to let well alone."

I may say, in conclusion, that there is one comfort people with slow digestions may take to themselves, namely, the thought that they will be far more cheerful and light by living abstemiously than the reverse. Digestion is often choked, but seldom, if ever, starved.

IN THE WASH.

BY FRED HASTINGS.

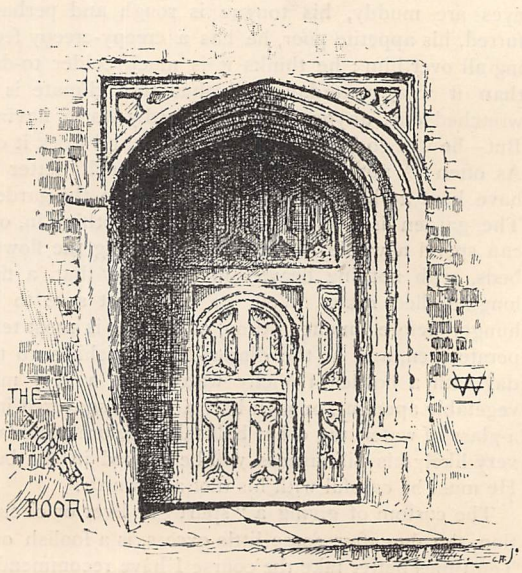
Mouth of the Ouse.

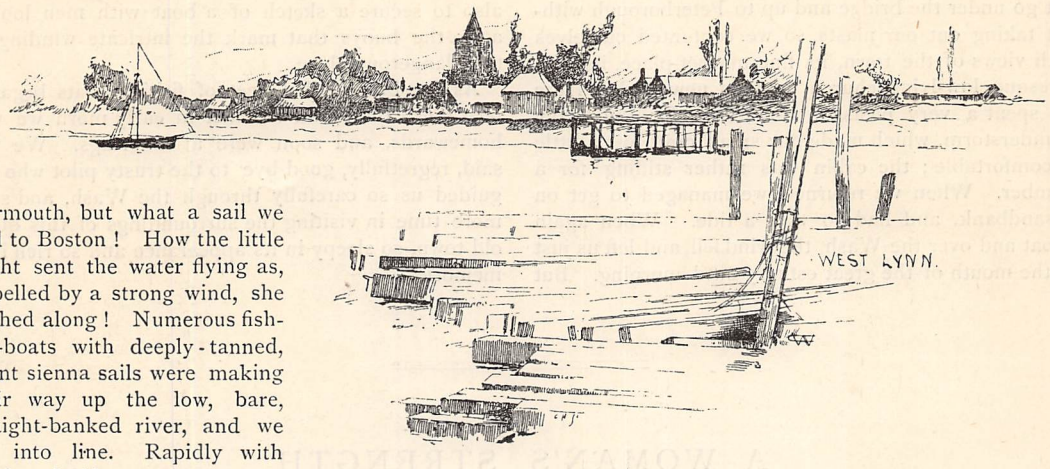


VERY few people think of spending a holiday in "The Wash." Of course I am not speaking of anything connected with suds or soap, but of that district where the Ouse and the Neve find their way through dreary, sedgy, fat, dyke-divided fens, to the sea. People talk of "The Broads" near Lowestoft, but there is, to us, quite as much interest in "The Wash" beyond Lynn.

Peep at Lynn. Fine old town! What a Guildhall it has, with front like a huge chess-board of alternate squares of black flint and white blocks of stone! Then St. Margaret's Church, with its two towers; St. Nicholas, with its ornate porch; the lofty tower, remnant of an old monastery; the Red Mount—where Isabella was lodged—relic of ancient borough walls, and the old carven door of Thoresby the merchant, are as attractive to the antiquarian as almost anything in the Eastern counties. Few towns, moreover, have such "walks," all shaded with grand trees and edged by fish-filled moats. We wander past the one where Eugene Aram is said to have hidden the murdered man. Rising Castle is also but a few miles away, and the ride to it, through commons of white sand, patched with pines and purple heather and yellow gorse, is very invigorating. Sandringham, the cosy home of the Heir-Apparent, with its model cottages and farms, is a few miles further on. Then Hunstanton, with its great cliffs of brilliant red and chalky white, is still in the district of the Wash.

At Lynn a friend was able to lend me a small yacht, on board of which I, with my family, could sleep by night as well as sail by day. We started at early morn from the royal borough. We had a fair wind down the long estuary, and out to the open sea. We meant to go on to Yarmouth, but the wind was contrary. We had to beat down to Hunstanton. Trying to miss the "Thief" sand and the "Bull-dog," we sought to anchor near the much-advertised watering-place. We put the hatches on to cover the "well." As we had left the cabin to the ladies, we had to sleep in the "well," over which we had drawn the hatches and tarpaulin. We had the soft side of planks, with rugs thrown over them, for our beds. We were not sorry when morning dawned. A small boat from a neighbouring fishing-smack soon boarded us, and we obtained a supply of fish and shrimps. These were most acceptable for breakfast. Then we landed, and saw the cliffs, the lighthouse, and the treeless streets. We secured various further necessaries of life, and returning, hove anchor, and started across the Wash to Boston. There was no getting round to Cromer or





Yarmouth, but what a sail we had to Boston! How the little yacht sent the water flying as, impelled by a strong wind, she dashed along! Numerous fishing-boats with deeply-tanned, burnt sienna sails were making their way up the low, bare, straight-banked river, and we fell into line. Rapidly with wind and tide we went to our resting-place. When we were moored and had had dinner, we were told that the position was a bad one for a yacht, so we had to pull her round to the dock. The gates were just closing, but we were admitted. As soon as she was fastened we made our way ashore towards "The Stump."

We shall not easily forget our walk along a narrow pathway under overhanging warehouses, past quaint buildings to the market-place. Nor shall we forget the grand parish church and "The Stump." What a height is that tower! The mariners can see it from afar. It is the one great landmark in this flat district. We could not but notice with what affection our pilot spoke of it, and how proudly he pointed it out. But the interior! Well, the church is, perhaps, the broadest in span of any church or cathedral in England. Four thousand people can most easily be accommodated in it. It has some very quaint brasses in the chancel: one to a pea merchant, whose robe is decorated with pea-pods, and whose effigy is guarded by the twelve apostles.

From Boston, we sailed to Sutton Bridge. There we rested for the night. Some of our party walked out as far as Sutton proper to see another quaint old church.

To drift up the straight river Neve to Wisbech in the stilly morning, with the tide, was a great delight. Only the pilot and myself moved about, and that very stealthily, that we might not disturb the sleepers below. Nearing Wisbech, coal-barges and timber-laden ships blocked the way at every point, but by sinking

LYNN, FROM THE BANKS OF THE OUSE.

ropes we passed, and reached the bridge. We could not go under the bridge and up to Peterborough without taking out our masts, so we contented ourselves with views of the town, its fine market-place, its picturesque, low-lying church, and its new park. Here we spent a very pleasant time, save for the heavy thunderstorm, which made our small craft just a little uncomfortable; the cabin was rather stifling for a number. When we returned, we managed to get on a sandbank, and had to wait a tide. When again afloat and over the Wash, the wind fell, and left us just at the mouth of the great estuary until morning. But time passed in reading and singing. We were able also to secure a sketch of a boat with men looking after the buoys that mark the intricate windings of this dangerous place.

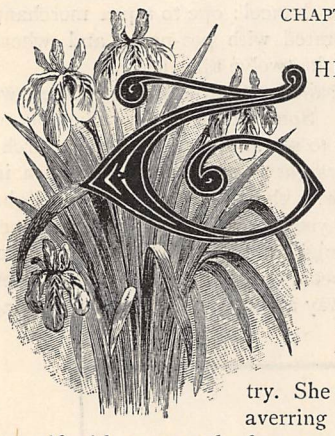
As the black-sailed fleet of fishing-boats began to beat down the broad channel in early morn we went homewards, and soon were at moorings. We then said, regretfully, good-bye to the trusty pilot who had guided us so carefully through the Wash, and spent more time in visiting the surroundings of this quaint old town, so sleepy in its appearance and so rich in its memories.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

CAPPERS.



THE next day I began my work at Cappers, having walked up to the Rectory the night before, to apprise Mr. and Mrs. Talbot of what I had done. They were both very angry with me, that is, the rector tried to be, and Mrs. Talbot had no occasion to try. She was genuinely vexed, averring that I should kill myself with over-work, for never in this world were there such naughty children as the little Challoners. One after another, however, I managed to combat her objections, until she was forced to admit that perhaps I was right, and that she herself had once tried her hand at some share in their education, and that at that very moment Gerrard was coming daily to Mr. Talbot for instruction.

So, with my mind at rest as far as the Rectory was concerned, I walked up to Cappers that lovely May morning, passing through the grounds for the first time. My way lay straight before me, up a winding path through the silent woods—silent but for the swirl of the river, as it leapt and sang in its tortuous course through its fern-fringed banks—till I suddenly emerged upon the pleasure-garden, and stood face to face on the one side with the park, just now a mass of fragrant blossom; on the other with the beautiful old building that, as Mrs. Talbot had told me, was soon no longer to know the name of Challoner.

I had no time to contemplate it, for I was already late; but I could see quite enough to feel that, with its mantle of ivy, its gables and mullioned windows, its rich tracery of stonework, its surroundings of rare old trees, and rarer shrubs, it was one of those places one would lay down one's life rather than part with, and that, if I were Captain Challoner, I would sacrifice anything short of principle, or honour, to keep it in the family.

I was standing in the portico—having rung the bell although the door stood open—vaguely wondering what kind of a man this Captain Challoner might be, when I saw Arthur coming towards me.

"Come in," he cried, "mover said 'twas you. Have you brought Duke?"

"No, not this morning. Will you take me to the schoolroom, dear? I am late."

"You ain't going to teach me. I won't do lessons 'cept wif mummy."

"All right. I dare say I shall have quite enough with Gwen and Gerrard and Sibyl."

"Gwen said you shouldn't call her Gwen," remonstrated Arthur, "as you are only the schoolmistress. Miss Jones always called her Miss Gwen, and me Master Arthur."

I smiled and made no answer. "Is this the schoolroom?" I asked, as we came to a halt after walking through various rooms and passages.

"Yes. Mover's there. I'm going out now—good-bye."

"Good-bye, dear," as I entered the room, in response to a "Come in" from Lady Challoner.

"Oh! Miss Morton, what a relief to see you," she cried. "I feared you were going to play me false."

There is no need to go into the conversation that ensued. It was purely educational. Lady Challoner was only too glad to bring it to an abrupt conclusion, and, in response to an impatient shout of "Gladys, Gladys!" to repair to Sir John, and leave me to disentangle matters as best I could.

The hour that followed in that oak-panelled room was an hour of struggle and conflict, which I re-

cognised, alas! as only the first of a series. If it had not been for Sibyl, who stood bravely by me, and for the powerful motive which had drawn me to the task, I should have gone to Lady Challoner and have told her that I would not undertake to teach Gwen and Gerrard. The two were very much alike in character. They both resented intensely, I could see, being taught by the village schoolmistress, and were as determined to rout me as I was determined not to be routed. The result was that, when I left the house, I felt more tired than at any time when I had been teaching my school-children, too tired almost to eat my dinner.

It was needlework and singing at the school that afternoon, and I had plenty of stray moments in which to recall Gwen's handsome, obstinate face, and Gerrard's "D'you think we are going to obey *you?* —you, the National schoolmistress!" when I was recalled to the present by a carriage drawing up to the schoolroom door. It was Miss Bostock. She came, for the first time, if I may so call it, in state; that is to say, in her carriage; and I remembered she was going to have tea at Cappers. I saw at once, by the expression of her countenance, that she was displeased with me, but, at the same time, I had never seen her look so really handsome before. She had on an unusually becoming hat, and a dress that suited her, which was not always the case. After a few words respecting some needlework that the children were doing for her, she drew me apart, and suddenly assuming a severely judicial air—

"Is it true," she asked sternly, "that you have undertaken to teach the Challoner children out of school hours?"

"Quite true," I answered. "I began this morning."

"I would not believe it. How could you venture to take such a step without referring to Mr. Bostock?"

"I am very sorry if I have done wrong. I asked Mr. Talbot's consent."

"Mr. Talbot! Poor old man! He knows nothing about the school."

"He ought to, as he is here most days, and knows every child in it. But, apart from that, I understood that my time out of school-hours was my own."

"So it is, as far as the letter of the agreement goes; but the spirit of the same is that you should not incapacitate yourself for your work, whereby we may lose a portion of the Government grant, and the children also suffer."

I flushed crimson. "I understand what you mean," I answered, "and you may rest assured that I shall not allow my teaching at Cappers to interfere with my rightful work. I am quite equal to all I have undertaken."

She looked incredulous. Herself an exceptionally strong woman, I have no doubt that she thought me, as far as looks went, a very poor sort of creature.

"You have great faith in your own powers," she remarked, with a sneer.

"Yes, I have, for they have been well tested," I answered.

"When? Where? How?"—an eager, inquisitive light shining in her eyes.

"In various ways, at various times of my life," I responded. "Indeed," I continued, only anxious to pacify her, "if I find Cappers too much for me, I will give it up."

"You should have asked Mr. Bostock's permission," she answered coldly. "It was most improper to make any engagement without his consent;" and with that she bade me a frigid "Good afternoon," and turned to go.

"They be a spanking pair o' hosses," remarked one of my little flock to his comrade, as they stood on tiptoe to peer out of window at the Bostock equipage. "D'ee mind when Sir John druv 'en, wi' the two others, down the street, what a clatter they'm made? My, it was fine, it was!"

I turned away impatiently, feeling very like Mrs. Coles. So the horses with which Miss Bostock was driving to Cappers had once been Sir John's property, probably Lady Challoner's own pair. No! no earthly power should prevent me teaching those children with every faculty I possessed, and as much as I could within the given time.

Nevertheless, as the hour drew near for carrying my resolution into practice, and I once more set out on my up-hill walk, my heart sank within me, as I thought of the contest so soon to begin again.

Alas! my dismal prognostications were doomed to be fulfilled. For the first hour after my arrival Gwen and Gerrard were simply intolerable. At the end of that time, seeing that they could not succeed in putting me into a passion, and dimly perceiving that I was of a somewhat different calibre to Miss Jones, they grew tired of the struggle, and, much against their wills, interested in their lessons. For they could not help it that they were endowed with excellent abilities, as well as with haughty, domineering tempers. Nevertheless it was up-hill work, and I was thankful when tea was brought in, and the lesson-book closed for a time. I think Gwen was cogitating the difference between me and Miss Jones, for she stared at me unceasingly with her big dark eyes, and when I proposed that we should talk French during tea-time, even went so far as to reprove Gerrard, who received the proposal with derision.

"How can you talk French?" he cried. "You are only the National schoolmistress."

"How awfully green you are, Gerrard!" she said. "Haven't you any sense?"

I, however, made no answer to his polite remark, beyond at once giving him the desired proof of my capability, by addressing him in French, until, just as I had embarked on telling the whole party a story, and all eyes were levelled on me with a very promising interest, there came a rap at the door, as with a stick, and Sibyl jumped up to open it.

"It's father," she said.

I was sorry for the interruption, for I was just beginning to make way with my unpromising pupils, besides which, the sight of Sir John, paralysed and invalided, always gave me a pang. He came in, in

his wheeled chair, that he could propel himself, and seemed surprised to see me.

"I forgot that I should have the pleasure of finding you here, Miss Morton," he said, in his rather uncomfortable, but yet courteous manner. "You are very brave to undertake these unmannerly young cubs. How have they been behaving?"

"We are getting on pretty well," I answered, whilst Gerrard, sulky at first, but at last unable any longer to curb his temper, broke out.

"Why can't we go on doing lessons with mother, as we used to?" he asked his father. "How can a village schoolmistress teach *us?*"

The accent on the "us" was too indescribable, and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my countenance. Sir John saw it, and was evidently relieved that I should regard the matter as a joke.

"I should think," he answered, "that any one could teach you, for you are as ignorant as a horse. At the same time I will trouble you to apologise at once to Miss Morton for your gross rudeness to her. Do you hear me?"

"I was not rude," he answered defiantly. "I said she was the schoolmistress, and so she is, and we won't learn of her."

Sir John grew scarlet in the face; poor Sibyl rose from the table in a fright, and even Gwen laid her hand on Gerrard's arm. I, dreading an outbreak, threw myself into the breach, saying the first thing that came into my head, frightened beyond words at the uplifted crutch, so perilously close to Gerrard's back.

"I don't think Gerrard knows, Sir John," I said hurriedly, "that I am not quite—quite—the same as Miss Jones. I have not told them that—that—I am a lady, that I was brought up very much as they have been."

"A little better, I trust," murmured Sir John.

"And—and——" Here I came to a stop, as red in the face as the two combatants, and with a silly sensation that I was going to cry. But the crutch was once more on the floor, and that was all I wanted.

"I am ashamed of you, Gerrard, ashamed of you. You have not behaved like a gentleman," cried Sir John, his face still crimson. "Apologise this moment, I tell you. It is all of a piece with insulting a lady, that you should take advantage of my incapacity to punish you, to so misconduct yourself."

This was more than Gerrard could bear.

"I did not know she was a lady," he cried.

"Then you must be a fool," retorted his father; and this time I felt strongly inclined to laugh.

"I apologise, Miss Morton," growled Gerrard very sulkily, extending his hand.

"All right, dear," I answered, longing to get off a subject of which I was the most unwilling heroine. "Won't you have a cup of tea, Sir John?" I continued, "there is plenty left."

"There are visitors in the drawing-room, father," broke in Sibyl. "Miss Bostock, and Mrs. Vernon and Olive. And there are such lots of cakes gone in."

"I know," said Sir John; "that is why I came in here. I will have a cup of tea, please, Miss Morton."

"And Miss Bostock drove Sheikh and Caliph," said Gerrard, who, like Sir John, had cooled down from boiling pitch as quickly as he had worked himself up to it. "Sheikh knew me directly I went into the stable."

"Did she drive them herself?"

"Oh, no. She had the big carriage, and Chambers and the footman to-day. He is a new footman. Walter went away last week, I wonder why?"

"Did you ever hear such gossips?" laughed Sir John, turning to me. "It is one of the delightful results of having no governess, and being left to servants."

"Chambers told Gerrard, father," said Sibyl. "He used to live with us once," she explained for my benefit.

"Miss Morton," interposed Sir John, abruptly changing the subject, "as I see you have finished your tea, will you sing to me?"

"With pleasure," I answered, "if you will excuse my being rather husky so immediately after tea. I can only sing what I know by heart, you know."

"I desire nothing better," he answered. "Now then, you brats," as I took my seat on the music-stool, "be quiet."

I suppose I must have sung for more than half an hour to the old tin-kettle instrument that did duty for a schoolroom piano. My *répertoire* consisted chiefly of Volkslieder that I had picked up from time to time; German, Italian, Scotch, French, as one after another Sir John asked me if I knew this or that, and I would try a bar or two, or go on to the end as the case might be, enjoying thoroughly the feeling of being in sympathy with my audience, the effacement of my character as schoolmistress. The children were perfectly quiet, and I could just catch sight of Gwen and Gerrard sitting in a corner together, and never lifting their eyes from my face.

On and on I went until my throat ached, and my conscience was pricking me sorely over the neglected lessons, when the door opened, and Lady Challoner came in, and sinking down wearily—

"I thought so," she said. "It is too bad of you, John."

"Hush!" said Sir John.

"No, I shall not hush," plaintively. "I cannot have Miss Morton's time taken from the children. You are always telling me they are so ignorant, then when I find some one who will teach them, you take up all her time singing to you."

"It shall not happen again," I said. "This evening, I really thought it might be wise."

"Music hath charms, you know," interposed Sir John. "The fact is, Miss Morton, alarmed at finding herself amongst savages, had recourse to the arts to soothe them."

"I don't know what you mean," answered Lady Challoner pettishly, "but if the children are savages, whose fault is it, I wonder?" After which little altercation the parents withdrew, leaving me alone with the

children. By this time, however, it was past seven o'clock, which was the hour for my departure. Thankful to have got over my first day, I was speeding down the corridor to the little side entrance, that Sibyl had shown me as my best way in and out, when a door

"No, it is no trouble," responded Miss Bostock stiffly. "I must really be going now, dear Lady Challoner," she continued. "Good-bye! I have had such a delightful afternoon with you and those charming Vernons."

"'HAVE YOU HAD A FRIGHT, MORTIE?'" (*p.* 426).

was suddenly opened and Lady Challoner called me into her boudoir. There, to my surprise, I found Miss Bostock, who I fancied had gone away long ago, with her hat off, and looking thoroughly at home.

"Oh! Miss Morton," said Lady Challoner, "I called you in to tell you that Miss Bostock is passing the school, and will give you a lift. I am sure you must want it."

"I shall be very glad of it," I answered, "if it is not too much trouble."

"Yes, I knew you would like them," said Lady Challoner, as, to Miss Bostock's evident astonishment, she drew her to her, and kissed her. "Good-bye, dear," she said, "we shall meet again on Tuesday. I will bring the tribe with me. They will enjoy your garden, and mind, I shall expect loads of flowers."

Two minutes later, I was sitting in Miss Bostock's barouche, driving through the beautiful park, and enjoying the rest after toil. My companion was very

silent. She was occupied in peering in all directions, whilst from time to time she half smiled to herself, as though her thoughts were pleasant.

"How shockingly it is all kept!" she said at last, with a strange satisfied look in her eyes, and pointing to the dilapidated fence. "It will be a good thing when it is sold. By-the-by," she continued satirically, without giving me time to answer, "I hope you enjoyed your pupils to-day. They must be charming children to teach, from all accounts."

"They are very clever children."

"Nevertheless," facing round towards me, "they have tired you out completely, and you had no business to undertake them. You are unfitting yourself for your duties, and I shall speak to Mr. Bostock on the subject."

My blood rose to my cheeks, and my temper, I am afraid, flashed into my eyes, but I managed, somehow, to speak quietly.

"You are quite at liberty to speak to Mr. Bostock," I answered, "but I must remind you again that out of school-hours my time is my own, and I am responsible to no one."

"But to your own conscience," she responded in a solemn, lecturing manner, inexpressibly provoking. "How do you reconcile it to your conscience to sacrifice your duties for which you are paid, in order to earn a few more shillings?"

For the moment I was speechless with suppressed wrath, then I reflected that she could not know my hidden motives, and again I tried to speak gently.

"My dealings with my conscience are entirely my own affair," I answered. "When I fail in those duties for which I am paid, then it will be time enough for Mr. Talbot or Mr. Bostock to remonstrate with me. Until that time I must disclaim all interference."

She looked at me with a disagreeable light in her eyes. "Then you defy Mr. Bostock," she said.

"No, indeed. I simply claim the liberty of action which is my right. I assure you, although you do not seem to think so, I am not unconscientious, and if ever I find that the teaching at Cappers interferes with my rightful work, I will throw it up at once. Until then, I shall certainly continue it."

I suppose she saw that I meant what I said, for she changed her tone.

"You are very obstinate," she said, smiling playfully, "but there! I will take no notice of it."

I tried to smile back, for I was most anxious to live at peace with her, and I knew that she was really a very good sort of girl, though domineering and overbearing; a spoilt child, in fact, and not over and above well-bred. She did not know that she had thrown down the gauntlet to another spoilt child, who had been so accustomed all her life to having her own way, that she could not meekly submit to Miss Bostock. At this juncture, the carriage drove up to the gate of my little domain, and I was spared the trouble of answering. I thanked Miss Bostock warmly for having saved me the walk, and she smiled at me graciously in return, even inviting me to come and have tea with her some afternoon; nevertheless, I returned to my abode with the disagreeable conviction that I had made an enemy.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

UP AT THE MANOR.

THAT spare afternoon when I was to visit Miss Bostock, and have tea with her, seemed never forthcoming. My children, Cappers, Mrs. Talbot, and Mrs. Coles absorbed all my time, and left me just leisure to eat my meals, and that was about all. That it was very hard work I cannot deny, but as the days succeeded one another, and spring turned to summer, and summer to autumn, I grew more and more to love it, as the only panacea for my living, abiding sorrow.

Mr. Bostock's reproof to me had never come off. No doubt, he was aware that as long as I did my duty by my scholars, he had no right to administer it. He was always very kind to me, but Miss Bostock never relaxed her vigilance, and I knew I should have but scant mercy should she catch me tripping. The sense of being watched put me on my mettle, and made me only the more diligent amongst my children. It was a labour of love, for I was fond of them all, but Hetty Coles remained, as at the outset, my favourite. She was keeping wonderfully well this autumn, and Mrs. Coles maintained that it was because I was so careful of her, whilst the child herself showed her gratitude to me, by rarely arriving empty-handed at the school. If she had nothing else to offer, there were always "father's flowers," which flourished and lasted as no flowers had ever done with me before. And meanwhile I was getting on well at Cappers. After a week's struggle, Gwen and Gerrard had yielded to circumstances, and finding that I was competent for the honour of teaching them, had condescended to become very much interested in their lessons. I soon grew to love them, as much as Sibyl, especially Gerrard. Unruly, tiresome, passionate, he was also truthful, fearless, determined, and affectionate, resenting with an intensity truly wonderful in so young a boy the selling of his old home.

"Oh! Miss Morton!" he cried one day, when somehow the subject had cropped up. "If I were only a man, and could fight for Cappers! But what can I do?"

"You can begin fighting this minute, Gerrard," I said—I loved the tenacity of his nature—"by throwing yourself heart and soul into your work. In these days knowledge, not the sword, is power."

"If I thought that by it I could save Cappers, I would get up at five, and learn until I went to bed. But I can't save it. It is to be sold when Jack comes home."

And then I fell to wondering what sort of a man this "Jack" was; whether he, like Gerrard, would not acknowledge himself beaten, and were made of good stuff.

"Have you a photograph of your brother?" I asked without thinking.

"Yes," cried Sibyl. "He sent one to me in his new uniform, 'cause I'm his pet," and away she ran to fetch

it, returning breathless with it in her hand. Before she had got across the room, I recognised it. It represented the same man as the one in Mrs. Talbot's drawing-room, the stranger who had succoured me in St. James' Street. So my curiosity was satisfied at last.

I took the photograph in my hand, and looked at it, and as I did so, I forgot where I was, forgot the children, everything but the strong, dark face, that I had remembered so faithfully for five years. Yes! he was made of good stuff, if countenance goes for anything. He was like Sir John, but darker, and there were traces of the family masterfulness in the firmly-set lips, and powerful jaw, and of that bull-dog quality of holding on like grim death, that I instinctively wished that he might possess.

"That's his new uniform," volunteered Sibyl. "He used to be in the Guards, but he left them when we lost our money, and went into another regiment in India. He's been in a lot of battles," she continued. "He's awfully brave, and he was wounded in one, I can't remember the name. He's coming home now, though, 'cause he's had fever."

"I hope," I said, with a sudden pang, "that he has got well of his wound?"

"Not quite," answered Gerrard; "but it's much better, only now he has fever."

So they chattered on about their brother, and I listened greedily, forgetting that the lessons were suffering in consequence, until suddenly recalled to my duties by the sound of Lady Challoner's voice in the distance.

Captain Challoner's photograph was relegated to the mantelpiece, and once more I remembered that I was the village schoolmistress, between whom and him there yawned an absolutely impassable gulf. What I had to do now was to teach his brothers and sisters to the best of my abilities, and I verily believe that Lady Challoner herself was not more anxious for their advancement than I was. They had all grown very fond of me, and I could do a great deal with them, but I could not work miracles, and they were still often troublesome and unruly to a degree that was a fine exercise for my patience. Unfortunately, too, their affection for me had taken the form of paying me frequent visits at the school, distracting the children, and drawing down the wrath of Miss Bostock, who would sometimes carry them off to the Manor, to relieve me of their presence.

For the village politics were undergoing a wonderful change, so wonderful that it puzzled even Mrs. Talbot, whilst it caused Mrs. Coles to give way to many a "Well, I never! Things are altered, when my lady will drive about with Miss Bostock, behind the horses that were once her own." It was certainly strange, and if I had cared to give my thoughts to it, I too should have marvelled at the *entente cordiale* that had sprung up, as in a night, between Cappers and the Manor. But I had resolved from the first to keep clear of gossip, so I tried not to wonder when I saw Lady Challoner drive past in Miss Bostock's carriage; when I constantly met the latter in the Cappers grounds; when I heard the children speak of her as "Lizzie," and it was plain that the old enmity was being converted into a red-hot friendship.

I don't think Mrs. Talbot quite approved of such a rapid change of front, but the rector rejoiced most cordially over it, although I could see it puzzled him.

"Gladys is quite right," he said one day, when the subject had been mentioned. "Cappers is deeply mortgaged to Mr. Bostock, and, speaking only from a worldly point of view, she is very wise in keeping good friends with him."

"Of course she is," responded Mrs. Talbot, in her semi-serious manner, "and she is a cleverer woman than I took her for."

And meanwhile there was a change, too, at the Manor. Miss Bostock began to dress with greater care, and in better taste; more carriages than of yore were seen ascending the hill, and the report got about that Mr. Bostock was coming forward at the next election for the Marcombe division of the county, supported by all the Challoner interest.

At last, one fine day in September, I found leisure to go by appointment and have tea with Miss Bostock. The invitation had been given me with a solemnity calculated to duly impress the honour on me, and I was silly enough, in spite of a certain curiosity I felt to see the Manor, to be shy, and not to look forward to an hour's patronising and cross-questioning.

As I walked through the park, and observed in what admirable order everything was kept, I could not wonder at Miss Bostock's strictures on Cappers, where everything was exactly the contrary; and when after a severe ascent I reached the house, I was very agreeably surprised in its outward appearance. "A cross between a lunatic asylum and a Regent's Park villa," had been Mrs. Talbot's trenchant description of it to me; but then she was one of those delightfully prejudiced people, who cannot measure out either their praise or blame with a stinting hand, but must needs go to extremes with both. It certainly was big, and staring, and cold, but the architecture was better than I had been led to expect; and time and creepers might do a great deal for it.

I was ushered by a depressingly solemn butler, and two very big footmen, through a nice hall, into a pretty room, looking south and west, where I was received by Mr. Bostock kindly, but with a patronising pomposity that made me wish myself home again.

"Miss Bostock will be downstairs directly," he said. "She has just returned from Cappers. She is there most days of the week. Lady Challoner, like every one else in the village, cannot get on without her."

He looked at me as though expecting a reply, but I could not think of a suitable one, and so I remained silent.

"They are in a great state of excitement there," she tells me," he continued; "Captain Challoner is expected almost immediately. They have received a telegram this afternoon."

"Indeed!" I answered. "I heard from the children that he was invalided home, but I did not know he was to arrive so soon." At this moment the door

opened, and Miss Bostock came in, followed by the big footmen with the tea. She looked more than usually bright and eager, but that she was preoccupied was evident, from the absent manner in which she greeted me, and by her silence as she poured out the tea. For fully ten minutes Mr. Bostock and I sustained the conversation by ourselves, that is to say, he talked and I listened. Then at last she roused herself from her absorption, and turning to me, began, with what I always considered questionable taste, to bring her conversation down to my level, and to discourse to me on the school and my pupils.

But not for very long. Before many minutes had elapsed, Mr. Bostock had brought it back to Cappers and its inmates. He was evidently very proud of the newly-formed intimacy between the two houses, and of the, consequently, fresh acquaintances among the more exclusive families in the neighbourhood.

"My dear," he said to his daughter, as he sipped his tea, "has Sir John made any arrangement about meeting his son at Marcombe when he arrives? He surely does not intend him, an invalid, to be jolted to death in that wretched fly of Morven's."

Miss Bostock smiled superiorly. "It is all settled," she said serenely. "The brougham—ours—is to meet Captain Challoner; I arranged it all to-day."

Mr. Bostock gazed at her with admiration. "What a head you have on your shoulders!" he exclaimed. "I don't think you ever forget the smallest detail. Wonderful! isn't it?" turning to me. "Unfortunately," he continued, "she is the only woman of business in the parish, and has to organise everything. That charming Lady Challoner has her hands quite full, with her husband and children, and as for poor Mrs. Talbot! of course, she is useless."

"Papa, papa!" objected Miss Bostock. "You must really not say such dreadfully imprudent things. You know how very kind both Lady Challoner and Mrs. Talbot are to Miss Morton, and how frequently she sees them."

I felt my troublesome colour rising at this hint as to my discretion. "Yes," I said quietly. "They are both very kind to me, so much so, that you need have no fear of my repeating anything I hear said of them, or indeed of any one else. As to Mrs. Talbot being useless——"

"You will allow, Miss Morton," interrupted Miss Bostock, "that my father and I have known the Talbots considerably longer than you have, and there is no need to discuss them." And with that, she began telling me about her orphanage upon the moor, which she managed entirely herself, and, as I had heard, with signal success.

"You must come and see it some day," she said graciously, as we rose from tea, and she led the way into the grounds, "as you seem interested in it, and have noticed the girls in church. I always have two of the elder ones here training for house and kitchen work, and I invariably get them good places."

There was no doubt that she was a very clever girl, and as I wandered over the garden designed by her, and was shown over the ground floor of the house, equally planned by her, I came to the mournful conclusion that she would be a capital mistress for beautiful old Cappers, when her father bought it. Not that her taste was unimpeachable, but she was very quick to take a hint from others; she had been extremely well educated, and had inherited from her father his shrewdness and talent for business, allied to a sound common sense, all her own. In fact, there was no doubt that whatever she chose to put her strong will to master she could accomplish.

So busy was she showing me this and that, pointing out to me one ingenious contrivance after another, all emanating from her own active brain, that I began to hope I might escape the cross-examination I usually had to encounter when with her. But I found that she was only lying in wait for me. I had been remarking on the pictures scattered about the house, excellent examples of the modern English school, and talking in my own character rather than in that of the village schoolmistress, when she suddenly turned round on me.

"You must have had a very first-rate education, Miss Morton," she said. "You seem to understand a great deal about pictures, and Sir John tells me you are quite a polyglot, you sing to him in so many languages. Where were you educated?"

"At home," I answered. "I certainly had a very good education, but I do not understand all the languages in which I sing. In many cases I have managed to pick up sufficient of the pronunciation and accent to struggle through a ballad, and as a rule, as my audience knows even less of the language than I do, I manage very well."

"You speak German, though?"

"Yes."

"And French, I know, for the Challoner children told me so."

"Yes."

"And Italian?"

"A little, yes."

"And you sing, and play the piano and organ?"

"Yes, I do all these things, but none of them perfectly."

"Your father was a solicitor, I think you have said?"

"No, he was in business."

"And where did you live?"

"In London," I answered. "I really ought to be going now, Miss Bostock," I continued, looking out of window, "it is getting quite dark, and I have not my Duke with me to-day."

"Are you afraid?" she inquired contemptuously. "I walk about at all hours by myself."

"No, I am not afraid," I answered, "but I should prefer to go home now; it is striking half-past six;" and thanking Miss Bostock for my pleasant afternoon, I began wending my way homewards, breathing more freely when I had passed out of reach of those sharp eyes, that had such a talent for detecting mysteries.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

JACK.

"The captain is coming home this afternoon, and the men are going to put up such beautiful arches, and the bells are to ring, and they are going to take the horses out, and drag him up to Cappers. Won't it be grand?"

Thus Susie Coles informed me, as she arrived at the school, some three days after my visit to Miss Bostock, her blue eyes shining with excitement, for, to the Coles family, the Challoners were quite the greatest people in the world. I felt sorry for Captain Challoner, when I heard this magnificent programme. It seemed to me that to a man ill with fever, and not yet recovered from a wound, it would all be an intolerable fatigue, gratifying as such evidences of regard might otherwise be. I knew already that he was expected home that day, and further that the sea-voyage had done wonders for him. The Cappers children had talked of nothing else for the last two days, and I was prepared for a very troublesome morning with them. Nevertheless, I experienced something like a twinge of disappointment when Gerrard flew into the schoolroom in the course of the morning, put a little twisted note into my hand, and tore out again :—

"As Captain Challoner is coming home this afternoon," thus ran the missive, "the children have clamoured for a holiday, and I have weakly given in. They insist on its extending to Thursday. I should think you would not be sorry for a rest.—G. C."

Let me see, to-day was Monday, and I was not to go to Cappers again until Thursday. Of course I ought to be delighted. Had I not any amount of work to do, for which I had been waiting for the leisure? Nevertheless I did not feel as grateful as I should have done for the unexpected holiday. I had to keep myself severely in hand to give the requisite attention to my duties. My thoughts would stray to Captain Challoner, and to the contrast that the ringing of bells and figurative strewing of flowers would afford to such a sad home-coming as his was, the home-coming to a ruined, paralysed father, who only awaited his arrival to complete the sale of his inheritance. The thought of it made me so miserable that, after my tea, I put on my hat to stroll down by the river, and try and divert my mind. But in vain. In the village everything spoke of the impending arrival. There were the arches, and even inscriptions, and the men prepared for the task of dragging the hero up the hill, and his name in every one's mouth.

"He's done well, has our captain," remarked one man to me, a proud smile lighting up his honest, homely features. "He went all through the danger and the march across the desert, and it's only right we should give him a fine welcome. He were allays a brave lad, just such another as Sir John, yet somehow different—gentler, and yet more obstinate like. He'll be a-coming soon now, I reckon. Hark! miss, I think I hears the wheels."

Yes, he was right, I could hear them too, for well I knew the sound of the Bostock brougham, and unceremoniously I left my friend, and fled. But no, my legs were not equal to Sheikh's and Caliph's. Nearer and nearer drew the vehicle, accompanied by the running crowd that intended, at a given point, to unharness the horses, and faster and faster I ran, but all to no purpose. In desperation I turned and faced it, sheltering myself behind a big burly man, who was giving vent to a stentorian "Hurrah!" as he wildly waved his hat. A minute later and I saw the face that I had never forgotten, thin, and bronzed almost to copper-colour from the Egyptian sun, grown much older too, the dark hair at the temples streaked with grey, but still the same face. Its owner sat upright, looking out of window at the crowd, smiling gently, and putting out his hand here and there to one or another of the people he had known from his babyhood. On the other side of him sat Sir John, with a galvanised smile on his countenance, a smile that brought the tears to my eyes. I was thankful it only lasted a minute, that the carriage and the shouting crowd had soon passed by, and that I was left alone, for my heart was full to bursting. I went home as fast as I could, and when I reached my bedroom, I laid my head on my pillow, and cried as though my heart would break.

* * * * * *

When Thursday came round, and I was prepared to go to Cappers, a new terror seized me, which, strangely enough, had not occurred to me before. What if I were to run against Captain Challoner, and he were to recognise me, even as I had recognised him in the very first glance at his photograph? I walked up to Cappers that morning with a beating heart, and over my face a thick black gauze veil. On my arrival, I repaired, as usual, at once to the schoolroom, where, of late weeks, I had always found my pupils awaiting me. To-day there were no pupils, but lying on the sofa—the wretched springless sofa that had done its work, and been consigned to the schoolroom—in his hand some kind of legal document, as I could tell from its look and colour, a gentleman in white flannels; no other than Captain Challoner.

"Hulloa!" he said as he looked up and saw me, for I had entered noiselessly; then, "I beg your pardon," he continued, "do you want any one? Are you come to see Lady Challoner?"

"I am come to teach the children," I answered, standing on one side of him, so that he should not see my face. At the sound of my voice, I saw him start, as Mr. and Mrs. Talbot had started the first time they heard me speak. "I am the National schoolmistress," I added.

"The National schoolmistress!" he said slowly, and almost incredulously; "and you are come to teach the children? You will have to wait for them, I am afraid. I sent them all out to hunt for mushrooms. I wanted this room to myself."

"I will go and look for them. No doubt we could have the lessons elsewhere." He half rose from the sofa, facing round towards me. How glad I was of my thick veil!

"I beg your pardon," he said again; "won't you sit down? You had better not go and look for the

children, they are half-way across the park by this time. I dare say they will be in soon. I will clear out of here in a minute or two. Pray sit down."

"No, thank you, I will go and look for them," I answered. "I know where to find them," and before he could remonstrate, I was outside the door, and on my road.

I breathed more freely when I had escaped from his presence. My heart was beating wildly, and I suppose I must have looked strange, for Gwen, when she saw me, exclaimed, "Have you had a fright, Mortie?"—the name Arthur had given me—"You look so queer."

"No, I have only run very fast to find you. I suppose you forgot your lessons to-day?"

"Yes. You see Jack's come home, and he sent us out to look for mushrooms."

"I saw him just now. He was busy in the schoolroom. We must have the lessons elsewhere to-day."

"We shall have no time for lessons anywhere," answered Gerrard; "it is so late. You had better let us off this morning, and we will tell you all about Jack, and the desert, in French. Will you make the bargain?"

I nodded my acquiescence, for what he said was quite true; and before long all three children were telling me the history of their brother's campaign in very dog-French, plentifully interlarded with English, but with a vigour and spirit that said much for the story-telling powers of the original narrator. When we reached the schoolroom with the mushrooms, Captain Challoner had disappeared, and the short remaining time was devoted to Sibyl's music lesson.

My visits to Cappers had always been interesting to me; now they became far too interesting, accompanied as they were by that double anxiety to meet and to avoid Captain Challoner. In vain I scolded myself, and conjured up all my pride; in vain I reminded myself of who he was, and who I was, and the insurmountable barrier that lay between us. It was all useless. I could not help it; that daily walk became the excitement of my life, the climax of each day to me. And yet I never saw Captain Challoner, except in the distance; in fact, beyond the children, I never saw any one but occasionally Miss Bostock, either as I was going or coming away, and she, like myself, was always in a hurry.

And, meanwhile, the gloom that hung like a pall round the old place had thickened rather than lessened with the arrival of the eldest son. He and his father were constantly together engaged in business, yet nothing seemed to come of it beyond—so said report—some violent scenes between the two. Be that as it might, certain it was that Sir John looked more lined and furrowed, his expression more bitter and satirical, every time I saw him. On the other hand, Lady Challoner was certainly brisker and more animated; in her eyes there gleamed now and then something like hope, whilst Gerrard was never tired of reiterating to me that his brother was a brick; how much of a brick, I could not possibly guess. What it all meant I did not know, nor did I ask any questions. The Challoner affairs, I tried to argue, were no business of mine, and I had no right to take advantage of the chattering of the children, to learn what was not intended for my ears.

Perhaps if I had paid my usual visits to the Rectory, I might have been enlightened, but I had avoided going there of late, beyond now and then looking in for a minute or two, having learnt that Captain Challoner spent the greater part of his afternoons with Mrs. Talbot. At last, one day when I had heard from the children that he was safely shut up with Sir John and the family lawyer, I took the opportunity to repair thither, prepared for a good scolding, which I felt I fully deserved, to be succeeded by a cosy chat. Mrs. Talbot, however, received me with open arms.

"My dear, how very glad I am to see you!" she said, as she kissed me. "I thought you had quite forgotten us. It is such ages since you have paid me a proper visit. Sit down now, and make your apologies for your absence. What have you to say for yourself?"

"A good deal," I answered. "I have a real proper excuse. I heard that Captain Challoner came here every afternoon, and I thought you would be busy with him, and that I should only be in the way. I can assure you it was great self-denial on my part." I spoke jokingly, but my words were true—how true, Mrs. Talbot could not guess.

"Then I must not scold you, I suppose," she said. "Yes, dear boy—that is a very improper way to speak of a distinguished officer of nine-and-twenty, isn't it?—he comes here nearly every afternoon. I cannot tell you what a pleasure it is to me to have him do so, to know that he looks on this house as his second home, and on Mr. Talbot and myself as a kind of father and mother. I only wish I had him here altogether. He is very, very far from well, and wants a great deal of care and looking after, which he is not likely to get at Cappers. Have you seen him?"

"Yes, once, and also in church. He looks very thin and worn."

"Thin and worn! He is a bag of bones, and I see no prospect of his getting either better or fatter, with all the worry and anxiety he is going through now. Yes, if I could get him here for a fortnight, or even a week, I would forbid the very word business, and feed him up from morning till night."

I could not help smiling. Captain Challoner did not look to me quite the man to approve of these kind intentions.

Mrs. Talbot smiled too. "You think I should have rather an unruly patient?" she said. "Well, perhaps I should in the matter of the feeding up, but as to the second part of the programme, we should be quite agreed. He has had nothing but business dinned into his ears from the moment he left the station at Marcombe, and it is my belief that Sir John and Lady Challoner are on at him the whole day long."

"On at him?" I queried.

"Yes, on at him. Surely you know what I allude to. You don't mean to say you go daily to Cappers, and have not heard?"

I shook my head. "I have heard nothing," I said.

"Heard nothing! Have not those little gossips told you? Why, Gerrard is almost bursting with delight."

"He has assured me very often that Captain Challoner is a brick, accompanied by sundry winks and nods, but that is all. Of course I did not, and do not, understand what he means."

"What marvellous discretion! Much too wonderful to last. Well! as the matter is no secret at all, for by some mysterious agency it is already half over the village, and you will hear it from Mrs. Coles, if from no one else, I may as well give you the true version of the tale. It is told in half a dozen words. Captain Challoner flatly refuses to cut off the entail, and to allow Cappers to be sold. You may fancy the result. Sir John and Lady Challoner are in a terrible way, but they cannot move him one inch. He is all for letting the place, but sell it? No! When Jack says, 'No,' like that, in capital letters, no earthly power can induce him to turn it into 'Yes.' And he is right, although I did not think so at first. What he says is reasonable enough, and perfectly true. If Sir John were to sell Cappers, he is so inherently extravagant that he would probably make ducks and drakes of the money in no time, and in a few years they would all be as poor as ever, with nothing to fall back upon. But meanwhile Jack is not having a pleasant time of it with his father, as you may imagine. And he behaves so well too; keeps his temper really wonderfully, and is so patient with, and attentive to, Sir John. Poor dear Jack!"

"But what will they do?" I asked anxiously—"Even supposing that they do let the place, which I should think would be very difficult, so out of repair as it is, will it help them very much—all of them, I mean?"

"Ah! it is a difficult question. There is only one solution of it. Perhaps Jack will set up a shop. It is very fashionable nowadays, and I am sure every one who knows him would patronise him."

I laughed. "Is that the solution?" I asked.

"Never you mind. I have gossiped a great deal too much already, only with you I know it is safe. The fact is, my heart is full of all the dear people at Cappers, and their troubles, and I lie here on my sofa, and turn it all over and over in my mind, until it is a relief to speak to some one about it. And now tell me about the children? Sir John assures me you have worked wonders with them, and that you can do anything with Gerrard."

"He is such a dear boy," I said. "I am so fond of him;" and with that we launched into a chat over my pupils, gentle and simple, until the maid brought in the tea.

"Was Lizzie Bostock at Cappers this afternoon?" inquired Mrs. Talbot carelessly, as she arranged the cups in the tray.

"I don't know. I have not been there this afternoon. To-day was only morning work."

"Of course not. I ought to have remembered that. Do you know, she has wonderfully improved in appearance lately, grown quite handsome, since Lady Challoner has taken her dress in hand, put an end to those barbarous mixtures of colours in which she used to array herself, and insisted on sending her to her own London dressmaker."

"I had no idea that Lady Challoner had done all that. I only noticed that she was dressed in much better taste, and better fitted too, than when I first came here. Fancy her being so submissive!"

Mrs. Talbot smiled. "She is a very clever girl," she said, "and knows her own weak points. She glories in her indifference to, and ignorance of, any-anything so frivolous as dress, although she has the sense to recognise that it is not without its value, and that Lady Challoner is one of the high priestesses of its mysteries. She is really a very nice girl—don't you think so?"

The question took me aback. Did I think Miss Bostock nice? that wonderful feminine adjective that means so much, or so little. I am afraid I did not.

Mrs. Talbot read my thoughts. "Of course," she said, "you cannot think her nice, for she has not been so to you. We all judge of people as we find them. What I mean is that she has excellent qualities. She is high-principled, she is good, clever, philanthropic, practical, energetic!" Here Mrs. Talbot stopped, holding up both her hands, a very favourite gesture of hers. "I know she fairly takes my breath away with all she does," she continued, "but then I am a stupid old woman, and she is a very clever, modern young one."

"Captain Challoner!" announced the maid, throwing open the door; and so engrossed had we been in our conversation, that we had neither of us heard his crutches in the hall, or seen him approaching from the garden.

"Here I am, come to let off my steam to you as usual," he said, as he entered the room on his crutches; then seeing me, he stopped, and put out his hand.

"How d'ye do, Miss Morton," he said. "I have never seen you again to apologise for invading your domain, as I did that day when I sent you hunting for the children all across the park."

"It was not of the slightest consequence," I answered, "I found them very quickly. I think I must go now," turning to Mrs. Talbot. "I have the choir practice soon."

"I know to a second when the practice takes place," returned Mrs. Talbot, "and you are not going to leave this room until you have had two cups of tea, and a proportionate amount of eatables. Sit down again, at once."

I resumed my seat, but I was resolved I would not stay a minute longer than I was obliged, so I took my cup of tea, and very nearly scalded my throat by swallowing it down in one hasty gulp.

"Well, Jack," said Mrs. Talbot. "What have you been doing this afternoon? Any news?"

"None," he answered. "I have been boxed up all day with lawyers and deeds, and pens and ink, and all that my soul most abominates, so to-morrow I am to have a whole holiday. Mr. Bostock is going to lend

"FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT OUR EYES MET" (*p.* 429).

me a horse to put into the dogcart, for me to drive over and see the Dawtreys, and perhaps the Vernons. I want to take Sib with me, Miss Morton; will you let her come?"

"Oh, certainly," I answered, "if Lady Challoner will."

"She has consented already." Then turning to Mrs. Talbot—"What kind of beasts does old Bostock keep in his stables?" he asked, "for from the way he talks of them, I should think he hardly knew a horse from a cow."

"No more he does. But he always gets them bought for him by competent people, and you are quite safe to have a good animal. Miss Bostock would see to that. She has a very good eye for a horse, and rides and drives very well indeed."

"She seems altogether a very remarkable person. As far as I have heard of her, there is nothing she does not do well."

"No, nothing," responded Mrs. Talbot gravely—"she is a very clever, capable, good girl, Jack."

"I feel sure she is. She proved to me to demonstration the other day, that had she had the command of the Nile expedition, Gordon's life would never have been sacrificed."

"How naughty you are! Miss Morton will be quite shocked."

"Are you shocked, Miss Morton?"

"No."

"I thought not. You were only amazed at this fresh development of Miss Bostock's capabilities, of which, of course, you could have formed no conception."

"But seriously, Jack, don't you think her a very nice girl?"

Captain Challoner grew suddenly grave. "I know nothing about her," he answered abruptly. "I have no doubt that in the course of time I shall be able to tell you, for she is always at Cappers, and she and Lady Challoner are apparently inseparables."

I saw a smile disappearing into Mrs. Talbot's teacup, which I had the greatest difficulty in not reproducing on my own countenance, as I remembered the relations existing between the two houses when I first arrived at Monk's Hollow. In order to cover it, I rose to go. This time Mrs. Talbot did not seek to detain me. She merely told me that Mr. Talbot would be present at the practice; and, accustomed as I was to go in and out of the house without ceremony, I was quite unprepared for Captain Challoner accompanying me out to the hall to open the door for me. I begged him not to trouble himself, but he only smiled.

"I am not quite decrepit yet," he answered, "I have the use of my hands, although not altogether of my legs. You go through the shrubbery, I suppose, don't you?"

"Yes, it is the nearest way to the church."

"Then I will come and open the little iron gate for you. Something has happened to it to-day; it sticks, and is awkward to manage, and very heavy to lift."

"Oh! please, don't," I answered, "I am quite sure I can manage it. I am very strong."

I spoke almost suspiciously earnestly, so anxious was I that he should not come. But I knew my words were useless; I might as well have addressed them to the winds.

Captain Challoner had already taken his crutches, and we walked down the slope together. At first we exchanged a few commonplaces on the lovely view from the Rectory, the weather, and such-like topics, until he suddenly addressed me directly.

"So you are the witch, Miss Morton, I understand, who has worked such wonders with Gerrard. My father tells me you have made a different boy of him. What is your recipe?"

"I?" I stammered. "Have I? I have no recipe, except that I am very fond of him, and I think he is beginning to like me. He has a very fine disposition."

"Yes, I think he has. One of those fine dispositions that throw off their exuberance by being an endless source of annoyance and trouble to all their surroundings." Then as I laughed, "Have you ever known a very tiresome, passionate, unruly boy, who was not pronounced by his fond relatives, "sure to turn out a fine character"? he asked.

"I am sorry to say I have had hitherto very little to do with boys," I answered.

"All the same you are quite right about Gerrard. He has a fine disposition, and what he wants is school. Poor little lad! he ought to be there. I am going to employ my enforced leisure in teaching him as much as I can, which is not much," grimly. "He proposes commencing at six in the morning."

"That is just like him. He never does anything by halves. He'll come to you at six, you may be certain, and he is sure to be good, for he is very fond of you." Somehow I could not, try as I would, say "Sir," to Captain Challoner, as I could to his father. It stuck in my throat, and seemed to choke me. And yet I was only the National schoolmistress, as Gerrard had said.

"If he is fond of me, it shows him to be very affectionate, for I have literally ruled him with a rod of iron, since my return home. My father and Lady Challoner have appointed me punisher in general to the family. It is no sinecure," drily. I could not help laughing.

"No, they are very tiresome, that is Gwen, Gerrard, and Arthur; but they are improving every day, and they are such dear children, so truthful and clever, and with a great sense of humour about them."

"That is not very grand praise, but still encouraging. Now," as we reached our destination, and he lifted the gate for me, "you see you could not have done this for yourself."

"Let us put it back, and I will try."

"No," decidedly, "it is far too heavy for you."

In a moment my spirit of perversity was roused, I had relatched the gate, and was trying to open it as usual. But in vain. Try as I would, and the very first attempt had brought the warm colour into my face, I could not move it one inch. For a second Captain Challoner stood and watched me, then he interposed.

"Leave go," he said authoritatively. "Did I not tell you that it was much too heavy for you? Why do you try?"

"To show you that it is not"—my hands, nevertheless, dropping to my side.

"Bravado," he answered; then suddenly, before I could respond—

"Miss Morton, have I ever seen you before? or is it only that you are like some one I know?"

My heart seemed to stand still at the innocent question, and all the colour rushed from my face, leaving me white and nerveless.

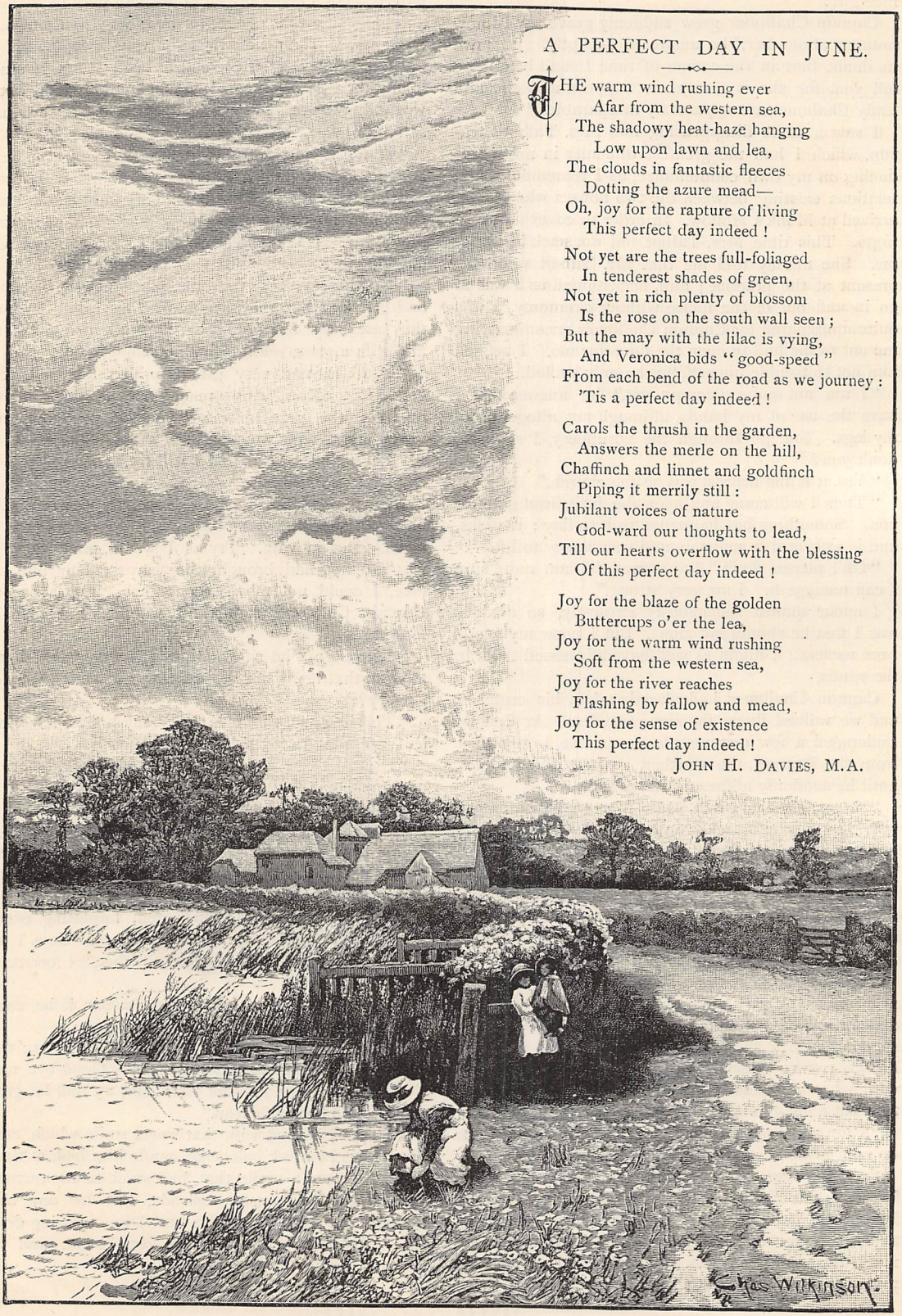
"Every one here," I answered, forgetting everything but the one desire to shield myself, "says I am so like Blanche Talbot—Miss Talbot," I corrected myself.

It was his turn now to change colour, if he could have done so under his tan.

"Yes," he murmured to himself, "that is it; that must be it. You are very like her. Good-bye now. Don't be obstinate another time and try and lift gates that are too heavy for you."

He raised his hat with that sweet smile which, combined with his dark colouring, made him look at times like an Italian, a smile that had stuck to my memory ever since the hansom episode, and for one brief moment our eyes met. The next I was running down the hill at full speed, to meet Mr. Talbot and the choir.

END OF CHAPTER THE NINTH.



A PERFECT DAY IN JUNE.

THE warm wind rushing ever
Afar from the western sea,
The shadowy heat-haze hanging
Low upon lawn and lea,
The clouds in fantastic fleeces
Dotting the azure mead—
Oh, joy for the rapture of living
This perfect day indeed !

Not yet are the trees full-foliaged
In tenderest shades of green,
Not yet in rich plenty of blossom
Is the rose on the south wall seen ;
But the may with the lilac is vying,
And Veronica bids "good-speed"
From each bend of the road as we journey :
'Tis a perfect day indeed !

Carols the thrush in the garden,
Answers the merle on the hill,
Chaffinch and linnet and goldfinch
Piping it merrily still :
Jubilant voices of nature
God-ward our thoughts to lead,
Till our hearts overflow with the blessing
Of this perfect day indeed !

Joy for the blaze of the golden
Buttercups o'er the lea,
Joy for the warm wind rushing
Soft from the western sea,
Joy for the river reaches
Flashing by fallow and mead,
Joy for the sense of existence
This perfect day indeed !

JOHN H. DAVIES, M.A.

WHAT TO WEAR: CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS.

FROM OUR LONDON AND PARIS CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

IT is quite possible to have a really fashionable gown with no trimming at all, but also you may make use of almost any kind of ornamentation, and the dresses worn by the two ladies in our first picture are good illustrations of how to apply trimmings. The bodice in the one ends in a side belt, not so wide, however, as is often worn; and a loop of velvet, descending from the left side, seems to hold up the skirt drapery, which is planned with a pendent end.

The bodice is full, but slashed in three points, so that embroidery of a conventional design on a dark ground is seen, and this borders the deep neck-band, which it would be difficult to have too wide for the fashion. The sleeves, cut on the cross at the top, would seem to be veering towards the old "leg of mutton," though at present it is much modified. The sleeves have pointed cuffs, the skirt falls in straight folds, and has a band down one side. The other dress can be made in silk of a rich character—in the useful, soft China silk, or in nun's veiling, or any other soft material. The sleeves show the new drapery on the shoulders. There is a straight cuff of embroidery on a white ground, and the front vest, which is pointed, is of the same. The bodice has wide revers, and the front is covered with perpendicular bands of the embroidery, the upper portion of the skirt turning upwards, after the manner of a kirtle, at the back. The hair is either dressed very high, or we are beginning to take half-measures, and are slowly veering round to the catogan.

These gowns are trimmed at the hem, at all events in front, with a band of embroidery, and this is frequently in open-work.

Stripes are far less used than brocades of all kinds, but they are treated in various ways—sometimes horizontally, sometimes perpendicularly. Fluted backs, lined with horsehair cloth, are new and very pretty also, for they stand out gracefully. The foundations of skirts are seldom wider than two yards and a quarter to a half; and ten inches is the utmost length a steel should be, always supposing a steel to be permissible at all.

Tabliers, both for day and evening wear, are often richly embroidered, and are very wide, reaching to well beneath the arms. Sashes are of great width, but are almost a necessary part of a dress. In the evening they are worn at the side; in the morning, quite in the centre of the back.

However plain the arrangement of skirts may be, they never look straight; narrow silk flounces underneath are a good preventive against clinging, and a ruche of chicorée silk at the hem throws many of them well out. In bodices, a Zouave jacket, or a trimming to simulate such a jacket, gives much style, but it requires to be carefully carried out; nothing could be more ugly than jackets ending at the bust. Velvet petticoats are worn with woollen skirts, which are often raised only sufficiently to show them; while in others the edge is cut diagonally, so that they slant down in a point on to the petticoat.

Many women like to work trimmings for their gowns, and the labour has, of late, been made easy. You can buy printed patterns on blue calico, on to which a special tubular braid is sewn, and united by not elaborate lace stitches. When the work is completed the lace comes off with the tacking-thread, and the patterns can be used again. Matters are simplified by the amount of braid required for the lace being printed on the designs, which are sold in varied widths.

Very large buttons are worn on coats and coat-jackets, and these are made of painted china, with Watteau subjects framed either in a rim of pearls and paste, or in paste alone.

Bow bonnets are the special English fashion, which has held its own, and has pervaded all classes. They are very easily made with wide moire ribbon, and shapes can be bought with a front slanting up to the crown, on which the bow rests. Indeed, bonnet trimming is made very easy now, and such bows can be bought ready made. They are Alsatian in style.

Tea-gowns are elaborate for dinner wear, and are made of soft woollen stuffs, which admit of lounging in them—pink and grey, and cream and gold are the favourite mixtures. They are cut in the Princesse style at the back, with long sleeves, the front draped either with lace or soft silk. The new lace flouncings are all sufficiently long to reach from the neck to the hem. The extended width is useful for this purpose, and also for the long wing-like sleeves to mantles.

Long cloaks in tweed are capital as a cover-all. They fit the figure as closely as a dress in the bodice portion, the sleeves being an oblong slip from the shoulder. Still for young girls' wear the jackets with loose fronts hold their own, and they show the pretty full vests or the waistcoats and neckties which are really so smart in style. Black silk and black velvet close-fitting jackets with short basques have wide revers and a cascade of lace down the front.

The Italian peasants have been busy all the winter plaiting coarse straw hats, which, at the present moment, may be seen worn in boats on all those English rivers which ladies frequent. They cost only a few pence, and are made of straw which has served for corn, the finer kinds being grown only

for millinery. The plait is after the Leghorn order —that is, not sewn together, but invisibly united by a needle with straw, which seems to make the several plaits one solid whole. The hats have wide brims, are trimmed with muslin and flowers, and bend up just where they are needed. When the days are hot, a full plain woollen skirt is best, and a shirt of wool or silk on the river. For those who row, a belt is most serviceable. Girls who simply "delight on the waters to glide" may indulge in a wide sash of soft silk, and have ready at hand a loose jacket to slip on as required. Soft China silk and mousseline de laine are two inexpensive materials which this year are adapted to a variety of uses.

II.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

To be in the fashion in Paris you must certainly select picturesque millinery, and I never in previous years saw fresher nor more natural artificial blooms, nor millinery which so certainly denoted the advent of spring. The initial letter shows a truly fashionable hat, the brim turning upwards from the face, and becoming shallower at the back, with almost as many flowers beneath it as above it. The material is a shiny-faced straw, plaited in a fashion which gives points at the edge, and the flowers are relieved by a background of lace. The crown is not trimmed to look so high as most of the new hats; the bows are of two distinct colourings, willow-greens and beige, standing up in front, and not, as is mostly the case, placed on the top of the crown. The French milliners would seem to treat each hat differently, and to crumple the brims, so to speak, into any form which it is possible to bend them into, and then they introduce anywhere, inside or out, a bunch of flowers gathered haphazard. But like the pride that apes humility, this seeming want of design covers the most elaborate and careful forethought and arrangement, especially as to tints. A copper-brown is a well-worn colour, and this serves as a good background for both wild and cultivated flowers. Tricorn hats, and brims bent upwards into a succession of large flutings, are the fashions which suit young people best, and they are modes that accord with Directoire bows, and all the dainty adjuncts which make the present style of dressing so jaunty and becoming. Ribbon run through insertion, with holes prepared for it, is introduced on to some of the brims, and forms the crown of many bonnets.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

Dressmaking is not difficult now, as I think you will agree with me, if you bestow some attention on the figures in our sketch on the opposite page; both styles suit the light materials now worn. One is a simple French bunting of an almond tone. The material is light, soft, and yet durable, and it is often made with a woven border in white brocade. Nothing could well be simpler than the make of the skirt. The front breadth is fully gathered at the waist and caught up with four pleats on each side; the back has long straight pleats, but at the side there are double revers of white embroidered silk or muslin. The bodice ends at the waist, fitting the figure closely; it opens at the throat with very wide double revers of the two colours, and there is a full muslin habit-shirt beneath, which is often replaced by a Directoire bow. From underneath these revers come two widths of embroidery, united down the centre, the scalloped-edged on the outside, and these disappear in a wide ruffled sash falling in a bow and ends over the side panel. The sleeves are very high on the shoulders, and are confined between elbow and wrist with a torsade of ribbon and a frill of lace. This would be a pretty style for cotton dresses; and those who are planning costumes for tennis parties might arrange them thus, making the gown sometimes of cottons, which are wonderfully fresh and pretty, especially the cotton brocades, showing detached sprays all over in white. The hat worn with this dress illustrates what I have said with regard to the introduction of trimming beneath the

brim. The straw turns up like a man-of-war hat; there is a knot of bows and ends on the outside, and inside a pleating of embroidered muslin, disappearing in a brown band with another bow on the left side.

The other dress is one that could be well made either in silk, woollen, or cotton, provided always that the plain fabric be either mixed with check or striped. The bodice is cut in a rounded form on the hips; the skirt at the back is gathered and the union covered with a thick silk cord, which, knotted, falls at the side in long loops and ball ends; the front, which ends in broad pleats, is draped in two or three side folds, which cause a series of drapings to cross the front. The panel is of a striped material, the lines arranged horizontally with some five horizontal runners from the waist. The vest, gathered into a wide belt, is of the same, and the front of the bodice appears to cross over and form part and parcel of the skirt over which it is draped. The sleeves are very high on the shoulder, as all the fashionable sleeves would seem to be, being cut on the cross—some of them—while others have a draped crossway piece poised like small butterfly-wings.

The hat is made of a piece of the dress, and shades the face, the material rising in four folds above a knot of ribbons at the back, with a couple of white quill feathers standing up boldly in the midst.

Black is always worn, and in England, for many causes, perhaps more than anything else; but in Paris Fashion decidedly points to brilliant colouring. Cottons are generally fresh in tone, but the woollens are equally so; and the checks, often intermixed with plain materials, combine cream, blue, red, and brown or pink, mousse, cream, and dark blue. Silk is mixed with wool in brocades, which are newer than anything else, and they are not cheap, but they are durable and well-looking. Colour is finding its way under a new aspect in under-linen, the last idea being frillings bound to the depth of one inch with blue, red, brown, or pink linen, invisibly stitched. This novelty is effective, and really pretty; moreover, it washes well.

The parasols with their china handles are of very vivid colours, too, while the natural wood sticks are supplemented by bunches of cherries or plums, or whatever the fruit may be. Nevertheless, the style is severe this year. The green tones are so numerous it is quite impossible to class them; every shade would seem to find favour; and the very lightest when blended with pink are extremely pretty.

Copper embroidery on tinsel threads is the newest tone in trimming, and blends curiously with almost any needed shade.

The Directoire bows are not difficult to make in soft lisse or muslin; they consist of a very full bow with short ends large enough to reach to the bust, and that is all.

But as summer advances and bodices are cut not quite so high at the throat, collarettes made of finely-pleated silk muslin, or coloured lace, will be worn; they terminate as a jabot at the waist-belt. There are pleated cuffs to match, and these additions modernise a plain costume considerably. Silk muslin fichus,

A DAY IN JUNE.

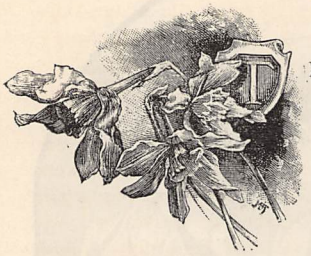
edged with embroidered frills, are made in black and white and in the fashionable colours, such as Suède, old rose, copper, reseda, &c., and they also smarten up a costume which has lost its first freshness.

The leading tailors make jackets of pale tan cloth; the revers show two or three rows of stitching, and they open over waistcoats either of cloth of gold, with an appliqué of écru embroidery, or of lavender silk, trimmed with silver cord. The basques of such jackets are cut up in tabs, and the coloured silk or cloth of the waistcoat shows in the spaces between. Deep cuffs, likewise of the colour, are sewn inside the cloth sleeves of the jacket.

The Empire hats, made by our most noted milliners, are of medium size, and are specially useful in black Brussels net, with bows of black moire ribbon on the soft low crown, and a garland of pale yellow or pink roses; buds to match, with small bows of ribbon, quaintly arranged, are often placed beneath the brim. Directoire hats, on the contrary, are made of black straw or chip, and have a band of the new Euphrates green chip inserted in the brim. The most popular trimmings consist of green velvet and green ostrich-feathers.

SOME HINTS ON ARRANGING FLOWERS.

FIRST PAPER.



WILD DAFFODIL.

THE following hints will not be on the arranging of exotics and the expensive choice flowers which only the few can possess, but rather on the very simplest and sweetest of blossoms — our dear "old-fashioned" garden flowers, beloved and grown by the wise amongst our English gentry, and by the poorest of cottagers. And, added to these, I want also to offer suggestions relative to those gems of our country fields, hedgerows, woods, and ponds—the wild flowers. Many of the so-called commonest wild flowers ought to be more largely used for home decoration than they are, and now that the great yearly miracle of the resurrection of the flowers is wrought again for us, I am sure my readers will be amply repaid if they will follow my advice—take their daily "constitutional" (and thus kill two birds with one stone) in search of floral treasures to beautify their rooms. "Oh, but we have abundance of *garden* flowers for our use," I hear some one say. To such a candid objector I would say, "Do not gather too many of your garden flowers, for is not the garden really the 'outer court,' and therefore part of the home which we desire to look beautiful? Let garden blossoms grow and adorn their allotted sphere, and commit your robbery, as a rule, farther afield." This, I argue, is also true economy. Miss Wetherell makes her little heroine, "Fleda," practise such economy—Listen!

"Oh, grandpa," Fleda exclaimed suddenly, "won't you stop a minute and let me get out? I want to get some of that beautiful bitter-sweet."

"What do you want that for?" said he. "You can't get out very well."

"Oh, yes, I can—please, grandpa! I want some of it *very* much—just one minute!"

He stopped, and Fleda got out and went to the roadside, where a bitter-sweet vine had climbed into a young pine-tree, and hung it, as it were, with red coral. But her one minute was at least four before she had succeeded in breaking off as much as she could carry of the splendid creeper; for not until then could Fleda persuade herself to leave it. She came back, and worked her way up into the waggon with one hand full as it could hold of her brilliant trophies.

"Now, what good 'll that do you?" inquired Mr. Ringgan good-humouredly, as he lent Fleda what help he could to her seat.

"Why, grandpa, I want it to put with cedar and pine in a jar at home; it will keep for ever so long, and look beautiful. Isn't that handsome?—only it was a pity to break it."

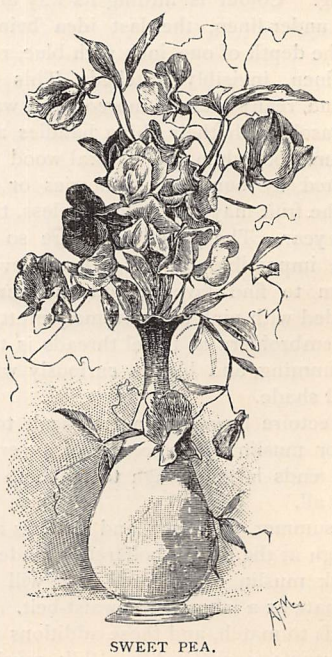
"Why, yes, it's handsome enough," said Mr. Ringgan; "but you've got something just by the front door there, at home, that would do just as well; what do you call it, that flaming thing there?"

"What, my burning bush? Oh, grandpa! *I wouldn't cut that for anything in the world! It's the only pretty thing about the house;* and besides," said Fleda, looking up with a softened mien, "you said that it was planted by my mother. Oh, grandpa! I wouldn't cut that for anything."

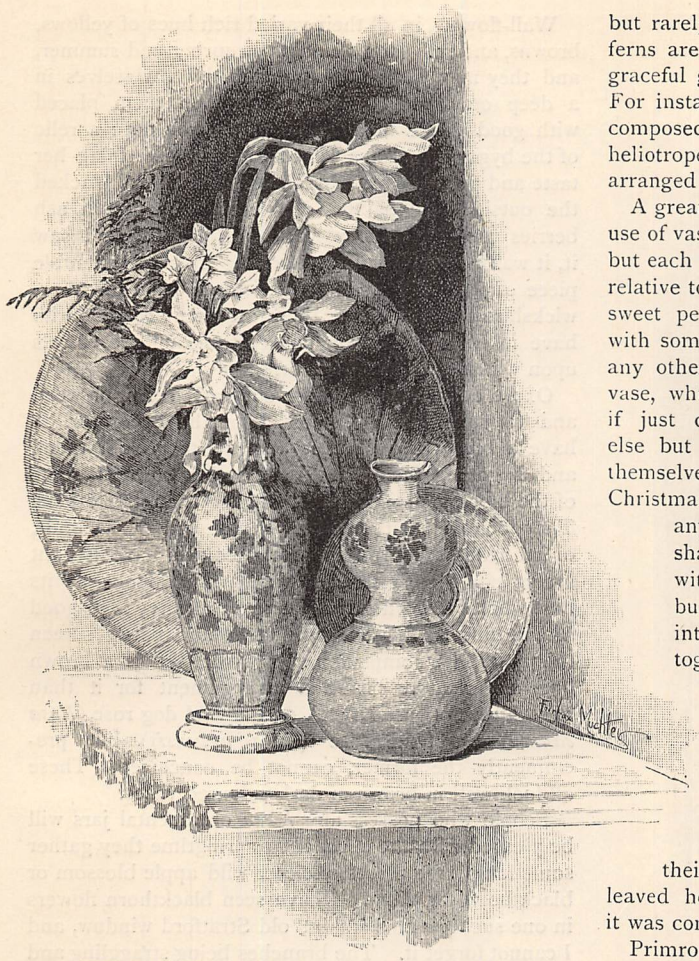
There was the artistic intelligence shown in the heroine of "Queechy," which we should all do well to cultivate more and more.

Beyond this, I have another argument in favour of the wildings. One invaluable treasure for home decoration is the common buttercup. It is splendidly effective when grouped in a room which has much green (or brown) about it—on the walls, carpet, upholstery, and so on. And what a pleasure buttercup-picking is to small children! How such occupation will "keep them out of further mischief," as the mothers say! Children should be *encouraged* to gather their flowers and bring them purposely to fill some honoured niche in the home rooms. They might even be taught to arrange the flowers, and stimulated to getting pretty effects, by a small money reward being offered.

I think the first and highly useful varieties of buttercup are *Ranunculus ficaria* (Wordsworth's pet celandine, and this should have some of its dark, rich leaves always with it), *R. bulbosus*, and *R. acris*



SWEET PEA.



WILD DAFFODIL, NARCISSUS, AND COMMON FERN.

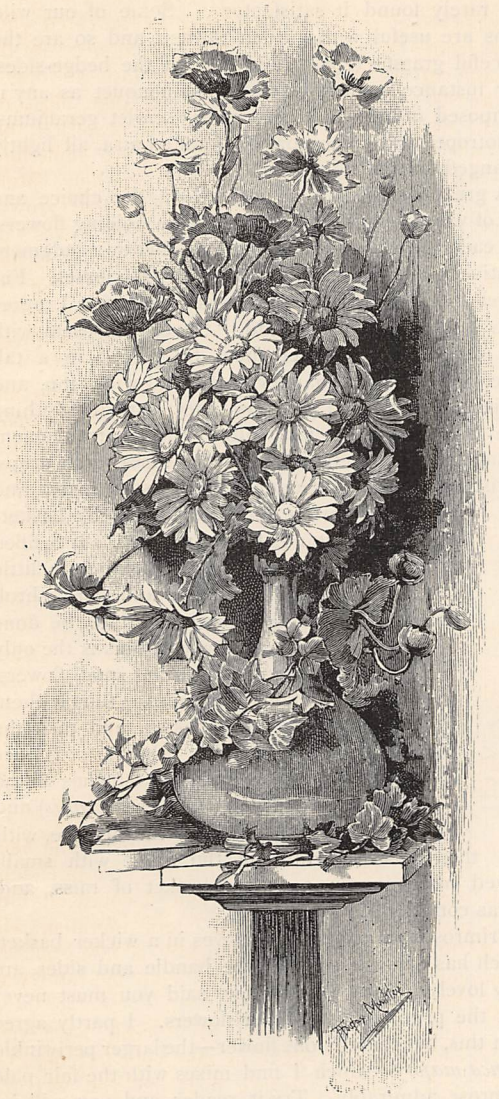
(crowfoot). The marsh caltha, which comes in May-time, and decks the meadows and marshy river-side spots, is a most valuable flower for green rooms. Its large golden flowers are too well known to need description. Knots composed of this flower should be accompanied by its own green leaves. Nothing could be prettier than a great bowl or jar filled with marsh marigolds. Always get plenty of stem with any flower you are getting. This is most important, and very few people seem able to comprehend the fact that their arrangements of flowers are more often a failure, from an artistic point of view, from the cause of too little stalk rather than anything else. There is no reason in the world why wild flowers may not be gathered with plenty of stem upon them. Chrysanthemums, pink, white, and yellow, Marguerite daisies, and wild oxeye daisies (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), sulphur-coloured sunflowers (large ones only useful for spacious rooms, and the medium-sized flowers for ordinary-sized ones), and nasturtiums are all very effective, and my favourites in a *green* room.

I would warn readers against mixing wild with garden flowers. It is not advisable, and I have but rarely found it satisfactory. Some of our wild ferns are useful with garden flowers, and so are the graceful grasses (*e.g.*, tufted aira) of the hedge-sides. For instance, as lovely an August bouquet as any is composed of Aimée Vibert roses, scarlet geraniums, heliotrope, and some sprays of tufted aira, all lightly arranged for a slender vase.

A great deal might be written on the choice and use of vases and other receptacles for holding flowers, but each respective reader must use her own judgment relative to the flowers and vases *she* possesses. For sweet peas, which are always so beautiful, I agree with some one who has said, "Never mix them with any other flower." Let them be placed in a tall vase, which has a narrow neck and wide top, and if just dropped in anyhow they can do nothing else but artistically fall into perfect arrangement themselves. In ruby glasses and vases, snowdrops, Christmas roses, jessamine, Seven-sister roses, and any *white* flowers look well. A ruby basket-shaped vase stands before me now. It is filled with double snowdrops, tied together in little bunches with pieces of box and dark shrub intermixed. Fragile flowers need to be done together in little knots always. This is the only secret of successfully using small flowers, and especially wild ones. Bunch them together in little masses, and then the commonest will be valuable. I once made an arrangement of bunches of the common dog daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and some branches of the catkin tribe, with their tassels, arranging the whole with small-leaved hedge-ivy in a wicker basket of moss, and it was considered very pretty.

Primroses with their own leaves in a wicker basket, which has ivy wreathed on the handle and sides, are very lovely. Some people have said you must never mix the primrose with other flowers. I partly agree with this, but there is one flower—the larger periwinkle (*Vinca major*)—which I find mixes with the fair pale primrose admirably. Try it, reader, and you will be charmed. It is almost my favourite spring-time arrangement. It may be remarked, also, that masses of primroses are charming when placed by any purple hangings or upholstery. If there are any purple pots or vases in a house, primroses, when obtainable, should certainly fill them. Primroses, and indeed any light-coloured flowers, should be used for brightening up dark corners, or standing against any deep shade. The wild hyacinth, commonly called blue-bell, is a useful flower for decoration. I like it in profusion by itself, gathered with long stalks, and with some of its own graceful leaves. I have placed ground ivy with it; and the pretty white stitchwort is also a good companion, as it lends grace and lightness to the basket, or crock, which holds the hyacinths.

I have been told that a certain florist has quarrelled with another lover of flowers on the advisability of mixing certain other flowers with garden roses; and it is said to have been written in one of our magazines a year or two ago that "roses must



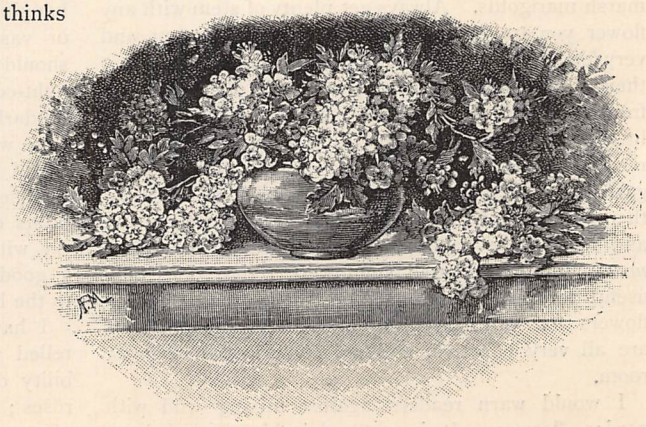
DOG DAISY AND RED POPPY.

never be put into vases with any other flower." Now I am one with the quarrelsome florist who thinks otherwise. I hold that all roses are so beautiful of themselves that with their own green leaves there is not much else to be desired. But, surely, no sane person will cry out if I say you may put white flowers of an airy, delicate nature with your roses? The wild clematis and the white jessamine are peculiarly adapted. Either will take off the heavy look which a vase of roses generally has. Cause your clematis to fall unstudied about the vase or basket, and trail upon the table or bracket, and you will, I think, be pleased. The contentious man alluded to says that flowering sumach and sprays of the palest wild apple blossom both combine exquisitely with roses.

Wall-flowers, in all their varied rich hues of yellows, browns, and reds, are abundant in spring and summer, and they may be put in profusion by themselves in a deep crock or bowl. I have seen them placed with good effect in a three-legged iron pot: a relic of the bygone, which a lady had been exercising her taste and practising her brush upon. She had blacked the outside and painted a wreath of mountain ash berries round it. Filled with wall-flowers, as I saw it, it was not out of place standing upon a venerable piece of furniture in an ancient room of an old Warwickshire hall. Perhaps there are many readers who have in their possession one of these unique vessels upon which they could perform!

Oxeye daisies are amongst our early spring flowers, and they are capital material for the decorator. I have a blue vase which is a favourite pot for them, and I gather them with long stalks so that some of the blooms may stand up higher than the others. They look well without greenery, or with fern-fronds, or branches of shrub or birch-tree; I have a light green gipsy-kettle-shaped vase, which looks at its best when filled with these daisies; and ivy is as good as anything to fall over the sides and partly screen the pot. The companion "gipsy-kettle" is a brown one, and a more beautiful arrangement for it than Scotch roses (Burnet rose), or the wild dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and field rose (*Rosa arvensis*), but pre-eminently the former, cannot be conceived. These all look well in brown or dark-coloured vases.

People who possess any *large* ornamental jars will be pleased with the effect if in springtime they gather some long large pieces of either wild apple blossom or blackthorn for them. I have seen blackthorn flowers in one such jar in a quaint old Stratford window, and I cannot forget it. The branches being straggling and not pliable, the effect could only be gained by guarding against crowding, and letting all the twigs be clearly defined. Of course I need not say that suitably-shaped and well-blossomed branches should be selected from the hedges. In the early summer the white and red lychnis will be found, and they suitably combine together and look well in a white vase. Being graceful, airy flowers—particularly the red—



WHITE SINGLE HAWTHORN.

they are useful in combining with bouquets of a more set character. One of our most charming wild flowers, and at the same time most useful, is the *purple* wood-vetch—plentiful in June and July. If only it would—*could* come in primrose-time, how useful we could make it! Owing to its twining propensities and its graceful beauty, nothing better can be found for twisting about vases, basket-handles, &c. It ought to be more largely utilised for épergnes. The yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), found by the water-side and in ponds in May, is one of the most beautiful of wild flowers; and a very pleasing sight it makes when placed in some heavy vessel, the stems being left sufficiently long to resemble the natural growth. I would have a profusion of the leaves (flags) with the flowers. If the vase be placed by a mirror the reflection heightens and is suitable to this effect.

Another mixture that I would recommend for the front of a pier or other glass may be procured when any reader is out on a boating excursion in the habitat of the water-lilies. Never lose an opportunity of gathering these grand, wax-like blossoms of the river; the white ones are my favourites, but the yellow ones are very beautiful, and sometimes they may be gathered and arranged together. Make them as nearly as possible to resemble their growth, and be sure to have a few of their smaller leaves with them. A rather large and shallow receptacle is best to hold them; if your arrangement is one of the white lilies, you will be charmed by adding at the side of your vase a few tufts or masses of the lovely water-myosote.

I trust some of my hints may not be in vain, and when Autumn lavishes her rich wealth for my readers, I may have a few more remarks on this subject to offer.

E. E. A.

THE STRUGGLES OF ABEL STRONG.

A LIVING CHESS STORY. BY HENRY FRITH.

Onward like kings, our duty done
On each appointed square;
Alas! to find our cherished hopes
Are "castled" in the air!

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

CASTLED IN THE AIR.

IT was pretty evident to me while watching the game, as in my fancy I designated these events, that Abel Strong was disappointed at not having some acknowledgment from Miss Aggington—were the notice ever so little. But although many inquiries came from the Hall, though jelly, fruit, and other sick-room comforts, were freely and generously supplied by the squire, his daughter never sent a personal message. After several weeks had elapsed, Miss Aggington left home for change of air, and her sudden departure worked a marvellous change in Abel Strong.

He shook off his despondency almost immediately. The mind-worry which had possessed him he laid aside; he conversed with cheerfulness, and often hinted to me his grand idea for saving manual labour in the foundries, substituting steam-power and machinery, which he described, for hand-labour.

There had been an investigation into the circumstances connected with the accident, with the result that the foreman and three other men had been dismissed. Abel's evidence inculpated them, and Mr. Aggington promised the young man an opportunity to recoup himself fully for all his pains when he returned to duty.

Before three months had expired Abel was again at work, and busy with his new plans. The head draughtsman, whom we may term the superintendent, took great interest in Abel, and encouraged him. This man was a hard-headed, stern moralist, who made little allowance for human nature, but he prompted ideas in Abel's mind, and fed him with hope daily.

"Young man," he would say, "you have your career before you to make or mar your fortune. Go your ways steadily, swerve not, and you will win the prize. Never mind how high it *seems*, aim for it; and as you elevate yourself so will it be the nearer!"

Abel's heart responded. Did this stern-faced, hard man of business recognise the love which was burning so brightly, unseen, in his heart? It would almost appear so. Thus time passed, until the machinery which Abel had invented came to be tested, but the "hands" rebelled against it, as it had been feared they would do.

Mr. Aggington, however, determined to give Abel a trial, and appointed him overseer of the gang who were employed to forge and erect the machines. In this capacity he had many an opportunity to practise self-control, and one memorable day his courage was severely tested. The master's undoubted favour had made Abel many enemies in the "shops."

In all communities there are men who, idle themselves, wish to make others so, and if possible prevent any from rising from their own dead-level of mediocrity. In the Westonbridge Works there was

such a leaven, and it came out when Abel's inventions became facts.

Going home one evening, Abel found himself being "dogged" by a man, and, fearing mischief, he stopped and faced his pursuer. To his surprise he found his expected assailant none other than John Curtis, the hard-headed superintendent already mentioned.

"Is it you, Mr. Curtis?" exclaimed Abel.

"Yes, Abel Strong, it is I. I have come to deliver you from the snare of the fowler, lad; you'd best walk along o' me."

"Why, sir?" asked Abel. "Am I in danger?"

He spoke calmly, as if it concerned him but little, yet his hands clenched involuntarily, and his head was held higher.

"I see you are ready for battle," said the other. "Be calm, and hit hard if it comes to blows!"

"Why, Mr. Curtis, *you* surely don't advise me to fight!" exclaimed Abel. "You wouldn't have me injure any one! This is quite a new feature!"

"There are times, Abel Strong, when self-defence, aye, even to the verge of the grave, becomes a duty. I shall not shrink from my duty, lad. Listen!"

The man halted as the sound of a whistle came to their ears through the mist and darkness. It was not a pleasant prospect. On the right, a few paces from the footpath which the men were treading, was the channel, and the high cliffs which overlooked it. Beneath these cliffs lay cruel shingle, on which if one should fall or be cast, his body would be almost unrecognisable, even if the beating waves did not carry him away to sea in the ever-running eddy. In front and on the left were rocks frowning over the path—great rugged boulders, whose companions had at times tumbled from the cliff-edge to the beach, leaving open spaces here and there where danger lurked in the slippery grass or bracken.

A chilly, misty, autumn evening—a night to conceal fell deeds and murderous faces.

The whistle was not repeated. "It is a sea-bird's cry," said Abel.

"No sea-bird ever called its mates for such purpose," muttered the grim Curtis. "Be on your guard, Abel Strong, and mind your footing!"

The warning was not superfluous, nor was it unheeded. Abel now prepared for the attack which he expected, and in another moment three men leaped suddenly across the path, and bade him "Stand!"

"Who are you?" demanded Abel, stepping back and bracing himself for the anticipated struggle.

"Never you mind who we are. We're not goin' to have favourites here. Give up yer machine, or go over cleve!"

"And suppose I decline to do either?" said the young man boldly.

"Then we'll mak' ye," said another voice.

"Hallo, Bob, is that you?" exclaimed Mr. Curtis suddenly. "Thought you were transported by now! This is nice business, stopping peaceable people on the road!"

"Go ye about your business, Muster Curtis. We ain't no call to interfere with you. It's the other."

"He's my man, and I stand by him," replied Curtis, "so here goes."

"Come on then, an' ye *will* have it," said the first speaker, and a rush was made at the others.

Abel told me afterwards that he did not understand how it all happened. A fierce onset was the immediate result. The two assailed stood back to back, having nothing but their fists to oppose to their assailants' clubs. But the latter found their match. Abel's companion proved himself a very expert in boxing. He quickly disarmed one opponent, and made such good use of his cudgel that he laid its late possessor at his feet. He then turned his attention to one of the two men who were pressing Abel hard, and left him with one. A desperate struggle now ensued.

Abel closed with his adversary, clutching the stick firmly as he. The men swayed and plunged, each endeavouring to obtain possession of the cudgel. Strong perceived a design on the part of his opponent to push him to the edge of the cliff, but the young man was wary, and dexterously shifted his ground so as to keep the other nearer the dangerous place.

Meanwhile, things had gone badly with Mr. Curtis, who had received a severe blow, and was for the moment *hors de combat*. His foe had no particular grudge against him, so, leaving him half insensible, he turned his cudgel against Abel at the very moment when his adversary was pulling him fiercely across the path. The newcomer had uplifted his arm, and another second or two would have disposed of Abel, had he not suddenly let go the stick and darted aside. The victory was his, for the man with whom he had been so desperately contending staggered, reeled, and unable to preserve his balance, tottered to the edge of the cliff. With a terrible cry he disappeared ere either of the men could assist him.

A horrible pause—a dull thud—and all was over! The remaining ruffian fled into the darkness, leaving Abel master of the situation, with one insensible and one other injured man. He had himself not escaped scot-free; he was bleeding from a wound in the head, and was also suffering from some vicious kicks, but after awhile he and Mr. Curtis managed to raise the fallen man, and support him as far as the nearest cottage.

There he was recognised as a "fitter" named Paul a man who could have no reason to bear malice against our hero.

"You contemptible hound!" cried Abel. "In what manner have I ever injured you, that you and your wretched associates should seek my life? You all deserve to be hanged!"

"Then you leave us alone, and don't go taking the bread out of our mouths with your machines. Things is good enough as they are."

"Well, well," said Mr. Curtis, "let us go and see after that Bob. He's dead, I reckon."

He was found dead and cruelly disfigured at the base of the cliff. Then Abel, wounded and blood-stained, made the best of his way towards his father's cottage.

I had been speaking to old Strong during the afternoon, endeavouring to ascertain his reasons for disliking, and so strongly disliking, the Aggingtons. We had got on the subject again, and just as Abel entered his father was saying—

"Oh, she came—she couldn't do less. He saved her life."

"Who came, father?" asked Abel, as he stepped forward.

His appearance greatly alarmed the old man, who put his hand to his side, and grew deadly pale.

"Oh, my heart!" he murmured.

Abel rushed forward. "I am not much hurt, father," he said. "I will come down in a few minutes all right."

I volunteered to assist him, and we went upstairs together.

"Who called to-day?" inquired Abel. "Father seemed rather agitated, like."

"Miss Aggington," I replied, looking at him. "She came to inquire for you, I believe."

"Heaven bless her!" cried Abel fervently. "She's an angel. Come to see me, did she? Oh, you needn't laugh, I tell you, sir; she's the only woman in the world for me. I say," he continued joyfully, "if this machine succeeds, and I patent it, my fortune's made! I may be a partner! I can go to the Hall! Miss Mildred may in time marry—what are you laughing for?"

"You are building some very airy castles," I replied. "But there is something more serious. Your father is ailing, and is, I am afraid, far from well."

"It's his heart," replied Abel; "he gets so excited if I say anything about the Aggingtons. I must hold my tongue; but 'Faint heart never won fair lady,' and I will win Miss Mildred if I can. Come on now!"

We descended. Abel was bright and cheerful, thinking of his love; the old man, pale and weary, appeared ready for death. Each had his hopes: Abel building his airy castles, his father brooding on the past, and anxious, for he felt that the weakness of his heart was increasing, and he had his account with life to settle yet.

So he sat quiet, or only occasionally chatting and reading, till bed-time.

"Good night," said Abel, at length. "You will see that I shall succeed, castles or no castles. Good night, father. Let me assist you."

He supported the invalid into the next room, and went cheerfully upstairs, fortunately unconscious of the events which the next few days were destined to bring forth.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

THE KNIGHT'S ADVANCE.

TWO days after the events related in the last chapter, a very decided change came over the men at the Works. Individuals could be perceived going among the men at their dinner-hour, with results which were quickly apparent. Sulky faces and muttered oaths took the places of cheerfulness and "chaff," which, if rough and inelegant, was not ill-natured. Loud grumblings were vented against Mr. Aggington and Abel. At last the storm gathered to a head.

The afternoon work-bell was ringing in the diners. The shops were almost empty, the yards deserted, here and there an engineer was in charge of a boiler, or a few men watching the furnaces, but the majority were at dinner—a surging, restless crowd of men, nursing fancied wrongs, and determined to have their own way, like little wilful children.

The bell ceased; only a few men had obeyed the summons. Some even of the foremen had not returned, and to experienced hands matters looked serious.

"Say, sonny, what's up?" inquired Curtis of one of his "peers," a head man in the erecting-shop.

"Goin' out, they do say," replied the other, a man named Waller. "They means mischief. What shall we do?"

"Send for the governor," was Curtis's reply. "But have him here, and keep young Abel Strong out of it. Here he is."

"Ah, Strong, you've heard the news, I s'pose?"

"Yes, I have heard that these silly fellows have demanded my dismissal, and will strike if I be not discharged. I have written to Mr. Aggington, offering to resign if he think fit."

"Well, if the governor's the man I take him for he'll not be dictated to," said Curtis.

"If I resign, these men will remain, and their families can live," continued Abel, hardly heeding the others. "If I am stubborn, or Mr. Aggington refuses to accept my resignation, dozens of families may starve. In any case, it is, I think, my duty to go."

"Nonsense," replied his senior. "Don't you be so jolly generous, man! Let them suffer, ignorant asses! Be firm and stern in your duty to your employer."

"I do not think that, because they are ignorant, these uneducated people ought to suffer. But I am thinking of the women and children. It's all very well to strike and be independent, but who will support the family?"

"You're too soft, Abel, for all your Strong name. Too soft! A deal too soft!" was the reply.

At that moment a loud murmur came to their ears—a murmur which in a few seconds swelled into a dull roar. Then silence.

"The brutes are growling," remarked the superintendent. "Come and see what is the matter."

Accompanied by Abel, Mr. Curtis, with set teeth and clenched sinewy hands, made his way to the great gates, just outside of which, in a large open space, stood a large crowd of mechanics and lookers-on. An individual in broadcloth was standing on a barrel addressing the multitude, and urging upon them the desirability of standing firm.

"No surrender!—let your will be recognised," he shouted. "Are you children, to be ordered about? No! Be men, stand firm, and show them you are as good as they."

"Aye, and better!" said a voice. "We will!" A

"DRAGGING ABEL AS FAST AS HE COULD RUN INTO A PLACE OF SAFETY" (*p.* 441).

murmur of assent again swelled into an angry roar. The British lion was lashing himself into a rage.

"As for interlopers and favourites," continued the speaker, "I say, down with them all! No favour here! We're all equal, and will have our rights. Why should we work like slaves——?"

"When did *you* do a day's work last, old fellow?" inquired a sarcastic voice in the throng.

A shout of laughter greeted this remark, and the speaker was somewhat disconcerted.

"Some must work and some must talk," he replied. "I am pointing out your business. Don't be cowed by these upstarts—these rough-riders of the poor—the tramplers on the working man! As for Aggington, for him——!"

"What for him?" demanded Mr. Aggington in a loud tone, forcing his way on horseback in the direction of the speaker. "Go on, sir; tell me to my face what you were about to say behind my back."

I was amongst the spectators, and near the orator. At a distance I could see Miss Aggington, who, thoroughly identified with the works, took immense interest in all that went on. Abel also saw her, and edged unperceived, and perhaps half unconsciously, towards her.

Meanwhile, Mr. Aggington was addressing his men.

"Go to your work, my lads," said he. "You are wasting time and money in listening to such fellows as this. What do you want?"

A shout of "Give up Abel! No favourites!" was the reply.

"Give up Abel! Dismiss Abel Strong! What has he done wrong?"

"He's been and got machines in place of honest hands," cried the malcontents.

"'Tis false!" shouted Abel from the skirts of the crowd. "But I have resigned my place, and if Mr. Aggington will accept it I will go."

"Yah!" "Coward!" "Stand your ground, man!" were some of the remarks made after this statement, showing a considerable difference of opinion.

Mr. Aggington held up his hand for silence. "Men, listen to me," he said. "I pay you your wages, and I pay Strong his wages. It won't make one penny difference to any one of you whether he leaves or not. You won't gain a farthing more. But he *has* given up his place, and *I won't let him go!* There! He is a useful, sensible, honest young man, not like this braying thing here on the other hand, who won't work, and is not ashamed to stir up strife! Yes, I mean you, sir," he added, turning to the angry delegate. "You, with your flaming bombast and one-sided arguments. You ought to be ashamed of

yourself! But, my lads, Abel Strong isn't going away. I've made him a promise, and I'm going to keep it—as I would to any man amongst you! There's my answer!"

"Are you going to be over-rode by him?" screamed the delegate. "Up, men, and act like men!"

"Yes, yes; we're no chicks to be put off and on. We'll come out, boys, and have a spree! Hurrah!"

"And him? That Abel! Is he to be got off?" screamed the orator. "Is owners and favourites to——"

He was not permitted to finish his sentence. Mr. Aggington, perceiving his own and his daughter's danger, resolutely swerved his horse against the speaker, and threw him heavily to the ground. The crowd hooted and yelled. Some stones were thrown, and many spectators hastened away.

Suddenly Abel was perceived not far from where Miss Aggington was seated on horseback. Abel's eyes, I could perceive, were fixed upon her. She was his goddess—his whole soul was in his gaze, when the threatening appearance of the crowd caused a neutral spectator to call to him—

"Get thee away, Strong, or thee'll not live to see much more!"

Abel had been discerned making his way towards his master's daughter, but fortunately for him the fringe of the crowd was composed chiefly of moderate or neutral workmen, who were drawn into the movement by the more discontented and violent who surrounded the inflammatory orator. By the former he was not molested; they even made way for him, and by the time the chief malcontents had begun to search for him he was close to Miss Aggington, his eyes telling her as plainly as eyes could speak his devotion, and his tongue his pleasure at seeing her.

"Mr. Strong," she said, "I am glad you are better. Do not waste time in words. You are threatened. Go on as quickly as you can."

"Miss Aggington," answered the poor love-sick fellow, "may I not remain a moment to thank you for your kindness?—your goodness has done more to bring me round than all the doctors."

"Nonsense, sir," was the cutting reply, as with flushed cheek Miss Aggington gathered up the reins. "You have said enough—on—here they come! Fly! —fly!"

The men, the most violent section who had initiated the movement against Abel, now perceived him, and with yells and curses were bent upon seizing him. He saw his danger, and many others advised him to "get out smart." There was no doubt of the peril in which he stood. The men's passions were inflamed. They came elbowing their fierce way through the crowd, which in many instances opened, and still Abel did not stir.

"Are you mad, Mr. Strong?" cried Miss Aggington. "Here, catch hold of my saddle," she said eagerly. "Quick!"

Tacitly he obeyed. At the same moment she struck her horse sharply with her riding-whip. The people opened on all sides as the animal plunged, and in a moment, in response to her cry, "Make way there, please, good people," a lane was opened. The horse trotted rapidly away from the crowd, and then broke into a canter, dragging Abel as fast as he could run into a place of safety, amid the mingled cheers and yells of the workmen.

"Miss Mildred," gasped out Abel, as he released his grasp, "can I ever properly acknowledge your kindness?"

"Yes," she replied coldly, "by not referring to it. You once saved my life! I have paid a part of the debt, Mr. Strong, that's all. Good-bye!"

"Then," he said boldly, but trembling with his boldness, "you merely 'pay off' this 'debt,' as any other, with no regard for the personal creditor—a mere business transaction?"

"Sir!" she exclaimed, in offended pride and astonishment, "if you *did* save my life the action gave you no right to be impertinent! Here is my father. Good evening!"

She turned her horse aside, and with a haughty inclination of the stately head rode back to meet Mr. Aggington, who had had some rough encounters with the men.

"They mean mischief," he said in Abel's hearing. "Come home quickly, dear—we may have to defend ourselves."

Then they rode away, leaving Abel with hot cheeks and clenched hands to curse his folly in having offended his love by his outspoken regard.

In this condition of pained humiliation I met him, and accompanied him home. Old Strong seemed out of sorts, and unfortunately turned upon his son when Abel began to sound Miss Aggington's praises.

"One would think you wanted to marry her," sneered his father. "But you never will!"

"I'll try, at any rate," replied Abel doggedly.

"Not with my consent, boy. Marry her at your peril! I hate the whole race, and as for her——"

"Father, hold your tongue, please. Say nothing against Miss Aggington or her parents, or I leave here! I cannot bear it, indeed!"

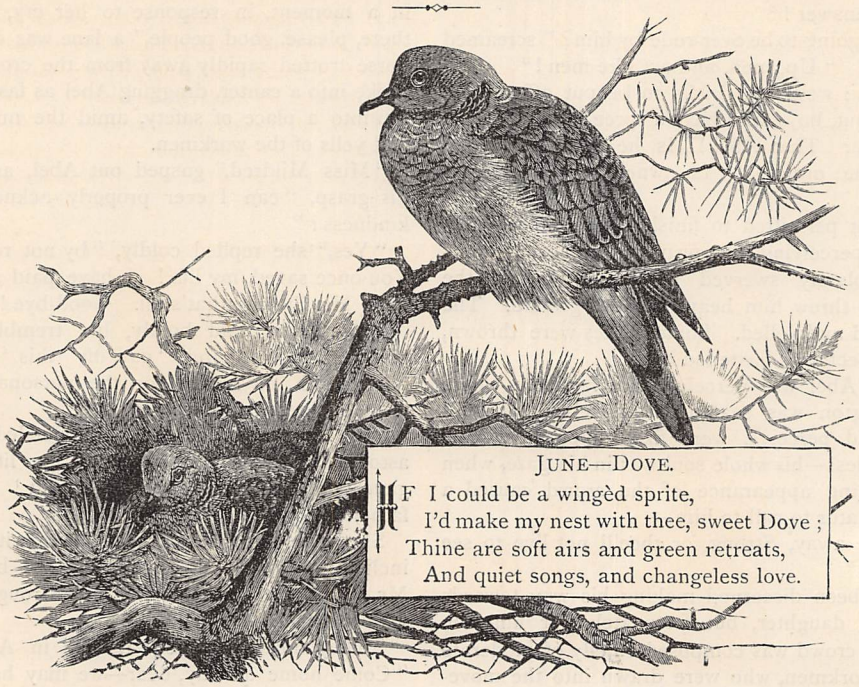
"Go then, unworthy son!" almost screamed the old man. "Go!" He rose, and threatened Abel with his stick. "Leave your dying father, you ungrateful son—you—oh, my heart! I am a dead man—help—But never—Aggington—no—no!"

He became speechless. The agitation had been too much for him. He sank pale and apparently dying on the sofa, while Abel hurried to the doctor. But all efforts were useless. The heart had given way—in a few minutes Thomas Strong had ceased to breathe.

Why this fatal prejudice against the owner of the Hall? What could it mean? I soon knew all.

END OF CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.



JUNE—DOVE.

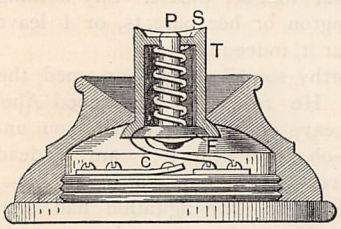
IF I could be a wingèd sprite,
I'd make my nest with thee, sweet Dove;
Thine are soft airs and green retreats,
And quiet songs, and changeless love.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

A Self-Acting Fire-Alarm.

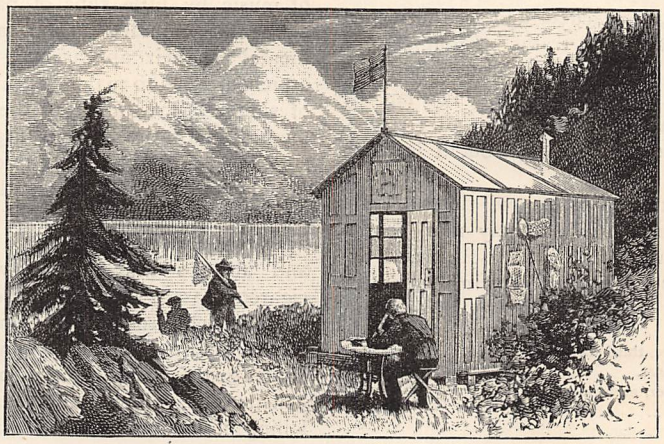


The fire-alarm here illustrated in section consists of a thimble, T, enclosing a spiral spring, S, surrounding a metal pin, P, which has a flat foot or circular flange, F, around its lower end. The pin is soldered to this flange by a fusible alloy melting at a temperature of 150° Fahr., and the thimble thus provided is placed in an ordinary electric bell contact piece, C, as the push-button. It serves the purpose of a push-button under ordinary circumstances; but if fire breaks out in the room where it is placed, the fusible solder melts, and the flange is separated from the pin, allowing the spiral spring to press down and complete the contact, C, thus ringing the bell.

Coca.

A very useful article has recently appeared on the history and properties of "coca," the remarkable South American plant which yields the anæsthetic cocaine. Three hundred years ago a Spanish traveller described its use by the Indians, who chew a paste made from the leaves, in order to keep off hunger and thirst while on their journeys, and enable them to undergo fatigue. At present the plant is largely cultivated in the Andes, from the Argentine Republic to New Grenada, the chief depôt being at Las Paiz, in Bolivia. Nearly all the produce is consumed in South America. It grows best in the mild and moist climate of the lower mountains at a height of 2,000 feet to 5,000 feet above sea-level. Two or three crops of the leaf can be gathered in the year; and the largest leaves are preferred, as containing most of the alkaloids, which make the virtue of the plant. The leaves have an odour of blended hay and chocolate when broken, and are of a rare green colour.

Since the discovery of cocaine the leaves have been exported to Europe ; but the sea-voyage is found to rob them of the alkaloids, and therefore it is the custom now to extract these in South America, and then export them for the manufacture of cocaine. So much interest has been aroused concerning the fortifying properties of the plant that it is to be hoped the trade will increase, and the benefits of the leaf, hitherto confined almost exclusively to South America, will be extended to the Old World.



A MOVABLE SCIENTIFIC STATION.

A Movable Scientific Station.

A movable station for biological work in the field has been adopted in Bohemia after the designs of Dr. Ant. Fritsch. Our illustration shows the hut, which contains one room, suitable for four naturalists engaged on the fauna of ponds and lakes. The building consists of eighty movable pieces, which can be put together in two and a half hours. The work of this Bohemian survey consists in examining the living products of the lakes and ponds, and taking the temperatures of their waters at different depths.

How to Go to the Paris Exhibition.

The excursion of the year will, unquestionably, be to the Paris Exhibition, and it will be useful as well as interesting to many to learn something as to the chief methods of reaching the gay city, and the cost of the journey thereto. Paris is, at any time, full of attractions, and to its usual charms there are this year added those of the Universal Exhibition, the huge Eiffel Tower, and the vast masses that will be drawn there. To the dweller in London, Paris is now nearer in point of time than Edinburgh. The preparations which have been made by some of the chief railways for transit have been on a scale of great magnitude ; trains are to be expedited ; new and quicker steamships are to be put on the routes ; harbours have been improved ; and there can be little or no doubt that the traffic between the nations of Great Britain and France will be unexampled in extent. In the years of its "Expositions" Paris puts on its gayest dress ; and when, in a limited period, over twelve million visitors pay to enter an Exhibition (as was the case in 1878), and many of these come from afar, even the broad boulevards show some addition to the numbers of those of many climes who throng them. This year Paris is to outdo itself in the display at its Exhibition ; and from the "overtopping tower" of M. Eiffel to the pagoda-like Indian section of the Exhibition, from the magnificent locomotive our Midland Railway sends, to the collection of municipal flags, there is variety enough to provoke the quotation of that verse of the laureate's, in which he describes the—

> ——"Polar marvels, and a feast
> Of wonders from the west and east."

Coming, however, back to England, the question of how to get to the Exhibition may be put.

The chief routes to Paris, taking London as the starting-point, are those of the South-Eastern Railway, London, Chatham, and Dover, and London, Brighton, and South Coast. The Folkestone and Boulogne, the Dover and Calais, and the Newhaven and Dieppe routes, may be taken as another method of describing these three. The old route to Paris is that well-known one by Folkestone and Boulogne, and this the South-Eastern Railway describes with a parent's partiality as "the quickest and best route." The "Express Daily Fixed Service" occupies eight hours only, the cost being—first class, single, £2 17s. 6d. ; return, £4 18s. 3d. ; and second class, single, £2 3s. 6d. ; return, £3 18s. 3d. The route in England is well known—it is by Tunbridge, Ashford, and Shorncliffe, to Folkestone, where the fast steamers are taken for Boulogne, whence the railway runs *viâ* Amiens and Creil to Paris, through a country not very picturesque. A second route is that of the London, Chatham, and Dover, by Dover and Calais. Through the scenery of Kent, by Canterbury, Dover is reached, and the *Invicta*, *Empress*, *Victoria*, or other steamship, quickly "ferries" the passenger over the Channel ; it being claimed that the sea-passage is

"sixty minutes only." Entering the "Nord" train, when on French soil, there is little to interest until Boulogne is reached, when the route becomes that to Paris just referred to. The "Express Service" fares are—first class, single, £3 1s. 6d.; return, £4 18s. 3d.; second class, single, £2 6s. 6d.; return, £3 18s. 3d.; and the total time taken by the journey by this express service is 8¼ to 9½ hours, according to the train chosen, a midday train being the quickest. The third route, that by Newhaven and Dieppe, is one which has been much expedited of late years. Passing Croydon and Lewes, Newhaven, the port of departure, is reached, and well-furnished passenger steamers await the trains. From Dieppe the route is by Rouen, Acheres, and through the forest of St. Germain, and thus on to Paris. The fare by this route is—first class, single, £1 14s. 7d.; return, £2 16s. 3d. The time is not stated, but it is much the longer route.

Hitherto we have named fares and times of first and second-class trains only. It may now be desirable to give particulars of the third-class and excursion service, and possibly the following statement will be of use :—

	Single.	Return.
South-Eastern, night service, third class... Time about 16 hours.	£1 2s. 6d.	£1 14s. 6d.
London, Chatham, and Dover, night service, third class ... ... Time not stated.	£1 2s. 6d.	£1 14s. 9d.

Cheap excursions on Saturdays and Mondays will also be run, the fare being—second class, £1 10s. 3d.; third class, £1 3s. 3d.

In addition to these there are already determined a series of excursions for specific classes—for members of learned, technical, and other societies, but these are varied in character, and confined in date and to the persons for whom they are organised.

It may be added that one of the chief of the firms of excursion agents quotes the special rates for hotel accommodation at eleven important hotels in Paris during the period of the Exhibition as varying from 6s. 6d. to 20s. per day, for breakfast, table d'hôte dinner, bed-room, lights, and service. The estimate of this firm is that, for the third-class railway fare by the cheap night service, hotel accommodation at one of two hotels named for four days, two days of carriage-drives in Paris, and two days' admission to the Exhibition, the inclusive cost would be £4 to £4 14s. It may be well to add that already some of the hotel-keepers, and owners of boarding-houses and furnished apartments, in the neighbourhood of and looking on to the Exhibition buildings, have greatly raised their charges. Those who desire to restrict their expenses would do well either to choose a location at some little distance from that centre of attraction, or to arrange previously by letter with the hotel-keepers as to rates of charges.

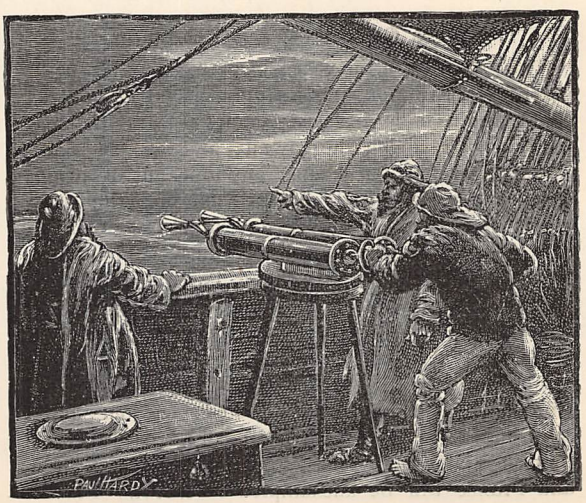
The express fares generally allow seven days for single and one month for return tickets; the cheap night services allow three days for single and fourteen days for return tickets; so there is time to break the journey at one of several stations, and Calais, Boulogne, Amiens, or Rouen would, in either case, repay a short stoppage.

Three Useful Novelties.

Turning over the pages of song-music is a well-known difficulty with accompanists, and anything to make this easier, without disfiguring the sheets, is to be welcomed. One way of achieving this result is provided in some pretty little tassels of various colours, which are attached to the edges of the sheets of music by little slips of parchment, whose inner surface is gummed. The tassels are really ornamental in their appearance, and may be readily attached, so as to make "turning over" the simplest of simple tasks.—Many of the objections which some medical authorities have urged against cigarette-smoking are met by an improved mouthpiece which Mr. Hugh Black has recently patented. The new mouthpiece consists of a coil of chemically prepared filter-paper, which at the same time purifies the smoke and absorbs the nicotine which the unprotected cigarette passes so freely to the system of the smoker.—Cooks who roast their joints before an open fire will be glad to hear that a simple and easily-attached cinder-guard has just been patented by Mr. Alfred Thistlewood, which altogether does away with the falling of cinders into the dripping-tin and spoiling the gravy. The new guard does not interfere with the heat in the least, and indeed should rather add to than take from it, for it consists largely of copper wire, which is an admirable conductor.

A Signalling Fog-Horn.

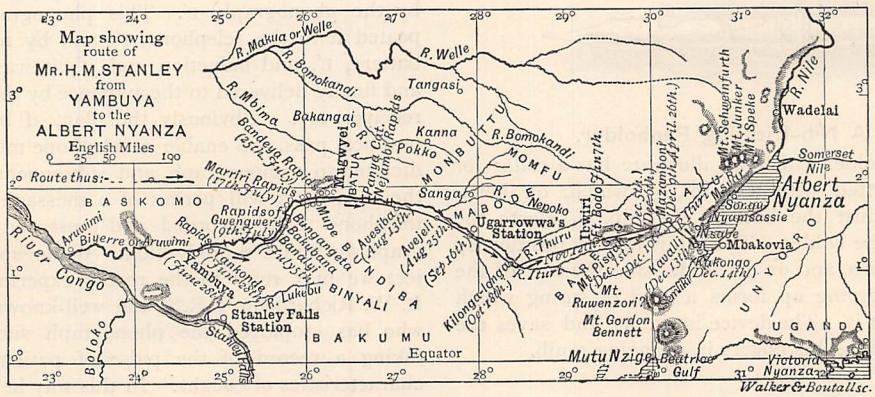
A signalling siren, or fog-horn, worked by hand, has been introduced by Herr Pfannenstiel, and is to be tried by the Trinity House authorities. In Germany it has been found capable of signalling to a distance of ten miles. The sound is produced by the vibration of three steel springs, two of equal length, and one shorter. They are connected so as to swing



together, and are actuated by the pistons shown in the illustration ; the air-blast set up by the pistons escaping by the funnel-mouths. The figure shows two sirens, or horns, placed together to give two notes of different pitch. The signals of a message are produced by short and long strokes of the piston on the high-pitched siren, according to the Morse or other code of signals ; and the low-pitched siren is sounded after the completion of each letter, to prevent confusion. The siren is always ready for use, and being light, simple, and requiring no mechanical driving power, it is well adapted for use on board vessels.

A Telegraph Rocket.

A new distress-signal has recently been brought out, which requires no stick. It consists of a metal cylinder containing the propelling charge, and over it is a charge of tonite composition. The rocket is placed in a phosphor-bronze socket and is fired by pulling a lanyard. Stars are thrown out as the rocket ascends to a height of 600 feet ; then the tonite charge explodes with a report like that of a 6-pounder. These rockets are suitable for boats ; and by arranging the coloured stars they can be made to signal on the Morse code. They are of different sizes, the larger being seven inches long by two inches in diameter. The National Lifeboat Institution are introducing these rockets with red stars.



MR. STANLEY'S MARCH.

Mr. Stanley's March.

In the beginning of April last, news reached London that Mr. H. M. Stanley had effected a meeting with Emin Pasha on the Albert Nyanza. We give here a carefully-drawn map showing the route of the gallant explorer after he left his rear-guard at Yambuya, on the Aruwimi river, on June 28th, 1887, until he met Emin on April 29th last year, near Kakongo, on the south side of the lake. All the news we have as yet consists of Stanley's letters to the Emin Pasha Relief Committee and to the Royal Geographical Society, and one or two private friends. But this is sufficient to show that the journey has been successful, almost beyond all expectation, despite dangers and obstacles that read more like the fables of mediæval travellers than extracts from the journal of a nineteenth-century explorer. No less than 160 days were passed in traversing a region of forest of which Mr. Stanley says :—"Until we set foot on the grass land, something like fifty miles west of the Albert Nyanza, we saw nothing that looked a smile, or a kind thought, or a moral sensation. The aborigines are wild, utterly savage, and incorrigibly vindictive. The dwarfs—called Wambutti—are worse still, far worse. Animal life is likewise so wild and shy that no sport is to be enjoyed. The gloom of the forest is perpetual." After meeting Emin, Mr. Stanley returned to Yambuya, to join his rear-guard, which he found on the 17th of August, terribly depleted by death and desertions. On the 5th of September he once more set out to join the Pasha, and there is every reason for hope that by this time he is marching with him to the east coast.

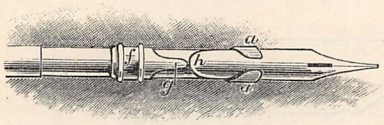
An Electric Dater.

The wood-cut illustrates a device for stamping times and dates by means of electricity. It is the invention of Mr. C. A. Randall, and consists of a stamper and a clock, which, by means of a battery, shifts the time of the stamp every minute. The apparatus has been tried in the telegraph department of the Post Office, and it is admirably adapted for registering the arrival of employés in works. The stamp can be hired out, complete, for a small annual rental. The card or paper to be printed is placed under the stamp-head shown in our illustration.

Magnetising by Light.

Mr. Shelford Bidwell, F.R.S., recently described some interesting experiments in magnetising a bar of

iron by radiation. The bar was first magnetised in a solenoid, then de-magnetised by placing it in a coil traversed by a current. This treatment produced a tendency in it to be more susceptible to a magnetising force in one direction along the bar than in the other —a condition which Mr. Bidwell thinks essential to the success of the experiment—but otherwise the bar was like an ordinary unmagnetised iron rod. When the beam from an oxyhydrogen lamp was allowed to fall upon it, a magnetometer placed near it showed that it became magnetic.



A Nib-Ejecting Penholder.

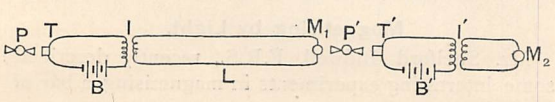
The penholder which we illustrate has a collar for the stem, fitted with a point, *g*, which, on being pressed against the butt of the nib, *h*, ejects the latter from the holder. The nib is held in position by the clamps, *a a*, and on its under-side the end of the holder, in curving up, forms a kind of spring which bears against it. The device is simple, and saves the user from soiling his fingers in changing a nib.

To Keep Away Moth.

For a long time past it has been well known that moths object to the smell of cedar-wood, and this knowledge has recently resulted in a new application of waste products, in the manufacture from cedar-wood pulp of a paper to be laid under carpets, or to be used as a preserving wrapper. A large supply of cedar chips can be obtained from the pencil manufacturers, who have hitherto found no use for this waste material.

The Telephonograph.

The idea of making a phonograph speak to a telephone, like a person, and thus transmit a verbal message, is not new, but it has recently been tried with fair success, if we are to credit the accounts received from America. At a lecture on the phonograph and other inventions of Edison, delivered lately in Philadelphia, a phonograph message from New York was received by telephone in the hall and heard by the audience. This transmission over 103 miles of telegraph wire, including six miles of underground cable, was effected by the arrangement of apparatus shown in the figure, where P is the sending phonograph at New York, which spoke its message to a carbon (or microphone) transmitter, T, in circuit with a battery, B, and the primary wire of an induction coil, I. The secondary wire of this coil was in circuit with the telegraph line, L, to Philadelphia. At this place, in the lecture hall, an Edison loud-speaking telephone,



or "motograph receiver," M_1, gave out the message, but it was too weak for the audience to hear, so it was reinforced by means of an auxiliary phonograph, P′, and another telephone circuit, consisting of a carbon transmitter, T′, in circuit with a battery, B′, and the primary wire of an induction coil, I′. The secondary wire of this coil was in circuit with a second motograph receiver, or loud-speaking telephone, M_2. It will be understood that the phonograph, P, at New York, had a message imprinted in it, which it reproduced in front of the telephone, T. The latter transmitted it to Philadelphia, where it was spoken out by the motograph receiver, M_1, and thereupon registered by the phonograph, P′. This phonograph then repeated it to the telephone, T′, and by means of the battery, B′, and induction coil, I′, it was reinforced, and finally delivered to the audience by the motograph receiver, M_2. Obviously the plan, if brought to a practical pass, will enable a telephone message to be dictated to a phonograph, and subsequently sent over the line, or it will permit of a message received by telephone to be recorded and preserved in a phonograph for future reproduction. While upon this subject we may refer to the recent experiments of Dr. B. W. Richardson, F.R.S., the well-known physician, who has employed the phonograph successfully in taking a record of the pulse of patients, and the characteristics of coughs. In this way he hopes to be able to compare the records of different times with one another. At present the memory is about the only guide of the doctor with regard to changes in a cough.

Spring Traces.

The ordinary leather and chain traces for drawing carts have been superseded on the Eastern Railway of France by chains with spiral springs, which permit the horse to gradually bring its force to bear on the vehicle in starting it. They are found more serviceable than the rigid trace.

Sanitary Whiting.

An antiseptic whiting has recently been introduced, and is recommended by the makers for hospitals, ships, stables, kennels, and so forth, in order to keep them free from insects. The compound, which appears to contain some camphor, is also useful for cleaning silver plate and articles of domestic use. The aroma is said to be not unpleasant, while the compound is non-poisonous, and will not injure colours.

Petroleum Soap.

Miss Gordon Cumming has drawn attention to the cleansing effect of petroleum on soiled clothes. The best way to employ it is to fill an average boiler, say of 14 gallons, with water, adding half a pound of soft soap, and when all is boiling thoroughly, pour in 1½ table-spoonfuls of petroleum. Then put in the clothes and boil them for half an hour, before lifting them out and rinsing them in several waters. A little more soap, water, and paraffin should be added to make up for loss as successive lots of the clothes are boiled.

In America and New Zealand kerosene, as being free from smell, is preferred to paraffin. Kerosene may also be added before the water boils, and hence blankets and flannels, which should not be boiled, can be washed with it in the same way, whereas, with paraffin, the boiling water must be used "off the boil" in separate tubs.

Refrigerator Barges.

It may be mentioned that the London and Tilbury Lighterage Company now employ cold air or refrigerated barges for the distribution of provisions brought to the Port of London in "cold rooms" on board vessels. The company in question have now a fleet of such barges transporting the thousands of tons of frozen meat which arrive on our shores. Each barge can take fifty tons of meat, and is provided with doors at each end to load and unload by. The insulated rooms are lined with charcoal, wood, and Willesden paper, and they are cooled by refrigerators on the ammonia compression system in a separate barge. It is proposed to build railway and road vehicles on a similar plan.

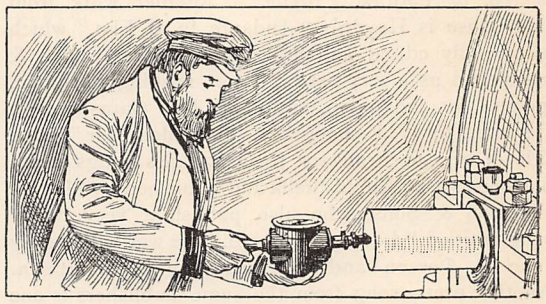
A Pressure Filter.

The woodcut shows a new filter for attaching to water-mains by the lower pipe. The filtering material inside consists of compressed granular carbon,

with block carbon over it, and the water, forced by the pressure of the main through these, is drawn off by the upper tap, as shown. The carbons may be readily removed from time to time and cleansed. Such a filter is suitable for hotels, restaurants, and large establishments.

The Meldometer.

The meldometer of Mr. Joly, recently exhibited at the Dublin British Association meeting, Bath, is a simple instrument for observing the behaviour of bodies at high temperatures. It fits the stage of a microscope, and consists of a platinum strip between two clamps. An electric current heats the strip, and material laid on it is soon heated up. The temperature is regulated by a carbon resistance controlled by the operator. Quartz is easily melted by this method, which is also applicable to the examination or sublimates during and after their formation.



A Portable Tachometer.

The figure illustrates a tachometer which gives the number of revolutions of a shaft by pressing its point, seen on the left, into the central cavity of the shaft. The dial is provided with a scale ranging from 100 to 1,000 revolutions per minute, but by means of gearing the instrument can be adjusted to measure speeds under 100 or over 1,000 revolutions per minute.

Photographing a Coast.

Professor Davidson, of the American Coast Survey, has conceived a scheme for photographing the whole Pacific Coast of the United States, from stations selected ten miles apart. In addition, there would be views of headlands as seen on both sides and in front, while islands would be photographed from different points of view. The object is to supplement charts in navigation.

Protecting Propellers.

"Vindex metal" has been recommended for this use by Mr. Cormack, a Scotch engineer, as, owing to the fact that brass is electro-negative to steel, propellers in sea-water rapidly corrode unless in contact with an electro-positive metal. Such a metal is "Vindex," which could be used for the blades. We may mention that the basis of the metal is zinc, and it is sufficiently strong for the purpose.

A Book for Housewives.

All the students in our National School of Housewifery ought to possess Cassell's "Book of the Household," which is now being issued in monthly numbers. They will find that its programme is very much the same as the programme of the National School of Housewifery, but of course it is dealt with much more fully than in the limited space we have at our disposal for such a purpose. Both articles and illustrations are new and good, and the work is one which every girl should study with interest.

Some New Pieces.

For drawing-room use amateurs will be very glad to welcome Franz Liszt's beautiful arrangement of the "Spinnerlied" from Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* (Duff & Stewart), and also the six pieces by Mr. Walter Brooks, R.A.M., which have just been added to the "Family Circle" series issued by the same publishers. Perhaps the best of Mr. Brooks's pieces is No. 8, entitled "Idylle." Another work from this house is Haydn's "Andante in B Flat," which is carefully edited and fingered. Messrs. Enoch & Sons send us a very pretty, if not strikingly original, gavotte for the piano, entitled "The Gainsborough Gavotte," by W. E. Pengelley. "Maiden Fair" is the title of one of Professor J. S. Blackie's songs which has been set by Alfred Stella and published by Messrs. Paterson & Sons, who also publish a very pretty song entitled "Loving Shepherd," the words being by Jane E. Leeson and the music by W. Harrison. Another pretty song from the same publishers is one entitled "I Think on Thee in the Night," the words of which are translated from the Russian, and the music by Alfred Moffat. There is plenty of life in "Michael the Cavalier" (same publishers), and a lighter and very taking song is "Morning May Dew," of which Mr. Arthur Chapman is the author; it is set by Miss Annie E. Armstrong, who is also the composer of a pleasing barcarolle, "Down the Stream," also issued by Messrs. Paterson & Sons.

For Self-Culture.

We know a member of the first County Council of London who declares that he acquired the basis of the education, to which he owes in no small degree his present position, from "Cassell's Popular Educator." If results like this, which is only one of many, could be achieved by the older issues of the "Popular Educator," what may we not expect in the way of educational results from the "*New* Popular Educator," of which the first volume has just been issued? Plates, maps, illustrations, as well as articles, are in the main new, and are decidedly in advance of their predecessors, and it ought to be quite possible for any boy or girl in an elementary school nowadays to complete a fairly good education without further assistance than this work offers.

Studies of Paris.

We suppose that many hundreds or thousands of people will make acquaintance with Paris during this present Exhibition year. That being so, there is an especial interest about Mr. David Balsillie's "Studies of Great Cities: Paris" (Edinburgh, David Douglas), which gives a pleasant enough picture of a sojourn in the French capital. We do not feel called upon to endorse all his expressions of opinion, but, on the whole, we must say the book seems likely to prove useful to any one who is proposing to visit Paris for the first time.

"Subjects of Social Welfare."

With one exception all the papers in Sir Lyon Playfair's volume fall strictly within the lines of the title he has given it. The exception is an interesting paper on Sleep, which is given in this volume among other papers on matters of public health. Industrial Wealth and National Education are the sectional titles under which are grouped other papers, all of them dealing in a practical and yet popular form with subjects of the deepest interest, and some even of daily need. Sir Lyon Playfair's book, which is published by Messrs. Cassell & Co., deserves the careful attention of every thoughtful citizen.

THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTS (SECTION V.).

PASS LISTS.

The First Prize* of One Guinea is awarded to Miss CLARA GURNEY, Uffington Vicarage, Faringdon, Berks.

CERTIFICATES OF HONOUR.

Name.	*Address.*
Andrews, Louie	Torquay.
Beck, Elizabeth B.	Grays, Essex.
Evans, Josephine H.	Ware.
Hopkins, Isabella E. L.	Ely.
Farrand, M. E.	Horbury.
Jones, Maude D.	Wrexham.
Pritchard, Edith	Newport.
Wailes, A. B.	Watford.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT.

Name.	*Address.*
Briggs, Lily	Manchester.
Briggs, Lucy H.	Manchester.
Porter, Charlotte A.	Bridlington Quay.
Thornham, Clara	Hull.
Whitehead, Charlotte E.	Somerville Aston.

* The Second Prize is not awarded, as the candidate whose paper came second in the award, had omitted one very important item which no housekeeper can afford to ignore.

The successful candidates may have their Certificates posted to them, on their sending to the Editor a fully-addressed label, together with two penny postage stamps, to defray cost of postage and roller. The Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage to Certificates in the post, nor can he answer inquiries respecting unsuccessful work.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

AN UNWILLING LISTENER.

EVER since I had been at Monk's Hollow I had been in the habit of jotting down hurried notes of my daily life. From time to time these notes were consulted, amplified, turned into letters, and sent off to my darling. In them I told him every detail of my existence, except one, and that was that my gate was growing so heavy for me that at times I felt as though I could not lift it. For the winter was come, and with the colder weather and the having to go out in all weathers, the strain of my duties seemed stretched to its utmost limit. The numbers at the school, too, had increased, owing—not to my efficiency, as Mrs. Talbot insisted—but more probably to the hot soup that Miss Bostock dispensed there twice a week, through the three worst winter months, with such care and method, that I do not think so much as a crumb was ever wasted.

She was decidedly the bright spot in the village this winter. Always cheerful, always perfectly self-satisfied, she was a marked contrast to the inhabitants of Cappers, the Rectory—where the winter told very severely on Mrs. Talbot—or myself. For a thicker gloom than ever had fallen upon Cappers; the gloom of a ceaseless struggle to make head against the reverses of fortune. No doubt it fell most heavily on Captain Challoner, for he was, in a secondary degree indeed, responsible for it, and I am certain it retarded his recovery. I did not often see him. Now and then I would catch a glimpse of him in the distance, or in church, and every time I did so he seemed to me to have grown thinner and more careworn. I do not know what went on through these weeks between him and Sir John, nor how much his determination not to allow Cappers to be sold cost him, but I fancy a great deal. For week after week the place was advertised to be let, and no one came to look at it, and meanwhile one room after another was shut up, and another servant was dismissed. Lady Challoner alone did not seem to share the general depression. At times she even looked hopeful and cheerful; whilst at others again the old plaintive listlessness would return in all the greater force that it had been dispelled by some hidden power for a time.

It would have been so easy for Captain Challoner to escape from it all—to go and stay with the friends a man in his position must have had. Sometimes I told myself I wished he would go right away, and that never again might I see him. And, in truth, I did wish it, for I knew that his presence in the village was an exquisite pleasure, and yet pain, to me, to whom it should have been less than nothing.

My old bad nights had returned to me, and I would lie awake by the hour together, asking myself if I were not doing wrong in continuing my teaching at Cappers, when it caused me such beatings of the heart as I walked up the path and down the passages, such starting at every footfall, and such a wistful longing to hear Gerrard talk of Jack.

My domain was never again invaded by Jack. Even if I met him, he would only give me that bright fleeting smile and a bow, and pass on. Once he did say, "Not been trying the gate again, I hope?" but he seemed always occupied, always in a hurry. He was very seldom at the Rectory now, nor did Mrs. Talbot talk about him much, except to say that he was very busy, and did I not find the children wonderfully improved since he had taken them in hand? No, the only people who seemed to see anything of him were the Bostocks. The names of Challoner and Bostock had become almost synonymous. To see one was to see the other; Lady Challoner and Lizzie were inseparables, and Captain Challoner was steeped in the gulf of intimacy almost before he knew where he was.

This, then, was to be the solution of the question that Mrs. Talbot had glanced at; this was to be the means of salvation, the hope of which brought the smile to Lady Challoner's eye and the brighter ring to her voice—the marriage of her stepson and Miss Bostock. And, on the face of it, could anything be more natural, more appropriate in every way, than such a self-evident termination to the Challoner difficulties? All this my reason told me, and a great deal more, and yet my heart refused to subscribe to it, although I saw plainly how matters were tending. If Captain Challoner flatly refused to cut off the entail, no doubt Sir John insisted that he should offer an alternative, and should himself be the victim of the same.

Victim! What a foolish word! Would he be much of a victim in marrying a clever, handsome girl like Lizzie Bostock, whose money would place him and his family once more in their rightful position in the world? Would she not make an excellent mistress of Cappers? And ought not I, of all people, to rejoice that the Challoners might be so restored? Nevertheless, I could not so rejoice; and it was a relief to me to take refuge in my work, which left me little leisure for thought. Yet I could not banish it altogether. It would assail me at all manner of

times: as I ate my meals, as I lay in bed; above all, as I heard the children discourse in French and English on their brother Jack.

"Gerrard," I said one morning, ah! how mendaciously, "I do not want to hear any more about Captain Challoner. I come here to have your lessons, not to talk."

"I thought every one liked to hear about Jack," remarked Sibyl innocently. "Lizzie always does."

"Oh!" said Gerrard, pursing up his lips, and sagaciously nodding his head; "Lizzie is like Desdemona—'these things to hear, she does seriously incline;' particularly the 'moving accidents——'"

But here I interposed, and with such authority, that I heard no more of Captain Challoner for the rest of the day.

That same morning I was leaving the school-room when I met Lady Challoner in the passage. She looked faded and harassed, and was going to pass on, when she changed her mind, and stopped. "Are you ill, Miss Morton?" she asked.

"No, thank you."

"You look ghastly. What does your friend Mrs. Talbot say?"

"She gives me periodical scoldings, but I am afraid she finds me hopeless now."

"Scoldings? hopeless? What for?" but even as she spoke, her thoughts were clearly elsewhere.

"For lifting gates that are too heavy for her," interposed a voice in my rear; and I turned to see Captain Challoner and Miss Bostock, who had just entered the side door together, in the former's hand a basket of beautiful hothouse flowers.

"Oh! are you come back, Jack?" asked Lady Challoner, her eyes brightening when she saw his companion, "and Lizzie with you. That is nice. I hope you are come to lunch, dear?" turning to Miss Bostock; "although I can't promise you much to eat."

"No, not to-day, thank you," as she embraced Lady Challoner warmly. "I must lunch at home, for papa and I have an engagement immediately afterwards. I was on my way to bring you these flowers when I met Captain Challoner. And then nothing would do but he must carry them for me; and as I was not going to be cheated out of a glimpse of you, we walked up together."

At this point in the conversation, anxious to get home, I tried to effect my escape, hemmed in as I was in the passage.

"I must be going, Lady Challoner, please;" but Lady Challoner, busy turning over the flowers, did not hear me.

"Won't you stay to luncheon?" asked Captain Challoner, looking at his stepmother to endorse the invitation.

"My dear Jack," she said irritably, "don't you know that it is an article of Miss Morton's creed not to break bread in other people's houses? I must except bread-and-butter and tea, I think," turning to me; "you are quite right to doubt our fare, for, as I told Miss Bostock just now, you would probably get uncommonly little to eat."

I saw Captain Challoner frown at this foolish, reckless talk, as he turned to me again.

"Won't you really stay and see for yourself that we do have enough to keep body and soul together?" he asked. I felt the unfortunate crimson tide flooding my face, and Miss Bostock's glittering eyes fixed on me, as they had been ever since the conversation commenced.

"Indeed," I faltered, "I would rather go home. I have my dog waiting for me."

"That is the most convenient dog I ever met with," remarked Miss Bostock, with a little satirical laugh. "What a husband, children, parents, servants, or any other excuse you please, are to most women, that dog is to Miss Morton. He must be worth his weight in gold."

I was about to answer, with more temper, I fear, than judgment, when Captain Challoner saved me the trouble.

"You are nearer the mark than you fancy," he said coldly. "Miss Morton's dog must be extremely valuable. It is quite the handsomest colley I have ever seen. I often meet him about," turning to me, "and I am very glad to hear you do your duty by him so well. Since you must really go home, I will walk to the gate in the wood with you."

"Oh! please, don't," I answered from the depth of my heart, for I saw the colour rising in Miss Bostock's cheek, and an uneasy expression pass over Lady Challoner's countenance.

"Indeed, Jack," she said, with a little nervous laugh, "you are wofully ignorant of Miss Morton's ways. She always tears down that path in a fashion Atalanta might have envied, and where would you and your crutches be?"

"Yes, that I do," I cried, "I always run. I should be at the wood gate long before you."

I could see disapproval of my answer stamped on both the faces before me—a tiny elevation of the eyebrows in Lady Challoner's, a rigidly pursed-up mouth in Miss Bostock's—and could almost fancy I heard the words, "How very familiar! One would think she was his equal!"

"No, you wouldn't," came the cool reply; "for to-day you will walk. So much running must be very bad for you," and with that Captain Challoner held open the side door, and motioned me to pass out. I think at that moment I could have cried with vexation.

Yet, after all, it was but a very tiny bit of the way that he had volunteered to accompany me; some six or seven hundred yards perhaps, not more, but I could feel though I could not see Miss Bostock's glittering eyes still fixed on me and him, and, with all my heart, I wished him further.

"I wanted to have a word with you," he said, so naturally that at once it seemed to lift the strain of the situation. "I am very much afraid that you are overtaxing your strength in teaching my brother and sisters, for I am quite aware, from them, how much you throw in over the contract. I heard what Lady Challoner said just now about your looks, and it

strikes me it is another case of the gate. If it is too much for you, give it up. Whilst I am at home, I will teach the children, and soon there *must* be some fresh arrangement made. Good-bye."

He gave me his hand, as he held the gate open, looking at me searchingly the while.

"Ghastly!" he said, still holding my hand; "yes, that is the word, and——" But I did not wait to hear the rest. Abruptly releasing my hand, I sped down the path, never drawing breath, until I had put some hundred yards of the wood between him and me.

From this hour there came a change in Miss Bostock's manner towards me. She had never liked me, of that I was aware, but had done her best to conceal the feeling under a half-patronising, combined at times with a sternly inquisitorial manner. But from the day that Captain Challoner saw me to the gate, she became distant and cold, never speaking to me, unless necessary, and sometimes ignoring me, with a quiet impertinence that made my blood boil within me. This state of things had been going on for more than a week, bringing us very near Christmas, when one day, as I was walking up to Cappers, turning over in my mind whether it were not my positive duty to give up my engagement there, I suddenly came upon Sir John in his bath-chair, accompanied by his son. Narrow as was the path, I would have passed on with a bow only, but that Sir John stopped me.

"In a hurry as usual, Miss Morton?"

"Yes, sir," I replied with a smile; "I am afraid I am a little late."

"Never mind if you are. Let me see, is to-day the long or the short one?"

"The long one."

"Then I'll be hanged if I don't have a song. I have not had one for months, Sib reminded me this morning, not since he," with a glance over his shoulder, "came home. I have not been in a humour for music or anything pleasant since then, but to-day we will have some Handel. This place don't agree with you," he continued, looking at me kindly—"low, relaxing air; or else it is that you are wearing yourself out. All the same though," as if he were defying some invisible person, "I hope you won't go."

"I have no intention of so doing," I answered, feeling alarmed at the bare suggestion. "Good morning," I continued, "I must not really stop any longer."

"Then a song or several songs this evening. Jack must hear you. I don't believe he has ever had that pleasure. Have you, Jack?"

Thus addressed, Captain Challoner broke the silence he had maintained throughout our dialogue, whilst an amused smile flashed into his eyes and the corners of his mouth.

"I accept the invitation with pleasure," he said, without answering his father's question, convincing me that he had somehow heard me sing without my knowledge. When could it have been?

"Then what time, Miss Morton?" asked Sir John.

"Not until six. I must not cut the lessons too short, you see."

"No fear of that," returned Sir John. "You work yourself to death with those children. They have learnt more in the few weeks you have taught them than ever they did with Miss Miller. Now, I suppose I must not detain you any longer; I see you are on thorns to be going. *Au revoir* this evening," and with a kindly smile at me, Sir John motioned to his man to go on, whilst I pursued my way up the hill.

My heart felt strangely light that afternoon, as I arrived at Cappers. I was going to sing to Sir John, and did I not delight in singing to him? I had brought all his favourite music with me, prepared to lay it on the old schoolroom piano, when at the door I was met by all three children.

"Short lessons this afternoon, Mortie," cried out Gerrard. "The concert takes place in the library at six."

"In the library! What do you mean?"

"Why, Jack says it is a shame to ask a swell like you to sing to this old tin-kettle of a piano, so you are to go to the library, and we are all going to listen to you."

"Your brother does not know how I sing; he has never heard me."

"Oh! yes, he has; at least he spoke as if he had."

"I think he has," said Sibyl; "perhaps he goes to the church, and listens to you practising, for he is always humming your 'Rest in the Lord' to himself. He is awfully fond of music, like father."

Sibyl's suggestion annoyed me, all the more that I felt sure she had unwittingly hit on the truth. More than once when I had been singing in the church I had fancied I heard a slight noise, but when, on looking, I had discovered nothing or no one, I had thought no more about it.

"I have never seen him there," I answered, alarmed lest Sibyl, who was a terrible little gossip, should impart her ideas to any one else, after which, in order to put a stop to any further communications, I insisted peremptorily on lessons, and not until the clock rang out six did I allow any respite. But whilst the hands were still pointing to the hour, the door opened, and Captain Challoner appeared.

"It is six o'clock, Miss Morton," he said; "and you remember your engagement. I am come, however, to invite you into the library. This piano is not fit for any one but the children to play on, much less for you to sing to. I believe it was my mother's before she married."

"I have often sung to it before," I answered; "but I will certainly come to the library, if you like. Gwen, dear, put away the books."

Taking my music with me, I followed Captain Challoner down the passage, across the hall to the library, where, as we approached, I heard Sir John and Lady Challoner's voices raised in hot discussion, and could even fancy I distinguished the word "Bostock." It must have been fancy though, for we were too far off to catch anything but a confused murmur, and as we drew near my attention was attracted by a blank over the doorway, where hitherto had hung a picture. It was one that I had often noticed, feeling sure that

it was a masterpiece of painting, although the subject of it was not prepossessing, as is the case with so many of the Dutch school. Captain Challoner saw me glancing at the empty space.

"Gone," he said, "gone to Christie's to be put into the Tamperlin sale next Tuesday."

"Oh!" was all I could say, wondering how much else had gone with it. "It was a very valuable picture, wasn't it?" I asked hesitatingly, but feeling as though I must make some remark.

"Yes, very; by the younger Teniers. So you found that out, did you? Are you a connoisseur in pictures, as well as a musician?"

"Oh! dear, no, not a connoisseur, but I have been abroad a good deal, and have seen a great many, besides being very fond of them."

"Ah! yes. I have heard that the 'pitty room' is hung with all manner of gems, and good engravings. I must come and see it some day;" and for one second his eye rested inquiringly on me. The next it was withdrawn, for the library doors suddenly opened, and Lady Challoner appeared with heightened colour, and sparkling eyes, but more than usually frigid in manner.

"Jack," she said icily, "you must not keep Miss Morton talking if she is to sing to your father; it is past six now. Come in, please," she continued, turning to me. "I trust your singing may have a soothing effect on Sir John. He is not well," she added, as a kind of explanation, and closing the door behind us. Judging by his looks, the poor man did, indeed, require soothing; the furrow between his brows was like a deep cut, his eyes were flashing restlessly, and he had evidently some difficulty in greeting me calmly.

"It is a bad day with me, Miss Morton," he said, and as he gave me his hand, I could feel him quivering all over, "and your singing will be most grateful to me. You were pretty near the mark, Sib," he continued, turning his eyes to the child, who was leaning on his chair, "when you compared me to King Saul this morning."

"Oh! but, father dear, I didn't," cried Sib, much distressed. "I only said that reading about David and King Saul reminded me of what a lot of good Mortie's singing did you. I did not mean to say you were like Saul."

Sir John laughed. "It sounded rather like it, eh, Sib?" he said. "Now, go and open the piano for Miss Morton, and light the candles, for we are in Egyptian darkness here."

"Jack has done it already, father."

Then I began to sing, whilst Sibyl seated herself at Sir John's feet, her curly head resting on his knees, and Gwen and Gerrard placed themselves on either side of Jack, who sat a little apart, from whence he could see my face, although I could not see his. I was glad of that.

It was half an hour of pure, unalloyed pleasure to all of us, I think. Even Lady Challoner seemed to enjoy it; the plaintive expression fell from her face, and her hands lay loosely clasped on her lap, whilst as for Sir John, he looked years younger, as he gently beat time on Sib's golden hair.

All at once, whilst the last notes of his favourite "Angels ever bright and fair" had hardly died away, and there was a hush all over the room, the door opened, and Barker announced "Miss Bostock!" In the silence preceding her entrance, I distinctly heard Sir John say under his breath, "Confound that woman! Can we never be free from her?"

She came in, like a match struck in the darkness, all in a glow from the cold, intensely and vividly happy, full of bustle and energy, brimming over with life and hope, almost too glaring a contrast to the assembled company, each one of whom had a heavy burden of trouble and anxiety weighing on him or her.

"Dear me!" she cried, as she came in, "What is happening? Why are you all sitting in the dark in a circle? as though you were playing at post," bestowing, between each question, resounding kisses upon Lady Challoner and the children; then catching sight of me at the piano, her voice losing all its warmth, "Oh! I see," she said coldly, "you have been having a concert."

"Yes, and an uncommonly good one," said Sir John; "it is not often one can get such a treat as Miss Morton's singing."

"I have been at my home all the afternoon," she answered, taking no notice either of me, or of Sir John's remark concerning me, and addressing Lady Challoner, "and I could not resist stopping here on my way back, as I had actually not seen any of you to-day. Quite an event, isn't it?"

"It is, indeed," responded Lady Challoner, whilst Captain Challoner offered a chair to Miss Bostock.

"No, I must not sit down, thank you, Captain Challoner, for I cannot stop a minute. It is so late, and as I am walking I must get home as fast as I can. The fact is, some of my girls are very good at needlework, and when I was with them this afternoon, they had just finished such a very lovely little frock, that I could not resist bringing it as a present for Sib. I think it will fit her nicely."

At that moment Sir John's face was a study to behold. I am sorry to say he looked as though he would like to throw the frock at its donor. But not so Lady Challoner. With a smile she took the parcel in her hand.

"You are really the very best and kindest creature I ever met with," she exclaimed enthusiastically—"you think of every one and everything."

"You think of us a great deal too much, Miss Bostock," growled Sir John.

"I could not do that," she cried; "it is such a pleasure to me; you don't know what a pleasure. And how are you to-day?" turning her bright handsome face glowing in the firelight to Captain Challoner. "No more neuralgia, I hope. Have you tried my remedy?"

He smiled. "Quite well enough to see you home this dark night," he said.

"Will you, really? How very charming of you! I

have a hundred things to consult you about, and although I pride myself on my perfect independence, yet it is pleasant to have a companion in the dark. But first I must make a bargain. If you come you must stay to dinner—— "

"It was very rude of me," I answered. "Will you please beg Sir John and Lady Challoner's pardon for me, but as you were all busy with Miss Bostock, and I wanted to get home, I thought I had better slip out without any fuss."

"ONLY MY DUKE TO LOVE ME" (*p.* 454).

But at this point in the conversation, I took advantage of Gerrard's leaving the room, to slip out of it unnoticed myself, and picking up my wraps, was preparing as usual to run home as fast as I could, when I was stopped by Sibyl.

"Oh, Mortie," she said, "we did not know what had become of you. Father sent me to look for you; he says he never half thanked you for singing to him; it did him a lot of good. Why did you run away without saying good-bye?"

"I see," said Sib, nodding her head. "Do you know Lizzie has brought me a frock, such a pretty one, dark blue and red?"

"Yes, so I heard her say, and made by the orphans, too. That is nice, Sib."

"H'm," responded Sibyl. "I don't think father and Jack quite like it. You see she is always giving us things—fruit, and flowers, and loads of presents—and we can't give her anything, 'cause we've got no money."

"But you must not think about that, darling," I answered, sorry that such an idea should have crept into her little gentle head. "Miss Bostock has no brothers and sisters, or little nieces, to give presents to, and she likes making them to you, because it is lovely to give presents, isn't it?"

"Yes, and we can't."

"But you can thank her and love her, and that is quite enough return. Now, I must really be off. Good-bye, my sweet. To-morrow we will think of something for you to work for Miss Bostock."

"Oh! that will be lovely."

"Is she gone yet?"

"No. Jack is dressing to dine at the Manor, so she is waiting for him to walk with her."

"Then I will go now, Sib. Please say good-bye in the library for me. Good-bye again, my pet."

Sib's kisses were still warm on my cheek, as I stepped out of the side door into the garden. The moon had not risen yet, and it was dark, so dark, indeed, that I could not think of taking the path through the wood. My best way lay down what was called the Little Avenue, a by no means short avenue of magnificent oaks, where, however, I had to go rather slowly and carefully to avoid stumbling over the gnarled and knotted roots, that flung themselves from the trees on either side, almost meeting in the middle.

All at once, as I walked along, absorbed in by no means pleasant thoughts, and picking my steps in the darkness, I suddenly heard Miss Bostock's clear, metallic voice resounding in the still, frosty air. It startled me, for it sounded so close that I could hear distinctly every word she said, and I should have thought she was just behind me, or by my side, were it not that the avenue was out of her way, and that her route lay towards the North Lodge.

"I never will," she said—and her voice was all the more audible that she was evidently excited—"as a rule give way to prejudice; but in this case it is more than prejudice, it is an instinct, and one that I cannot shake off. It comes back to me every time I see her, every time I hear her speak, and I tremble to think that my father may have been instrumental in introducing this wolf in sheep's clothing to our happy little fold here. What business, I ask you, Captain Challoner, has a girl of that age with a mystery? unless, indeed, there is something very wrong about her?"

My heart stood still as well as my steps. Miss Bostock was speaking of me, that I could not doubt for a second, speaking out all the pent-up dislike she had cherished for me ever since I had set foot in Monk's Hollow. I peered through the gloom to try and make out where she could be, but in vain. Darkness lay all around me, and without thinking of what I was doing, I listened breathlessly for Captain Challoner's answer.

"My dear Miss Bostock," it came, "are you not making a very large mountain out of a very small molehill? I thought the mystery, if there is any, was explained by the fact that this wolf in sheep's clothing is a lady in reduced circumstances, who has taken up the profession of a schoolmistress as a means of livelihood. Everything about her corroborates this story. She is undeniably a lady, and that she is poor is plain, or she would not be where she is. I think your father is very much to be congratulated on having secured the services of any one who, from what I hear, so efficiently fulfils her duties. Who knows but what she may not be another victim of that rogue Danvers?"

"I wish I could subscribe to all you say, but I simply cannot. I mistrust her altogether, and I do not believe one word of her story. Why is she not a governess in a gentleman's family, with her education and talents? Why, if she is so poor, is her sitting-room here—I confess it is very small—furnished with such water-colours, engravings, and pieces of furniture as make Lady Challoner's mouth water every time she goes into it? No, Captain Challoner, I have a certain belief in instinct, and my instinct tells me that Miss Morton is come here for a purpose, and that not a good one. I may sound uncharitable, but that is my conviction."

Oh! why could I not get away from the hard cruel voice? Why must I hear myself dissected with the coldness and remorselessness of an anatomical knife? Why did I not cry out in the darkness, and say, "I am here to answer the charges you bring against me?" Ah! why? Because, in the first place, I could not; and in the second, I dared not.

"You not only sound so, but you are uncharitable," Captain Challoner's answer came wafted to me.

"You are candid."

"I know nothing of Miss Morton," he continued, taking no notice of the interruption, "except that she is a lady who is bravely trying to earn her own living, but—" and here his voice rose and swelled, so that I could hear every syllable he said—"I have knocked about the world a good deal in my time, and seen a good many men and women, and I would stake my honour that there is nothing wrong about that girl. But," resuming his natural tone, and laughing—a somewhat forced laugh it sounded to me—"why discuss the subject any more, since we cannot agree upon it? It is not worth arguing about, is it?"

"Indeed, no. Time alone can show, and I am pretty certain time will prove me right. Now let us talk of something pleasanter;" and with that, with supreme self-control, for there was a vibration in her voice that told me she was very angry, she passed rapidly to another topic, their voices gradually dying away in the distance, until they ceased altogether.

And I, what did I feel after it all? As though some one had dealt me a violent blow and knocked me down. To think that I should have been called a wolf in sheep's clothing! and spoken of like some common designing girl, such as figure so largely in novels. How grateful I felt to Captain Challoner for his half-bantering, wholly common-sensical defence of myself, although some of his words had pierced me deeper than all Miss Bostock's insinuations. Oh! it was cruel, and what had I done to deserve it? Like some wounded animal I crept home in the darkness to find only my Duke to love me, after all the wealth of affection that had been mine for so many years.

And then I remembered Sib's kisses this evening, Gwen's and Gerrard's undemonstrative loyalty towards me, Mr. and Mrs. Talbot's almost parental kindness, and last, but not least, Hetty Coles' enthusiastic affection; and with a tranquillised heart, and, in spite of all Miss Bostock's innuendoes, a clear conscience, I was able to sing my "Rest in the Lord" before going to bed, although not to sleep.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

IN THE SICK-ROOM.

DEAR little Hetty Coles! Her loving devotion was always a comfort to me in my lonely life, and now it seemed that it was to be withdrawn, and that she was to be taken from me. She was very, very ill.

The news was brought to me one morning by Susie, and it was as much as I could do to give my attention to my duties, after hearing that she kept begging that I would come to her. I was free to do so after twelve, for I no longer taught at Cappers. A week ago, a note had been brought me from Lady Challoner, containing remuneration for my services, thanking me for the same, and adding that they would no longer be required, as a fresh arrangement had been entered into. I was positively idiotic enough to cry over that little heartless epistle, and then my pride bade me dry my tears, remembering that I had contemplated the step myself, and that I ought to be glad that it was taken out of my hands. Following as it did on the conversation I had overheard betweeen Miss Bostock and Captain Challoner, I had no difficulty in recognising the hand that had guided Lady Challoner's pen, and I found on inquiry of the children that an ex-governess of Miss Bostock's, who was out of health, was coming to stay at the Manor for an indefinite time, and was there to teach them for a certain number of hours every day.

"What a capital plan!" I exclaimed cheerfully, after Gwen and Gerrard had poured out the whole story to me. "Miss Bostock's governess will be able to teach you much more regularly than I could, and much better."

"That she won't," retorted Gwen. "She does not know half as much as you, and she has not nearly such a good French accent."

"We shall never love her as we do you, Mortie," said Gerrard. "She is just an old stick, and so awfully ugly; but, as father says—do you know he was awfully angry about our having Miss Hexham, and there was no end of a row over it—we can't always expect to have governesses like fairy-tale princesses, and with voices like angels'."

I could not help blushing and laughing. "You little silly!" I said.

"It's true," said Gerrard, "every word of it. But now I must be off to prepare my lessons for Jack. He makes me work tremendously hard, but I rather like it. Good-bye, Mortie, dear. Come, Gwen." Two violent hugs, and they were gone, but they left a warm spot in my heart, which was not likely to die out, for not a day passed but one or the other of them looked in on me to tell me the news of the family. And every time that I opened the door to them I expected to hear that Captain Challoner was engaged to Miss Bostock. But day after day went by, and still there was no news, and I told myself I was disappointed. I had so schooled myself to the idea, as a happy solution of the Challoner difficulties, and therefore a happiness to myself, that I persuaded myself that I was impatient for its fulfilment. Nevertheless, argue as I would in favour of it, there would always rise up the question, Would Miss Bostock, with all her admirable qualities, yet be the woman to make Captain Challoner happy? I doubted it. I was turning the matter over in my mind as I walked down the lane to the Coles', that raw December morning, to see Hetty. A chill, damp mist, penetrating to one's very bones, lay on all the valley, shrouding trees and shrubs alike in a grey gossamer veil, and quite blotting out all the surrounding country.

I found Mr. Coles in the sitting-room, cowering over the fire, as he listlessly gazed at a pile of magazines he held in his hand. He looked more distressingly emaciated than ever; his eyes more protruding; his pallor more ghastly. The winter was telling on him, and he seemed to have no life left in him. He rose when he saw me, and a sickly smile crept into his face.

"I knew you would come, miss," he said, supporting himself against the mantelpiece; "I was saying so to the captain a few minutes ago. 'Miss Morton will come, sure enough,' says I. 'She loves our Hetty; besides, you have only to be in trouble, to bring her to you.'"

"Yes, here I am," I said, as cheerfully as I could; "and longing to see Hetty. How is she now?"

"She is very bad indeed, miss, as you will soon see. Her mother is with her now, but she can't go on with it much longer, or it will kill her. She was up with her all night, and looks more dead than alive this morning."

I asked a few more questions about the doctor, &c., and then I went upstairs to Hetty. No lady's room could have been more spotlessly dainty than the one in which she lay. It was bright with pictures and flowers, brighter still through the sweet child-face that lay on the pillows, a tangle of golden hair framing in the soft little features, all flushed with fever.

She gave a cry of delight when she saw me, putting out two burning hands to seize mine. "Oh! Miss Morton!" she exclaimed, after which words failed her, and she could only gaze at me with a rapturous smile.

"Yes, darling, I am come to see if I can't be of some help to mother," I said. "We must try and get you well soon, my little Hetty."

She smiled at me again in her pretty way, whilst Mrs. Coles came up to me with tear-stained eyes, and looking, as her husband had said, more dead than alive.

"She is very ill, miss," she said, drawing me to one side, and shaking her head. "She was light-headed all night, and it was as much as I could do to keep her in bed. However we shall do through another night,

I can't think. Just you listen to her breathing. Did you ever hear anything like it?"

No, I could truly say I never had, for it was most distressing. It was clear indeed that she was alarmingly ill, and I began turning over in my own mind what was to be done for the night work, whilst Mrs. Coles, sinking down on a chair, looked at me very anxiously.

"We could get a sick-nurse, miss," she said, in a whisper, "only Hetty, she could not abide a stranger. I think she would be beside herself, if she were to wake up and find a new face by her bedside, and I could not rest for thinking of it. Mrs. Talbot came down here this morning, as soon as ever she heard about Hetty, to offer Mrs. Lovegrove, the coachman's wife, that was once a real 'orspital nurse, and nursed Miss Blanche in her last illness—she got engaged to Lovegrove then, and they were married last year—to nurse the child; but Hetty cried, and put herself into such a taking as never was, and made herself a thousand times worse. Whatever I am to do, I don't know."

"Let me see," I answered, "to-day is Thursday; to-morrow the school breaks up for the holidays. I will sit up with her to-night."

"Oh, miss! but you can't if you have the school to-morrow. Coles would not hear of it. He always says you will kill yourself with all the work you do. No, indeed, you must not!" but it was only a half-hearted refusal, and one that I knew I should very soon overcome.

"It will be easy enough after the holidays begin," I said musingly, "and one night in school-time cannot possibly hurt me. I am tougher than you think, and meanwhile I will consult Mrs. Talbot, and we will arrange about the future."

Then Mrs. Coles seized my hands in a transport of affection.

"I wonder," she said, "how it is you come to be so good to all of us, from Cappers downwards. Master Gerrard, he is just a different boy since he knew you; and that old drunken Betty Buckle, I do believe she has not touched a drop since she promised you she wouldn't. I know you have taught me a lesson, miss, against holding my head too high, and——"

"Mrs. Coles," I interrupted, "I shall have to run away if you go on making so much of my small doings. The kindness and goodness are all on your side. I owe some of the happiest hours I have spent here to Hetty insisting upon my making your acquaintance."

"Ay, she is an angel, our Hetty. I always tell Coles so. 'Depend upon it,' I says to him last night, 'we shall lose her; she is too good for this world.' Lor, miss, how he did take on, to be sure! He put his head down on the table, and sobbed like a child, saying that God was punishing him for his sins. He does talk like that sometimes, till I almost think he is queer in his head, and yet, though I says it as shouldn't, there is not a better man in all England than he is."

"Mrs. Coles," I hastily interposed, as she paused for breath, and feeling sure that all this whispering was very bad for the child, "you go and rest for awhile, whilst I stay with Hetty. Hetty, dear," I continued, approaching the bed, "would you like me to come and nurse you to-night, whilst mother gets some sleep?"

It was worth all the prospective fatigue to see her face light up.

"You," she said—"you, a real lady, nurse me!—Oh, you must not!"

"Oh! but," I said, "a real lady can do anything, and I should like so to nurse you, Hetty, my pet."

She shut her eyes, with a rapturous expression, and then she opened them again. "It will be lovely!" she said, and so it was settled.

I stayed with her some time longer, whilst Mrs. Coles snatched a few minutes' rest, singing little soft hymns and lullabies, until I had the satisfaction of seeing her heavy eyelids droop slowly over her blue eyes, and in another minute or two she was asleep. Noiselessly installing Susie as a watcher, I hastened downstairs to tell Mr. Coles my decision, and also that his wife was resting. I found him in the deepest state of dejection, sitting with his head buried in his hands, almost in the fireplace.

"Well, miss," he said, hardly looking up, as I entered, "what do you say about her? I suppose you are going to tell me I shall lose her, my Hetty, my darling, my little ewe lamb! Oh, my God!" bursting into tears, "Thy hand is heavy upon me, but not too heavy, not too heavy. I am only reaping the just reward." Here he suddenly stopped, pulled himself together, and stared at me with his terribly glassy eyes, as though he had just awakened out of a dream. "I don't know what I am talking about, miss," he said, with an effort, resuming control of himself. "My disease, and the anxiety about Hetty, have quite upset me. Sometimes I feel as though I should go mad, and I say all kinds of things which I don't mean."

He looked at me very peculiarly as he spoke, and I hastened to calm him, feeling sure that what he said was the truth, and that anxiety respecting Hetty in his present condition of health had very nearly unsettled his reason.

"Mr. Coles," I said, as brightly as I could, for, remembering the four little ones already gone, I did not feel very hopeful, "you must not really give up hope so quickly. Hetty is very ill, but worse cases than hers have recovered, you know. I think you will be glad to hear that I am going to sit up with her to-night, whilst Mrs. Coles takes a good rest."

"You! why, you have the school."

"Only for one day before the holidays, and it does not begin until half-past nine. I shall manage quite well, I assure you, and Hetty does not mind me."

"Mind you! Why, she would cut off her hand for you. I have been jealous of her love for you, miss, I can tell you, though I have never wondered at it. I can't thank you; no words of mine can, but——"

"No, no, Mr. Coles," I cried, "don't thank me; please don't. What a nice lot of magazines you have

here!" glancing at the pile by his side. "Some day I shall get you to lend them to me."

"With pleasure, miss, though they're not mine; they are the captain's. He brought them to me just now—the numbers in which he has written articles. He writes wonderfully well, as I dare say you know, and draws too. He sent home lots of drawings from Egypt for the illustrated papers. Of course you have seen them at Cappers."

"No; I have heard of them, but never seen them. I should like very much to look at them, and to read the articles too."

"You can do both, for I have a great many here. The captain is always bringing me something to amuse me. He is a very clever artist, and as to his horses, they are wonderful. I should like to show you one or two now, if you have time."

"I am afraid I haven't," I answered, "for I must be off to make all arrangements with Eliza. Perhaps you will let me have them to keep me awake to-night."

That evening, after a long talk with Mrs. Talbot on the subject, I was installed in Hetty's room, having previously seen Mrs. Coles comfortably reposing in bed. On a table by my side were placed all the appliances for a sick-room. A bright fire burned in the grate, and on a stool close by were piled the magazines and papers that were to keep me awake throughout the long night. Hetty lay sleeping uneasily, tossing and moaning, and breaking the stillness that reigned around by her heavy breathing.

There is something eerie and uncanny—at least it seemed so to me, inexperienced as I was—in keeping watch by a sick-bed, where the patient is delirious or unconscious, when all the rest of the household is wrapt in slumber. When I came to think it over, I had never done such a thing before, and the responsibility of my charge weighed heavily on me. For the first hour and more I sat perfectly immovable, not daring to stir, or to take my eyes off Hetty, for fear some intangible something would happen to her if I did. But soon I discovered that this would never do. Over and over again, early as it was, I found my eyelids drooping over my eyes, and sleep stealing over me, until at last I ventured to stretch out my hand for the magazine that lay uppermost. They all of them contained some article by Captain Challoner, and very soon I was enjoying the exquisite pleasure of studying the mind of the man with whom I might not hold communication in any other form. The paper I read, whoever its author might be, would have been interesting at any time; to me it was perfectly absorbing. I perused it eagerly, greedily, casting a glance at Hetty between each page, all the more fascinated that I had fasted for a very long time from this stamp of literature. It treated of a subject which had always excited my interest, the ethnology of Egypt and the Soudan, and was marked by a vigour and clearness of touch which, apart from its other merits, held me enthralled to the last word.

When I had finished it, I drew a deep breath of contentment, and glanced at Hetty. She was lying with her eyes wide open, staring at me.

"Is it you really?" she asked, in her feeble voice.

"Yes, darling."

"You looked so—so—I don't know how to say it. Were you reading something nice?"

"Yes, very, very nice," I answered; "but now I am going to put the book away, and make you a fresh poultice;" and with that I carefully put another magazine at the top of the pile, after which I proceeded to immerse myself in my duties as nurse.

I found that, as the night wore on, they were no sinecure, and that my work was cut out for me in keeping my patient in bed and warm. Fortunately, my voice and presence had a most soothing effect upon her, and, in the height of her delirium, she never quite lost consciousness of my identity. Towards morning, by dint of singing to her low monotonous lullabies, I was able to lull her off to a sleep, broken indeed, but still a welcome change from the wild delirium of the small hours in which my name had been uppermost on her lips. It touched me beyond everything to see what deep root I had taken in her affections, so far exceeding my deserts, and I felt loth to leave her when at seven o'clock Mrs. Coles stole into the room, looking wan and pale, but declaring herself immensely refreshed by her night's rest, and ready to take my place. A quarter of an hour later I was asleep and dreaming, until awakened by Susie with the most tempting of breakfasts in her hand, and the cheering news that Hetty was certainly rather better than worse.

Refreshed and strengthened I rose, and was soon walking to the school in the fresh morning air, so welcome after the confinement of a sick-room, and feeling fairly equal to my duties, even equal to encountering Miss Bostock's lynx-eyes. To-day was the last of school for three weeks. This evening I should be a free agent.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

ACROSS THE MOOR.

CHRISTMAS DAY had come and gone, and I was very thankful that it was over. Except for the few hours I had passed in church, and a quarter of an hour with the dear Talbots, who neither asked me to be merry nor happy, I spent it in Hetty's sick-room, only too glad to be out of reach of all the conventional greetings and merry-makings, and alone with my sorrow and my memories. Time had sped quickly in that quiet haven, and now the holidays were fast drawing to a close, and soon I should be obliged, most unwillingly, to give up my little patient, grown dearer to me than ever, and return to my work. I could do this without anxiety, for she was very much better; the fever, which had run very high in the early stages of her illness, had abated, her breathing was much relieved, and the doctor was now almost confident of her ultimate recovery. It was pitiful to see her father's ecstasy of delight at the news, to look at his gaunt, hollow face, kindling with joy, knowing that separated he must soon be from his darling,—and that the probabilities were that he would leave her behind—not she him. His gratitude to me knew no bounds. He

insisted that it was entirely owing to my careful nursing that the child had pulled through so far, whilst, mingled with his thanks, came the old mysterious allusions to God not punishing him this time for his sins, which made me resolve to speak at the first opportunity to Mr. Talbot on the subject.

"If ever, miss, I am in a position to do you, be it ever so large or so small, a kindness, you may reckon on me, George Coles," he said more than once, his terrible cough interrupting him every other word; and as I listened to it, I felt that if the present severe weather, so unusual at Monk's Hollow, continued, he would not be amongst us much longer to do a kindness to any one.

Only one day throughout my holidays had I spent away from Hetty, and of that day I cannot even now trust myself to speak. Suffice it to say that I went to see my darling, and that the interview was just one of sheer torture to us both. He told me never to come again, that it broke his heart; and I crept back to Monk's Hollow feeling as though I had added to, rather than assuaged, his burden.

In the morning I had walked to Marcombe, and there taken a fly, and in the afternoon I returned home in the same fashion. It was a long walk to and from Marcombe—five miles each way—and weary and sick at heart as I felt, I hardly knew how I should ever accomplish the return journey. But do it I must. Were I to meet any of the Monk's Hollow people in a fly it might excite suspicion, whereas I was well known as a good walker, and addicted to the moor.

Slowly, like an old woman, all the life taken out of me, with my darling's worn, thin face—once the incarnation of careless happiness—always before my eyes, going over in thought every word that he had uttered, until I felt as though my heart must break, I walked across the moor, without being able to find one ray of light in all the black darkness that encompassed me.

The bitter wind blew and wrapped me round, and I did not even feel it. I saw nothing, I heard nothing. I was only conscious of being absolutely miserable, and of the fact that he and I were suffering unjustly. Yes, I was wrong in saying that there was no ray of light in my misery. Unjustly! If we had been suffering justly, how tenfold worse it would have been! Yet no one but our two selves knew this, or at any rate believed it. I stood alone in my faith and trust, and therefore I stood alone in the world.

And just now the darkness seemed impenetrable. Later, when, in the silence of Hetty's room, I went over that interview in my mind again and again, there flashed from it here and there sparks of light, which at first I could not perceive, as I stumbled, rather than walked, along the road.

In the distance I could hear a sound as of horse's hoofs behind me, ringing out on the hard, frost-bound road, but I heeded it not. I was deaf and indifferent to everything but my own wretchedness. Nearer and nearer it drew, then suddenly stopped, whilst a voice, *the* voice of all others that filled my cup of misery to the brim, called out to me, "Miss Morton!" For the first time I then perceived that it was getting quite dark.

"Yes, sir?"

"I thought it was you," reining up close beside me, and bending towards me from his saddle; "but it was not your walk. You have been overdoing yourself as usual, and are very tired, aren't you?"

For a fortnight I had not seen or heard him, shut up as I had been in Hetty's room, and now that he had come upon me in my darkest hour, such was the dull apathy that had crept over me, that even his voice could not rouse me out of it. I had on my thick black gauze veil, so he could not see the despair I felt, in my eyes.

"Am I?" I answered indifferently, hardly knowing what I said; "I don't know."

The next minute he was off his horse, and standing by my side, his keen eyes trying to penetrate my veil.

"Then I do," he answered. "You must not walk another step. You shall get on my horse. You won't be afraid, will you?"

This roused me at last. I always think the cold and my misery had dazed me.

"No, thank you, sir," I answered—somehow the "sir" came quite easily to-day. "I am not tired; only a little bit cold and stupid."

"A little bit cold and stupid!" he repeated impatiently. "Utterly worn out, you mean. I watched you walking before I knew who it was. You are dead beat." Then his voice changing, "You are not afraid to get on the horse with my saddle, are you? I think I can make it comfortable for you, and I will lead him all the way."

He spoke gently, aye, more than gently, as he laid his hand on my arm to prevent my going further. Afraid! The question conjured up a sickly galvanised smile. Yet I was afraid; though not of the horse or of the saddle, but of myself, of him, with that light shining in his dark eyes, and the subtle vibration in his voice.

"I would rather walk," I answered doggedly.

"The horse is as quiet as a lamb," he said, "and do you know that you are yet two miles from Monk's Hollow? Miss Morton, be reasonable."

"You are very kind, sir, but I will *not* ride."

"You will *not* walk," he answered, "for you cannot."

In truth I had just stumbled over a stone, and very nearly fallen. Captain Challoner at once took advantage of my momentary helplessness. Raising me in his arms—I must have grown very light of late—before I knew where I was, he had swung me on to his horse, adjusted the reins between my numb fingers, shortened the one stirrup, put my foot into it, taken off his covert coat, and wrapped it like a skirt around me, all with a promptness and decision that I had not the strength or energy to gainsay.

"Are you comfortable? Do you think you will be able to hold on?" he asked, and the commonplace words seemed to restore my senses. Hold on! Yes, indeed! Ah, how delicious was the motion of a horse once more under me! What happy days did

it recall! How, with a swift rush, it seemed to bring back my dead youth!

"Oh, yes!" I answered, shutting my eyes, "it is delicious."

"You look quite at home on your throne," he continued. "You have ridden before, I know!"

"Oh, yes!"

"But not in this guise?"

"No."

He was close beside me now, his eyes looking up at mine, and compelling me to open them. Was he seeking to penetrate my thick veil, recalling, perhaps, Miss Bostock's cruel words of the other night? Ah! how I longed, with an almost intolerable longing, to tell him everything, and to have done for ever with this miserable concealment! But no! it was not curiosity that shone in his glance; it was not doubt or mistrust; none of these could I have distinguished in the winter's dusk, but it was a something that, piercing alike the darkness and my mask, made my heart stand still within me. It only lasted a second, one brief second, for I had shut my eyes again.

"Please go to the horse's head," I said, and somehow my voice sounded as though it did not belong to me.

He obeyed me instantly, and as he did so I observed that he walked very lame.

"Captain Challoner," I cried, "I will not stay on your horse another minute. You have not got your crutches."

"I have discarded them," he answered. "You forget that you have not heard anything of us for a fortnight. I consider myself convalescent now."

"But you walk lame still."

"So I shall for some time to come. It is nothing."

"Nothing! When you have two miles before you. I will not stay here," I reiterated, and was just about to slip off the horse, when he turned round and laid a detaining hand upon my knee.

"Are you out of your senses?" he asked almost roughly. "You are as much fit to walk back to Monk's Hollow as Hetty Coles would be."

"I am quite as fit as you are."

"I think I am the best judge of that," he answered. "It seems to me," he continued, "that you are bent on killing yourself."

I laughed discordantly, and the sound vibrated in the still night air. My misery seemed to have reached its culminating point.

"No such luck for me," I answered very bitterly. "Death does not come to those who would welcome him."

"Have you ever seen death?" he asked gently, his hand still on my knee, to prevent me attempting to dismount.

"No," I answered, feeling strangely humbled by the quiet, direct question.

"Ah!" he said musingly. And then, suddenly, as though he were putting a great effort upon himself, he began telling me of the campaign he had lately gone through, of the march across the desert, and the battles that had followed upon it, when all England had held its breath in an agony of suspense and grief, and the best and bravest of her sons had fallen before the enemy. The moon was just peeping through the clouds, throwing fitful silvery gleams on the road that stretched like a white streak to Monk's Hollow, flickering now on the horse's head, now on Captain Challoner's face, and harmonising solemnly with the scenes he was painting, as his voice rose and fell in the frosty air.

And as I listened, I lost sight of my trouble, my misery, my fatigue. I forgot altogether my own personality. I was no longer in England, on Fastmoor. I was in Egypt, under its burning sun, treading its scorching sands, living through those days of awful anxiety, of desperate councils, and seeing, as in a panorama, the death I had spoken of so thoughtlessly and selfishly, sweeping down his victims amongst husbands, lovers, fathers, sons, and brothers. My breath came quick and short, and when the narrative suddenly ceased, and I perceived that we were close to Monk's Hollow, the tears were raining unrestrainedly down my face.

And yet, how quietly he had told it! With all the reserve of an Englishman, dwelling on none of the horrors, avoiding any sensation, yet rendering it all the more impressive by the simplicity and reticence that left the imagination free play. If his object had been to divert my mind—and that he had had an object I could not doubt, from the effort he had made to speak of a subject that was evidently painful to him—he had fully succeeded. The two miles to Monk's Hollow had slipped away as though they had been two yards, even my trouble seemed to have grown smaller, when weighed in the balance with one's country's grief. I bent forward in the saddle—

"Thank you; oh! thank you," I said.

He looked up and smiled. I think he had diverted his own mind too.

"I have upset you," he said anxiously. "I did not mean to do that."

"No, no!" I cried, feeling desperately ashamed of myself, "it is only that I am tired. I am all right. You tell your story a little too well," I continued, trying to laugh, but failing miserably. "You can never forget it all, I should think. Does it not haunt you?"

"Yes, very often at night, but then," as though afraid of my saying anything more, "I do not sleep very soundly. There is something wrong with a buckle here," he added suddenly in a lowered voice. "I had better put it straight."

He stopped the horse, and whilst he was adjusting some trifle in the bridle, I distinctly heard a footstep at some distance in front of us. Had he halted on that account? I wondered.

We continued the short remainder of our way in silence, as if by mutual consent, until we came to the descent into Monk's Hollow, and here we stopped again.

"I think," he said, "that you had better get down here, or the Monk's Hollow people will think you have broken your leg."

"HERE WE STOPPED AGAIN" (*p.* 459).

"Oh! yes, please, sir."

"I am Captain Challoner, not sir, to ladies," as he helped me down. "Are you quite sure you are rested, and can get home all right? Tell me the truth."

"Quite, quite sure, and very grateful to you. I could not have walked that two miles," I added honestly. "I only hope you are none the worse."

"I? No. It is very good for me to do a certain amount of walking every day."

Then, as I put out my hand, "Good-bye," he said gravely. "Take care of yourself, and don't sit up with Hetty to-night."

He held my hand for one long second, and then withdrew his abruptly, and I set off to walk home. Looking back, after a few minutes, I could see him sitting on his horse where I had left him, watching me, until, satisfied that I was getting on quite well, he broke into a trot, and shortly afterwards I heard him call out, "Good evening, Miss Bostock." She it was, then, who had been in front of us.

As for me, I went home with my head and my heart in a tumult, seeing now my darling's sad face, now that strange light in Captain Challoner's eyes; alternately rehearsing my interview with my dear one, and listening to the voice that had, for a time, diverted my grief. Quite worn out, I went early to bed, and slept soundly, to wake in the morning to a sense indeed of utter wretchedness, but with the cobwebs so far cleared from my brain that I was able to smile over my imaginations of the preceding evening. After all Captain Challoner had simply shown me the same

kindness as he would to any other tired woman, and as for that expression of his countenance that had set my heart beating, it must have been the figment of my brain; for how could I possibly have distinguished anything through the gathering darkness, and a thick veil? With such arguments I tried to soothe the disquietude I could not altogether dispel, and which would, at moments, give place to an exquisite sense of rapture, to be succeeded by a double portion of despondency. To-day was Saturday, the last of the holidays, and on Monday I trusted that, with renewed work and concentrated attention, my mind would recover its balance.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

"MY EYES ARE SO BAD!"

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

I TRUST that no one will be offended if I say that we human beings possess many feelings, and failings as well, in common with that portion of God's creation we somewhat haughtily style "the lower animals." One of these failings is that of extravagance. If we were to analyse this particular weakness, we should find it to be made up of, and caused by, a good many others.

We have only two eyes, but, nevertheless, we are as extravagant as regards our "powers" of seeing, and take as little reasonable care of these eyes, as if we had the same number as a butterfly.

What a terrible affliction it is to lose the sight! We cannot fathom nor realise it. Most of us in this busy, toiling world are dependent on our own exertions for the maintenance of ourselves and families in a condition of respectability, but what should we be without eyesight?—A burden to every one about us, and no longer able to hold our heads above water, as it is expressively phrased.

I do not mean to say that those people who have had the misfortune either to have been born blind, or to have lost their sight in infancy, are invariably helpless or unhappy, but how would it be with you and me, reader, were an accident to deprive us suddenly of light?—no longer able to read or to write, or to follow the avocations we delighted in, or the business that used to engross our attentions by day, unable even to leave our chairs or beds with safety, dependent upon the assistance of others—sometimes, alas! begrudgingly given—for the performance of the most trifling actions, shut out from the world, shut in with our poor selves in the dark chamber of our consciousness? Pray Heaven to avert such a calamity from all we know and love!

"Do you see that gentleman walking slowly along the pavement yonder, led by a little girl?"

This is what an acquaintance of mine said to me one day last summer while I was on a cycling tour.

"What, that benign-faced old man across the road?" I made answer.

"Yes; but he is not very aged. Barely sixty, though his head and beard are so white. They turned colour in a single night."

"Do you tell me so?"

"I but tell you what I have heard, and have no reason to doubt the facts, which are somewhat remarkable. Twenty years ago he was one of the handsomest and smartest Government officials in India. He had been out for ten years, and only home once. During his visit to the old country he fell in love with, and became engaged to, a very charming girl of good family. The engagement would be a somewhat long one, however. It would be two years before he could get home again. Well, he went back to India, high in hopes and ambitions now, because he would have some one to share his life with him.

"The time seemed very long to him, but the two years came to an end at last. Bidding his friends a joyous good-bye, he started by train for Bombay, there to catch a P. and O. steamer for England. He felt strangely nervous as he took his seat, but put it down to the effects of the heat, the hurry, and excitement of starting.

"There was only one other gentleman in the same seat with him: an officer going on furlough; and the two got friendly. By-and-by they came to a tunnel, and for a time there was a lull in the conversation. The officer was the first to resume it, and had been chatting on very pleasantly for at least five minutes, when Mr. R—— observed, with a laugh, 'Why, this is a very long tunnel. Is it never going to come to an end?'

"'What do you mean?' replied the officer; 'I don't understand you. We have left the tunnel long ago.'

"'Oh, man, man!' cried the other, clutching at the officer's arm. 'Say not so. We are still in the tunnel, are we not?'

"'No, no. You know we are not. You are joking, surely, my friend, or practising for the stage. Come, which is it, eh?"

"'It is this,' cried the poor fellow, with an agony of expression that no actor could have imitated—'*I am stone-blind; I shall never leave the tunnel!*'"

"How terrible!" I said.

"It was indeed terrible. He dropped down in a fit almost immediately, and was afterwards insane for a time."

"Did the young lady marry him?"

"Everybody asks that. Yes; like a true-hearted English girl. She is living now, and the child who is leading the gentleman is their youngest daughter."

Such cases of sudden deprivation of sight are, of course, exceedingly rare, but we all have an interest in preserving the eyesight, not only our own, but that of those dear to us.

Well, I do not mean to give space here to a description of the various diseases of the eye, for they are all so important as to demand the very best assistance we can procure, and they should never be neglected even for a day.

Now, the first piece of advice I beg to give to one and all, to young and old, is this: never be wasteful of your powers of sight, never fatigue your eyes if you can avoid it. But this advice requires some qualification, for exercise of the eyes tends to keep them healthy and young. On the other hand, want of bodily exercise tends to age them, so do indigestion, however caused, intemperance in anything, whether in eating, drinking, working, or thinking, a disposition to the formation of adipose tissue, and neglect of the skin. Of course these are only a few of the causes of early dimness of sight and senile long-sightedness.

As to the latter, it is natural enough in advanced life. I was amused one day while travelling by train. I had entered a carriage where sat two gentlemen, who were earnestly discussing their remarkable juvenility. Their united ages would have amounted to about one hundred and fifty. But, nevertheless, by their own account, there was very little that a young man of thirty could have done which would not have come easy enough to them also.

"And," said one, "I can see better now than I could at forty."

"So can I," said the other, "*much farther away*. I can read a paper at arm's length."

No doubt he could. But not within a foot of his nose.

Some people have naturally weak, or, I might say, tender eyes, that are subject to occasional attacks of slight inflammation, styes, neuralgia, &c. Such people must be extra careful of their sight, and this includes carefulness of the general health as well. Let them avoid every sort of diet that is likely to disagree, live well, but plainly, and make a practice of sponging the brow and closed eyes every morning with cold water, before taking the bath. Cold, weak green tea makes a good eye-lotion. The eye-douche sold in chemists' shops should be used for its application. However, this is only needed when there is some slight degree of inflammation from *external* causes, such as glare, fatigue of sight, &c.

What about *coloured glasses?* Well, these are of infinite advantage sometimes. Especially should they be worn at the seaside, where the glare is reflected by both the water and houses; also indoors by people who read much. Again, they ought to have protected sides, to keep away dust, if worn by people much exposed to wind. The best colour is said to be blue. I own to a partiality, however, for neutral tints, and these are certainly not so unsightly. Whatever be the colour chosen, see it goes right through the glass, and that the spectacles are well polished.

Those who write much indoors should see that neither the carpet nor the wall-paper is of a disagreeable or puzzling design, nor should wire gauze blinds be used on the windows. The same rule applies to the wearing of veils. But these have one advantage, and only one: they keep out the dust and insects. They should be of simple dark blue or black net, without spots or beads, and never worn down except when absolutely required. For remember, the eyes require to be kept cool, and the breath under the veil is in itself injurious to the eyesight in more ways than one.

Those who are much exposed to wind and dust, while driving or riding, should wear neutral-tinted glasses of large size, especially if the light be strong and the roads white. Often after a long day on the road I have suffered from fatigue and uneasiness in the eyes, and found relief from using a simple lotion, such as can be obtained at any chemist's.

Being a hard student myself, I have a fellow-feeling with those who have to write or read much, by day or night. The following advice will be found invaluable to all such, and if adopted, will greatly tend to preserve the sight:—

I. *Sit erect* in your chair when reading, and as erect when writing as possible. If you bend downwards, you not only gorge the eyes with blood, but the brain as well, and both suffer. The same rule should apply to the use of the microscope. Get one that will enable you to look at things horizontally, not always vertically.

II. Have a *reading-lamp* for night use. N.B.—In reading, the light should be on the book or paper, and the eyes in the shade. If you have no reading-lamp, turn your back to the light, and you may read without danger to the eyes.

III. Hold the book at *your focus;* if that begins to go far away, get spectacles.

IV. Avoid reading by the flickering light of the *fire*.

V. Avoid straining the eyes by reading in the *gloaming*.

VI. *Reading in bed* is injurious as a rule. It must be admitted, however, that in cases of sleeplessness, when the mind is inclined to ramble over a thousand thoughts a minute, reading steadies the thoughts, and conduces to sleep.

VII. Do not read much in a *railway carriage*. I myself always do, however, only in a good light, and I invariably carry a good reading-lamp to hook on behind me. Thousands of people would travel by night rather than by day if the companies could only see their way to the exclusive use of the electric light.

VIII. Authors should have *black-ruled paper* instead of blue, and should never strain the eyes by reading too fine types.

IX. The *bedroom blinds* should be red or grey, and the head of the bed should be towards the window.

X. Those ladies who not only write, but *sew*, should not attempt *black seam* by night.

XI. When you come to an *age* that suggests the wearing of spectacles, let no false modesty prevent you from getting a pair. If you have only one eye, *an eyeglass* will do ; otherwise it is folly.

XII. Go to the wisest and best optician you know of, and state your wants and your case plainly, and be assured you will be properly fitted.

XIII. Remember that bad spectacles are most injurious to the eyes, and that good and well-chosen ones are a decided luxury.

XIV. Get a pair for reading with, and, if necessary, a long-distance pair for use out of doors.

Let me add that it is the greatest mistake in the world to wait till your eyesight is actually damaged before visiting your optician.

A DISTANT VIEW OF MOUNT COOK.

A TRIP TO THE MONT BLANC OF NEW ZEALAND.

BY W. H. TRIGGS.

NEW ZEALAND is particularly rich in mountain scenery. A backbone of snowy Alps runs almost throughout the entire length of the South Island. And they are Alps worthy of the name. In whatever part of the South Island you travel, you are pretty sure to see on a clear day a background of mountains covered with perpetual snow.

There are scores of peaks ranging from 7,000 to 10,000 feet high. Mount Cook, the monarch of them all—the Mont Blanc of New Zealand—towers aloft no less than 12,375 feet, and one or two of his near neighbours, such as Mount Tasman, Mount Stokes, and Mount Sefton, are scarcely less imposing.

It may be, in the course of a few years, now that Switzerland has been "done" so thoroughly, and seeing communication with New Zealand is made so expeditious, that Alpine tourists, tired of going over carefully marked-out routes, will visit the Southern Alps of New Zealand to strike out a new line for themselves.

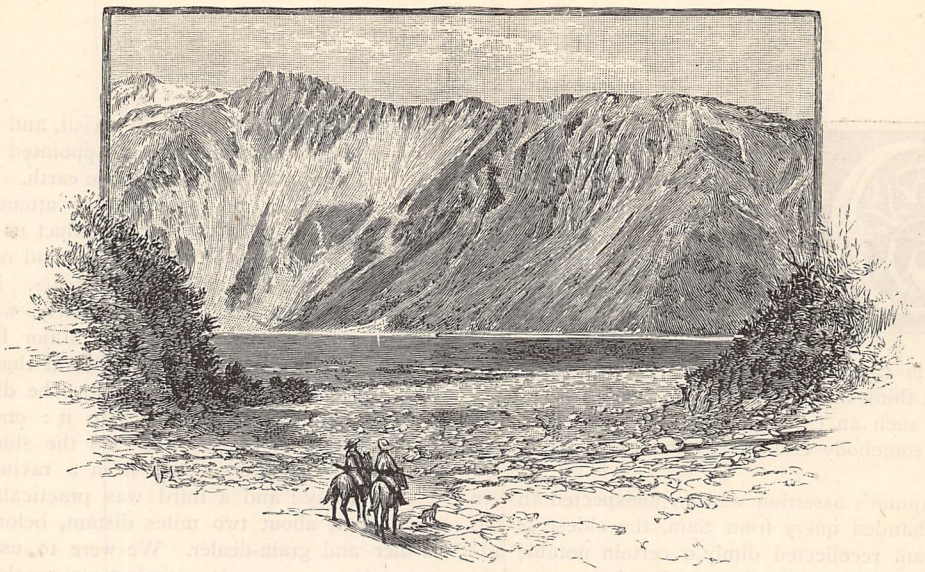
Once in the colony, it is easy enough to reach Mount Cook. From either Christchurch or Dunedin excursion tickets are issued for five pounds, which cover the cost of a day's travelling by rail and two days' coaching. At the end of that time you find yourself at a comfortable hostelry, known as the "Hermitage," and situate under the shadow of the southern spur of Mount Cook, from which it is separated by the Hooker River. You are in the very heart of glaciers, and ice-caves, and Alpine wonders of every kind. The house is built at the foot of the Mueller Moraine, and half an hour's scramble over the large accumulation of rocks and *débris*, brought down by the Mueller Glacier, lands you at the terminal face. Here are cliffs of ice, in some places as much as 450 feet high. There is an ice-cave filled with a delicate light of shimmering blue, and looking for all the world like the enchanted grot of some magician. Above it is a sheer precipice of ice, 150

feet high; and below, the River Mueller finds its way to the surface from the bottom of the glacier, boiling out from unknown depths, surging and raging, as if impatient to be free, and clanking and grinding huge rocks together in its impetuous course along the torrent-bed as if they were so many pebbles. On the ice-precipice above, great masses of stone, brought down by the glacier, are trembling on the verge, preparing, as it would seem, to launch themselves on the heads of any venturesome intruder who dares to enter the Magician's Cave. The undertaking is not devoid of danger to people unacquainted with the place; but the guide, who is a marvel of caution and foresight, tells us we may make the attempt. Accordingly we make a run for it, reach the cave in safety, and enjoy for a time the coolness and the wondrous beauty of the effect produced by sunlight filtered through ice. Presently the guide, with another cautious look aloft, beckons to us to come out again. Then, when we are looking round at the vast accumulation of *débris* brought down by this one glacier, one or two of the rocks which were poised on the edge of the ice-cliff come crashing down on the ledge we have just left, and then roll down the slope to the river-bed, showing us at once the danger of entering an ice-cave without keeping your eyes open, and also giving a practical illustration of the way in which a glacier does its work in disintegrating mountains and making plains and valleys.

An avalanche seen making its way down the side of one of the neighbouring heights soon afterwards completes the lesson. Observed at a distance, it is a most curious phenomenon, and bearing in mind what you have heard of the tremendous magnitude of avalanches, and the wild havoc and devastation which they work, you are at first inclined to laugh aloud at the sight. You are watching the snow-clad sides of the mountain when you notice what appears to be a little tuft of cotton-wool detach itself, and then move down the mountain-slope at the most ridiculous snail-like pace. As it travels the little tuft gathers more cotton-wool and grows larger, but there is no perceptible increase in its pace. Then it comes to a ledge—the cotton-wool is converted for a moment into flour, and a tiny stream pours over this ledge—apparently four or five inches high at the very least! Here it may stop, or it may become cotton-wool again, and then trickle over another ledge or two in the form of flour, but always proceeding with the same ludicrous deliberation. You also notice that it leaves a tiny streak or seam in its wake. All this, of course, is the effect of the distance—and distance plays many strange enchantments with you in the Alps.

If we were near the avalanche we should find the little tuft of cotton-wool was in reality acres and acres of snow, and that the slip travels at a velocity which is amazing and irresistible, wrenching up huge rocks, and tearing open the sides of the mighty mountain with a sound of thunder. The tiny ledge is in effect a precipice hundreds of feet high, over which snow, rocks, and earth are hurled with tempestuous force and horrid crash. The tiny streak seen from afar is a mighty scar in the side of the mountain, where rocks and earth have been torn away by millions of tons, to

MOUNT COOK (12,375 FEET).



MOUNT COOK—MAIN SOUTH SPUR.

be cast on the glacier-stream, then carried down by its motion, and finally deposited at its foot in the form of terminal moraine.

Only three persons have ever made the ascent of Mount Cook, and the story, as told by the principal member of the party, forms one of the most fascinating narratives in the annals of Alpine work.

In 1881 the Rev. W. S. Green, an Irish clergyman, and one of the most active members of the Alpine Club, was casting about in his mind as to what new climbing expedition might be undertaken, when the High Alps of New Zealand were suggested to him. The very daring of the idea seems to have compelled its acceptance, and Mr. Green determined to attack Mount Cook. He made his preparations with the utmost care. Not only did he provide a very complete outfit in the way of tents, sleeping-bags, &c., for camping out, but he secured the services of two of the best and most trustworthy guides Switzerland could produce.

It would take too much time to tell of the preliminary difficulties of the trip, most of which have been removed by the opening up of better communication with Mount Cook.

Mr. Green and his party had to spend several days in exploration, attacking the mountain from different points, until they found out a practicable route. Their way lay up the great Tasman Glacier, a magnificent expanse of ice formed by the union of over thirty distinct ice-streams, and having twice the area of the Great Aletsch, the largest glacier in the European Alps.

Mr. Green made five successive camps on his way up the Tasman, and then the last stage of the journey was entered upon.

The next night they bivouacked under a sheltering rock at an elevation of 7,000 feet above the sea, and then came the final and most difficult struggle with the yet unconquered mountain.

It was six p.m. when the party, after a most exciting and arduous climb, at length stood on the topmost crest of Aorangi, or the "Sky Piercer," as the Maoris call Mount Cook. There was every indication of a bad night brewing, and the gathering clouds below rendered entirely impossible the glorious view which the travellers would otherwise have enjoyed.

"A look backwards down into the dark, cloud-filled abyss out of which we had climbed," says Mr. Green, "was enough to make us shudder; it looked fathomless; and this white icy ridge on which we stood, with torn mists driving over it before the fierce nor'-wester, seemed the only solid thing in the midst of chaos."

Fierce squalls compelled them to drive their axes into the ice and crouch low to guard against their being blown off into space. It was evident they were in for a night of terror on the storm-afflicted mountain, and so it proved. They took shelter on a little ledge on a rock-ridge; it was less than two feet wide and sloped outwards, so that they had to remain standing and hold on with their hands. They were 10,000 feet above the level of the sea. It was raining hard, and avalanches were thundering all around them, causing the rock on which they stood to vibrate again. Sitting down or even moving six inches was out of the question, and in this position they had to stand for nine long hours, keeping each other awake, knowing that yielding for a moment to their feelings of drowsiness would mean instant death at the foot of the precipice on whose brink they were standing. It was an experience which has seldom been equalled in the annals of Alpine travel; but they successfully passed through it and got safely back to civilisation, as all who read Mr. Green's pleasant pages may learn.

THE WOLF'S MOUTH.

BY EDWARD IRENÆUS STEVENSON.

"DO I remember it?" asked Captain Ben of one of the party of young cousins about him, as they were sitting in the summer-house in the late autumn afternoon. He looked up from the *Army Magazine* he was affecting to read amid the running fire of conversation around his ears. "Why, certainly I remember it! You don't think that a grateful or a sane man is likely to forget such an experience so easily, do you? It must be somebody else who is doing the forgetting, I fancy."

The captain's assertion was an unexpected answer to a left-handed query from Sam, the eldest of the bevy. Sam recollected dimly a certain notable adventure that had befallen Captain Ben long ago, while he was passing some weeks in Southern Europe. At least, the demure Samuel recalled its outlines well enough to make him believe that the others, who had not listened to the story from Captain Ben's own lips, might find it interesting. Consequently, he made several vague remarks (upon the instigation of the rest) that penetrated the shield the captain held up, in the shape of the *Army Magazine* aforesaid. In the course of some minutes he had thrown it on the table, and begun to make the always demure Samuel rejoice in the success of his fine art.

"To start at the real beginning of this bit of experience that Sam has launched me into telling, you must know that many years ago, when I was only a lieutenant, I happened to be sent on a special commission from our Government to the port of Marseilles, in company with a pleasant friend of mine, Major Jerome Butler. When the major and I reached Marseilles, we found that it would be several weeks before we could accomplish our errand. There were several little obstacles. Now, it was very hot and stuffy weather in the town. Major Butler and I could not hasten our matter by remaining there. We decided, accordingly, to make a brief excursion into the wild mountain country lying north-east of Marseilles, and presently we found ourselves travelling leisurely among what are called the Basses-Alpes. (You'll find them on the map, if you look carefully.) We stopped a day here and a day there, now at one quaint village, now at another, and saw whatever was noticeable in the region—not much, at the most.

"But as we advanced farther in a particular direction we happened to take, we began to hear a good deal about a certain rather remarkable cavern in the neighbourhood of a hamlet called Vilot. It was spoken of as a genuine curiosity, and was called by the farmers of the adjoining mountain-sides the Bouche du Loup, or, as we would say in English, the Wolf's Mouth. When we approached Vilot, we became tolerably sure that it was worth a visit, and after some trouble we secured a guide, and appointed a day for an expedition into the bowels of the earth.

"Few tourists ever paid or pay attention to it. The peasant who said he could conduct us through a part of it, told us that he had not had occasion to undertake the task for several years. He was a singular-looking man of perhaps forty, with a pale face, and he spoke a *patois* that Major Butler and I with difficulty understood. He said that he knew the cavern thoroughly, and I believe he did. There were three declared entrances to it: one a steep-sided sinking of the earth far up the side of a hill near Vilot; another opened from a ravine at least a mile away; and a third was practicable from a stony field about two miles distant, belonging to a farmer and grain-dealer. We were to use the first one. On a grey wet morning we reached it, and found our guide awaiting us patiently. Only a single acquaintance of his saw us enter on the irregular descent.

"I shall never forget my sensations as we three went down into that cavern, between two ledges of rock that suddenly swallowed us in! I seemed to *feel* the darkness closing around the major, myself, and our guide. I had not at that time even been through a coal-mine. This sudden down-going, between damp slimy walls on right and left, the flaring and glare of our torches, the silence of the eternal rock that closed about us, and the gradual unfolding to our eyes of huge masses of débris, and almost perpendicular layers of the stone—all combined to fill me with novel feelings. One might have expected, by-the-by, that some of the good folk of Vilot and the region would have taken this opportunity to add themselves to our exploring party, the expense thereof being borne by two Americans supposed to be fabulously rich. But no! the Bouche du Loup had an evil name, and, in plain truth, was reckoned the actual abode of one or two very prehistoric monsters, besides Basses-Alpes spectres, and demons in abundance. These ideas, I am sorry to say, were confirmed among the superstitious farmers' families by the fact that three or four persons venturing into the cavern during a period of some years had actually been heard of no more.

"As the major and I reached the bottom of the first rude descent, the passage broadened out. We advanced into a gallery with towering, irregular walls mounting higher and higher until, as we walked on, we reached a hall as spacious as a large theatre. It was a noteworthy thing, however, that the kind of rock through which the Bouche opened showed very little of that beautiful sparkling surface, and those dazzling reflections from stalactites and stalagmites on all sides, that make many other caves so exquisite and indescribably fairy-like. These walls and over-

stretching roofs offered no such lustre. All was blackness or a dull greyish colour, the formations grand and ponderous, with the stone catching the light of our torches only sufficiently for us to fairly realise the vastness of the dozens of galleries, short or long, that we traversed. Our path was seldom very irregular or difficult to pursue—we stepped over loose-lying stone to stretches of a fine dark sand, and from sand to stone again. Striking shapes and outlines were now and then to be seen, where ancient Nature had taken a fancy to exert her hand fancifully. But, altogether, the interiors of those great rocky rooms that we were led through (our guide's taciturnity adding to our sense of awe) seemed the least attractive and the most sombre, weird, and frightful that you can fancy.

"We began to find our expedition a little monotonous. Major Butler and I talked more or less, and computed heights and distances, and drew each other's notice to anything remarkable — our guide being little more than such indeed, and confining his own attention more and more to the sudden turns and twists of our route, which nevertheless he truly appeared to remember perfectly. At last we became so convinced that another half-mile of this interminable ramble in the bottom of the Basses-Alpes would offer us nothing more remarkable or cheering, that we exclaimed that we had had enough of it. We would go back to the light of day, quite satisfied with our knowledge of the Bouche du Loup.

"Now the major and I came to this decision just as we were turning to leave behind us a very broad chamber in the cave—almost half an acre across, we gathered—quite the most extensive we had been shown. There was a little lake or pool in the middle, its shallow black waters as tranquil as a Claude Lorraine mirror, and our torchlight reflected perfectly on the inky surface. We expressed our wish to the guide. He had not been paying much attention to us for some moments, seeming oddly fatigued with his attempt to mount a projecting mass of débris—for a wider observation, I presume. As the major addressed him now, he appeared slower than ever of comprehending. Then, as we spoke, he put his hand to his side quickly. All at once he fell down at our feet, with a faint gasp!

"In the keenest surprise and alarm, we tried to bring the man out of what we supposed was a fit. Our efforts proved useless. We half stripped the poor fellow, and chafed his limbs, then sat beside him and waited—waited. In vain—it was no epileptic fit, no swoon. The major had considerable knowledge of medicine and organic diseases, and after more than an hour of the greatest anxiety that I had ever experienced, we realised that the unfortunate man had been subject to heart disease, and was—dead!

"It was a terrible surprise to us, but, as you will at once suppose, this discovery was not so terrible for us as the thought of our position. There we were, deep in the bowels of the earth, absolutely unable to decide which direction we must elect out of a dozen to reach daylight. Our torches were burning out. The time taken to try to resuscitate our guide had told on their length. We had leisurely advanced so great a distance into the cavern's recesses that, even if our course now were a fairly direct one, it would be necessary to hurry, or we might have no light to our feet. As it was, any path back must be a chain of paths. Moreover, if we stayed where we were, it was dangerously unlikely that any exploring parties would be sent to our succour. The peasants would not willingly invade the Bouche by themselves, no matter what view they took of the delay — certainly they would not attempt a search for days. Our guide, we knew, had no immediate family to become alarmed for him; and was, indeed, a stranger in the village, whatever his familiarity with the cavern. Travellers from outside cities were rare in the province, and none had been in the neighbourhood of Vilot that week. With the rigid form of the hapless Antoine between us, Major Buller and I stared at each other in the light of the torches we held, each of us in pallid consternation. Our predicament was strange and terrible. And, above all, how sudden!

"We had, however, no time to lose in examining further into it. We must act at once! We laid poor Antoine upon a flat slab of stone (with small likelihood of his being disturbed, except by our agency, for a long time), then we turned back, up the approach to the subterranean lake. At least, we selected a gallery that seemed identical with that we had before been treading. We hurried along. It was to be, we agreed, a hit-or-miss attempt at reaching daylight: it must be. We recognised few landmarks as we walked, for the very sameness of the cavern's interior offered, as I have said, little to strike the eye. When we came to a place in which there was a choice of directions, by agreement, we made simple chance-work of our decision — unless each of us at once agreed that some feature of the rocky surfaces about us made it more certain that we should turn our steps in a particular way. We were too excited to converse much. Our direful peril hung heavier over our hearts each instant.

"You can imagine—no, you cannot!—how fatigued we became, in spite of our intense agitation and fear. We must have walked miles, when we both began to realise our strength failing, and, at the same time, alas! lighted the last of our spare torches. By our watches it was four o'clock in the afternoon. We sat down and took counsel—where there was almost no counsel to take. Then we rose, and stumbled onward —onward, from passage to passage, rugged gallery to rugged gallery, in threatening succession. We were like lost ghosts in the tombs of the dead—such as the Vilot farmers dreaded to encounter, stealing out from the dark mouths of the Bouche on summer evenings.

"'I can go no further for awhile, major!' I exclaimed, perhaps an hour later, as we dragged ourselves towards the summit of a steep grade in a narrow track that wound and wound, and turned and twisted, in a way to make us despair of its end, indeed. My last torch had burned away, and fell from my hand a

cinder. Major Buller's final one was all we had left, flickering away with a diminished light.

"'Keep up your courage!' he replied, halting on the rock beside me. 'Don't give up! If you do, I fear I shall. We cannot—*cannot* perish here: you and I!'

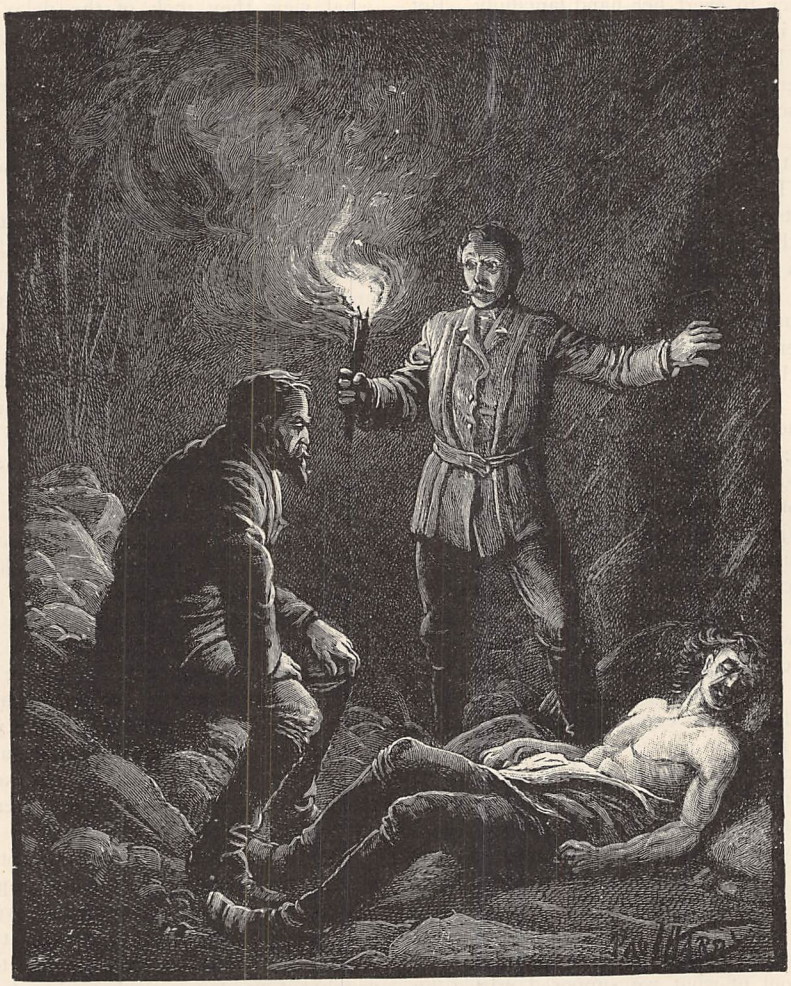
"'Had we not better return to that broader passage—the one that we noticed to the left?' I asked despondently. 'I think this one must end in a dead wall, it contracts so steadily.'

"'Perhaps it would be best,' the major assented. 'I can make out beyond us now only shadows and a rougher path for us to pursue. I've doubted this track for some time. We will wait a moment till we get breath, and then, why, right about face, old fellow, as you say.'

"'But look,' I said, pointing to the shortened torch, 'when *that* fails——'

"'When that fails we will search in the darkness for the way to sunshine,' he answered bravely, 'or wait where we may be overtaken by gloom, and pray. The Lord help us, lieutenant!'

"Just as he spoke a sound came to us. Not a call, not a cheer! No; but a clear shrill whistle from somebody's lips. More surprising still, a French dancing-tune, such as one hears at the rustic fairs where the lads and lasses spin round.



"'HE FELL DOWN AT OUR FEET, WITH A FAINT GASP!'" (*p.* 467).

"'Hark! hark!' I exclaimed. 'Do you hear that? It was a whistle. Listen! It goes on!'

"'Yes! We are not alone! Somebody else is in the Bouche!"

"'Quick! Follow the sound!' I cried, in a sudden thrill of hope. 'It is fainter now.'

"We caught up the torch; we staggered headlong up the passage; we called aloud. The sound of the whistle again came straight down its unknown length. Suddenly the whistle stopped again, but we forced our way along. The rock became closer and closer on

each side until it was like a narrow hall-way for us. Our clothes brushed against it, and we bent our heads. Again that simple fête-melody called us to persevere. Then, all at once, we found ourselves in a new and huge gallery, entered by the narrowest of natural doorways. From where we stood the ground sloped gradually down. Afar off we saw the entrancing, heavenly shining of daylight! And lo! a few rods from us, paralysed with fear, beside a little lantern, was a man sitting on the earth, his face turned towards us. I don't wonder that he was nearly terrified to death at seeing our dishevelled and pale selves, or that (as the poor man afterwards said) all the tales of the demons of the Bouche du Loup came whirling into his honest mind at once. But as we ran towards him he soon realised that we were mortals.

"He was a mushroom cultivator of the neighbourhood, and after we had convinced him that we were not ghosts, he heard our story in amazement and intense satisfaction at being able to end it happily for us. You know that mushrooms have to be grown in dark places to best develop. He had for some years tended several flourishing beds of them that he had planted in the darkness of this particular antechamber of the quiet Bouche du Loup. On his farm was one of the cavern's three entrances, which we saw before us at the distance of some hundreds of yards. He was accustomed to coming boldly in thus far (but no farther) every few days to look after his stock. He was very deaf, and consequently could not hear our calls, and—terrible for us to think of!—he had been on the exact point of leaving the Bouche when we came within earshot of his unconscious signal for our deliverance.

"'I thought you were spectres, gentlemen! Indeed you cannot realise how terrified I was,' he repeated again and again. 'No, I had not heard of any visiting party to the Bouche. Heaven be praised that I came to my mushroom-bed this afternoon, and that I happened to be whistling that little air so loud! Otherwise——'

"We did not urge him to finish. With his escort we quitted our gloomy prison speedily enough—emerging into the yellow sunset light about two miles from the place we had entered the cavern. We spent the night under his roof, and the next day, refreshed and calmed, we returned to Vilot. It proved, as we discovered on arriving at the village, that our escape had been all the less probable, our good fortune all the more wonderful, as it seems that the unfortunate man who had acted as our guide had informed his friend and another acquaintance, before leaving the village, that 'he expected to conduct the two American tourists out of the cave by the exit at M. Perrier's (the grain-dealer's) far across the mountain, and then act as our guide on a mountain excursion in the same district (of which we had spoken with him) before returning to Vilot. None of us were thus to be looked for by the Vilot folk for several days. Major Buller and I would have been dead of starvation and exhaustion in less time.

"In the course of the week another guide was found, and a search-party brought back the body of poor Antoine. He is buried at Vilot. There was no disputing his heart trouble; several peasants testified to its having at times alarmed the man. The exertion of scrambling and walking in the Bouche must have suddenly brought on a last and sudden attack of his enemy.

"After this adventure neither Major Buller nor I cared to remain much longer among the Basses-Alpes. Our Marseilles business recalled us, in any case. We sailed for home not long after. But you can decide, young people, if our adventure in the Bouche du Loup was a thing to be forgotten, as Sam here appears to suppose. And you can also tell why I wear this"—and Captain Ben held out a gold seal dangling from his watch-chain—"a wolf's head, with wide-open jaws, made in gold, as you see; and look, engraved on the creature's tongue, as it rolls out between the teeth, is the date of that escape for which we ought, every day we two live, to be thankful to Heaven. The major had a couple of these made at Tiffany's after our arrival in America, and he sent one to me on the anniversary it records."

AFTERNOON TEA.

THIS pleasant meal has now become an institution, and hostesses vie with each other in furnishing their tables with dainties pleasant alike to both eye and palate; and in presenting to our readers the following suggestions, we are catering for those who, from any cause, are unable to give a dinner or supper party, but do not find it difficult to entertain their friends at a nice meal in the form of tea.

A word, in passing, as to "the cup that cheers." Be it remembered that tea is not a *decoction*, but an *infusion*—therefore, if it stands more than four or five minutes the tannin will be extracted; in which case, no matter how light in kind the edibles may be, indigestion will surely claim some of the party for its own.

Fancy Bread and *Cakes* are certain to be required, and in commencing we will, assuming that at most tea-tables there are some who dare not partake of rich cakes, give a recipe for a *Diet Cake*, than which, if properly made and baked, there are none more wholesome, and few nicer; but, as the method is different from that known as "creaming," as well as from the

still better-known one of "rubbing in" the lard or butter, we must ask for special attention. The materials are :—three eggs, three ounces of castor sugar, four ounces of sifted flour, an ounce of fresh butter, a level teaspoonful of grated ginger, and the same quantity of fresh lemon-rind, also grated. Now for the mode. Put the yolks of the eggs into a bowl with the sugar, set the bowl over a saucepan of hot water (nearly boiling), and whisk the mixture until thick ; then stir in gradually the dry ingredients and the butter, which must be melted just sufficiently to reduce it from a solid to a liquid, but by gentle heat only. Last of all stir in (do not beat) the whites of the eggs, just beaten to a stiff froth. Have ready a tin, lined bottom and sides with buttered paper, pour in the mixture, which should only half fill it, and bake at once in what is known as a "steady oven :" that is, a moderate one, the temperature being even, as nearly as possible, from first to last. When a wooden skewer will leave the centre of the cake quite clean, and it feels firm top and bottom, it is done. It should be a pale brown only. The directions for this are necessarily minute, but once learned, an ingenious cook may make many varieties in the same way. Ground carraway or coriander seeds, as well as that pleasant spice, Jamaica pepper, commonly called allspice, may be substituted entirely, or in part, for the ginger in the foregoing recipe, as they all have the merit of being wholesome : indeed, they aid digestion.

Shortbread is generally liked, though usually made too rich for most people. The recipes which follow will produce real dainties, although of a plainer kind than is often met with. To avoid repetition, we may say that they all need slow baking, as the shortbread ought to be pale, although thoroughly done ; if cut small into any shapes preferred, they can be handed round as "biscuits," and will keep well if stored in tins in a dry place.

For *Oaten Shortcake.* — Put into a bowl half a pound of fine oatmeal, with enough boiling milk to form a stiff paste ; cover, and leave it for a few hours, then add half a pound of flour, two ounces of corn-flour, six ounces of castor sugar, and six ounces of butter, just liquefied by gentle heat ; work the whole into a smooth mass with the hand, then roll it out for use on a floured board. It may be shaped into ovals or rounds, and decorated according to fancy with candied peel in strips, cut-up dried fruits, coarsely crushed sugar, or carraway comfits. The edges should be pinched with the thumb and finger, this being a distinguishing feature of shortbread. It will probably be noted that this mode is not the usual one, the butter being often simply rubbed into the flour ; the fact is, oatmeal requires a long time to cook, and the preliminary soaking in the milk enables the starch cells to swell, thus rendering it more digestible.

Another variety, known as *Royal Shortbread*, is thus made :—Equal weights of flour, arrowroot, sugar, and butter are required—say four ounces of each—the yolk of an egg, two ounces each of dried cherries, almonds, and candied peel, all cut very small, and a pinch of salt. The butter is first rubbed into the arrowroot and flour, just as in making short pastry, then the fruits are put in, and lastly the sugar and egg, the whole being well worked as before. This is very delicious ; it should be ornamented with chopped almonds and fruits.

Cocoa-nut Fingers are enjoyable, and as the nut, grated and dried, may now be had of grocers, there is every facility for indulging in them. The ingredients are eight ounces of flour, three ounces each of sugar and butter, rubbed together ; one ounce of cocoa-nut, and two table-spoonfuls of cream, in which the nut should soak awhile before being added to the other ingredients. The fingers should be three inches long, and rather more than half an inch wide.

German Honey Cakes are very easy to make, and a decided novelty ; it is probable, however, that they will be too highly spiced for most English people, although the cakes we tasted, made exactly as described, were very good. Six ounces of honey and two ounces of butter are to be just warmed together previous to mixing with six ounces of flour, half a teaspoonful of ground cloves and nutmeg mixed, the same of chopped lemon-peel and carbonate of soda ; this is covered with a cloth, and left all night, then rolled out thinly, and cut into fancy shapes. These require a very gentle oven, as does anything containing honey or treacle. A word of explanation is here necessary. We have, in previous papers, stated that the addition of carbonate of soda to cakes, &c., is useless unless it is combined with an acid. In ordinary cases this is true, but cakes or puddings into which treacle has entered are an exception, as an element of both is what we may briefly describe as a "natural acid," which, in combination with soda, creates effervescence.

Chestnut Pyramids will meet with the approval of all lovers of the nut in other forms ; and when making forcemeat or sauce from chestnuts, there will be a good opportunity for a trial baking. Three ounces of chestnuts (previously baked or boiled, and carefully freed from the husk) are to be pounded while hot with two ounces of flour, two eggs, one ounce each of butter and sugar, and a few drops of vanilla essence—the last-named to be added when the mass has cooked somewhat, otherwise a good deal of the flavour will be lost. Place these in small rocky heaps, the size of a walnut, on a greased baking-sheet ; brush them over with beaten egg, and bake in a rather brisk oven. They should be allowed to cool on a sieve, as should small cakes generally, and never taken into cold air immediately. We now pass on to a couple of recipes which, if carried out, will enable our readers to set before their guests something new in the bread and butter line. Both are best if baked a couple of days before cutting up, and are equally good cut into thicker slices, and toasted and buttered in the same way as the well-known "Sally Lunns."

Hungarian Tea Loaf deserves first place. A pound and a quarter of Hungarian flour, two ounces of white sugar, and half a teaspoonful of salt are to be mixed in a large bowl ; in another bowl, half a pint of warm milk (in which three ounces of butter have been melted)

ON SUMMER DAYS.

(*See p.* 471.)

is added to the yolks of two eggs, the white of one, and two table-spoonfuls of fresh barm. With this mixture the ingredients in the large pan must be made into dough with the hand, and left to rise for a couple of hours, then put into a tin—well greased, and plenty of room left for rising. The heat of the oven should be quickest at the first, and allowed to subside during the baking. As soon as the loaf is taken from the oven, brush it over with the white of an egg, beaten up with a table-spoonful of castor sugar; sprinkle it with chopped almonds, then return it to the oven to set, and lightly brown the surface. Dried yeast, half an ounce, may take the place of fresh barm; it should be "creamed" as described in our article on "Home-made Bread."

Scotch Roll is less expensive than the above; ordinary flour, a pound and a half, is used for it, the other ingredients being two ounces each of lard and sugar, one egg, three ounces of sultana raisins, three-quarters of a pint of tepid milk and water mixed, and fresh or dried barm as above: the mode is also the same, but no tin is required, the dough being made into a roll or twist. When baked, brush it over with a table-spoonful of milk and a lump of sugar warmed together.

We will conclude this paper with a few hints on quickly-made *Fancy Bread*, and our readers will remember that expedition is necessary to insure lightness; indeed, only quick workers will be wise in attempting this pleasant task.

Under the above heading we may class *Dough Nuts*. A very inexpensive recipe is the following:—Rub an ounce of butter into a pound of flour, add an ounce of sugar, two teaspoonfuls of *good* baking powder, a pinch of salt, and, if liked, a few currants. Mix this to a very stiff paste with an egg and a little milk—as little as possible. Divide into sixteen or eighteen parts, form them into small balls, then make a hole right through each with the finger, to form a ring. These are now ready for frying, or, to be accurate, for *boiling in fat*: the latter being sufficient in quantity to cover them, and quite hot when they are put in. A few minutes will cook them, and after draining them from the fat, and dredging with sugar, pile them lightly on a dish, and serve hot or cold. The reason the hole is made is that the hot fat may reach the centre, otherwise it would not be sufficiently cooked by the time the outside was done. In cooking they puff up, and the hole closes. These may also be made in fancy shapes—little knots, plaits, &c.

Milk Rolls are similarly made to the above, except that the milk should be tepid, and no egg is required; about three-quarters of a pint of milk will be sufficient for a pound and a half of flour; they may be made small, or the dough rolled out to the thickness of an ordinary rolling-pin, and "gashed" at intervals of two inches. When baked, break where gashed. If brushed over with beaten egg or milk previous to baking, the appearance is improved; egg gives the richer colour, but is more likely to burn. Or they may be brushed after baking; a very good "wash" is the milk and sugar one previously referred to; or milk with a morsel of butter may be used instead for rolls which are intended to be eaten with meat, in which case, of course, no sugar should be used in making them.

Another pretty-looking tea-cake is made by rolling up the dough (made as above) like a roll pudding; this is cut into slices, and baked what we may call sideways: the flat side, that is, being laid on the tin. The rolling should be loosely done, but the outer edge must be brushed with beaten egg, and lightly pressed down, or the cakes will open too much in baking. Glaze them, and sift sugar over before serving.

Scones are perhaps too well known to need a detailed recipe, but we may say that an egg improves them considerably—one to each pound of flour; and the latter, for superior scones, should be at least half Hungarian or pastry flour.

Lizzie Heritage.

ON SUMMER DAYS.

RONDEAU.

ON summer days, 'neath summer skies,
When all the world in sunshine lies,
Through flower-spangled meadow-ways,
A sweet-faced lassie often strays—
A flower that with the flowers vies.

Unheeded by her, upward flies
The skylark with his song of praise;
Unheard the warm wind's whispering sighs,
On summer days.

For she's in love, if I am wise:
And, with the love-light in her eyes,
Beside the stile, where first his gaze
Had shown his heart, she lingering stays,
And dreams until the sunshine dies,
On summer days.

George Weatherly.

"Fairy Revels"

F. Peel, B.Mus., Oxon.

With spirit.

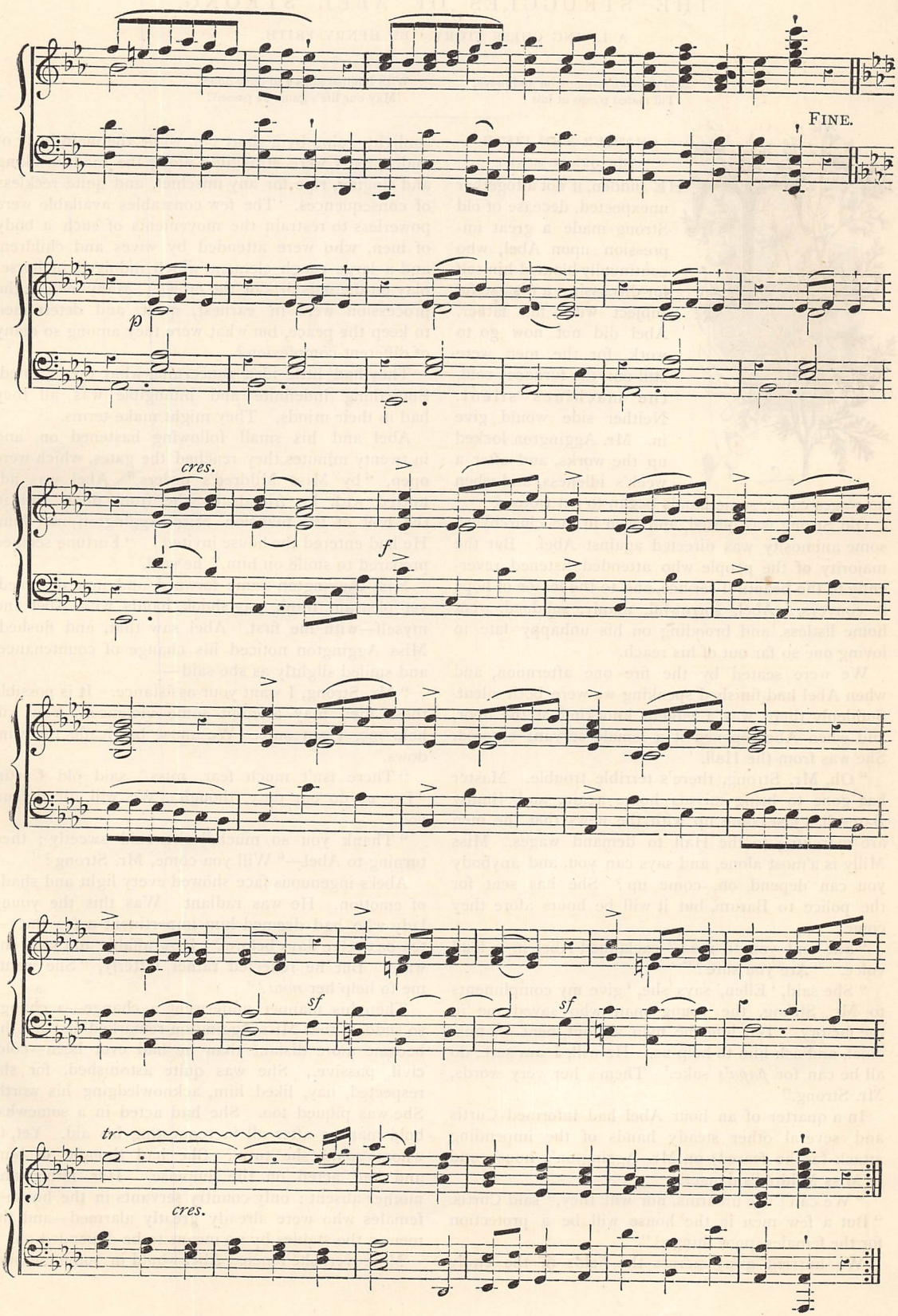
Piano.

mf *sf*

sf *f* *sf*

mf *f*

sf


FINE.
p
cres.
f
sf
sf
tr
cres.

THE STRUGGLES OF ABEL STRONG.

A LIVING CHESS STORY. BY HENRY FRITH.

And then we struggle on and move,
Till mated p'raps at last ;
With fulfilled aims and duty done
May our life's game be passed !

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

THE QUEEN MOVES.

THE sudden, if not altogether unexpected, decease of old Strong made a great impression upon Abel, who continually blamed himself for discussing a distasteful subject with his father. Abel did not now go to work, for the men were still out, the furnaces cold, the machines silent. Neither side would give in. Mr. Aggington locked up the works, and after a week's idleness, and when no wages came, some hands began to get riotous.

Old Strong was buried, and even in the churchyard some animosity was directed against Abel. But the majority of the people who attended listened reverently to the beautiful service, and to the lesson of hope it conveys. Abel, sorrowful, manly, subdued, went home listless, and brooding on his unhappy fate in loving one so far out of his reach.

We were seated by the fire one afternoon, and when Abel had finished speaking we were both silent. Suddenly there was a violent knocking at the door, and when Abel opened it a female servant entered. She was from the Hall.

"Oh, Mr. Strong, there's terrible trouble. Master has gone to bring missus home again, and Jimmy Bates has just come up with the news that the men are marching to the Hall to demand wages. Miss Milly is a'most alone, and says can you, and anybody you can depend on, come up? She has sent for the police to Barum, but it will be hours afore they come."

"She sent you to me!" exclaimed Abel in a loud voice. "Are you sure?"

"She said, 'Ellen,' says she, 'give my compliments to Mr. Strong, the young man who saved me in the factory. Tell him the men are out, bent on mischief, and ask him to help us. He will, I am sure, do all he can for *papa's* sake.' Them's her very words, Mr. Strong."

In a quarter of an hour Abel had informed Curtis and several other steady hands of the impending attack (as he feared) on Mr. Aggington's house, and of Miss Mildred's danger.

"We can't use firearms, nor will they," said Curtis. "But a few men in the house will be a protection for the females, poor things!"

We hurried away across the fields in the chilly sunlight, going by a short cut, while the main body of malcontents were straggling along the road, drinking and singing, ripe for any mischief, and quite reckless of consequences. The few constables available were powerless to restrain the movements of such a body of men, who were attended by wives and children, and a large rough element which indulged in horse-play on the outskirts of the crowd. Many men in the procession were in earnest, quiet, and determined to keep the peace, but what were they among so many of different complexion?

They had little idea concerning what they wanted. Something indefinite and intangible was all they had in their minds. They might make terms.

Abel and his small following hastened on, and in twenty minutes they reached the gates, which were open, "by Miss Mildred's orders." Abel was admitted with his friends by the front door, and in the hall of the mansion Miss Aggington met him. He had entered the house invited! "Fortune seemed prepared to smile on him," he said.

Miss Aggington came forward, and in a dignified, yet pleasant, frank way shook hands with Abel and myself—with me first. Abel saw that, and flushed. Miss Aggington noticed his change of countenance, and smiled slightly as she said—

"Mr. Strong, I want your assistance. It is possible these men may attempt some violence. You will help me, I am sure. We must barricade the windows."

"There isn't much fear, miss," said old Curtis "Let us do our duty, though. We will all defend you."

"Thank you so much," she said sweetly; then turning to Abel—"Will you come, Mr. Strong?"

Abel's ingenuous face showed every light and shade of emotion. He was radiant. Was this the young lady who had deemed him impertinent a few days—ten or twelve days before? How affable and kind she was! But he reflected rather bitterly, "She wants me to help her *now!*"

Then his manner underwent a change—a change so sudden that Miss Aggington remarked it—and he became more distant than he had ever been—cold, civil, passive. She was quite astonished, for she respected, nay, liked him, acknowledging his worth. She was piqued too. She had acted in a somewhat bold manner after all in requesting his aid. Yet, to whom could she turn? She had thought of him, and had acted on the impulse. Her father and mother absent; only country servants in the house—females who were already greatly alarmed—and the men in the stables by no means to be depended on.

Moreover, she fancied Abel would in some measure

understand these men, and so prompt her to conciliatory action. Finally, she had already perceived, beneath the unpretending exterior of the handsome Abel Strong a gentlemanliness of manner and mind which in her estimation placed him far above any one else in the neighbourhood ; and besides, he had already saved her life, and she was grateful.

As preparations were being made, the would-be rioters arrived and demanded to see Mr. Aggington. His daughter boldly replied that he was away from home, and bade them depart. There was grumbling, and then a demand for money. But all could have been arranged had not some of the foremost of the rioters caught sight of Abel. Immediately the information was promulgated a roar went up against "the traitor," and Miss Aggington, too late, perceived the error into which she had fallen.

A burly hammer-man demanded that Abel should be handed over. "We'll trounce him soundly, lads, that we will!" the people declared. But Miss Aggington herself slammed the door in their faces, and in a moment stones came crashing through the windows. As fire rushes along a train of powder, so did the demon of destruction rush from one to another. Passions were let loose. "Pull him out!" "Pull out the traitor!" "Lynch him!" were the cries which reached the ears of the alarmed occupants of the Hall. The storming of the house actually had begun, and there was a smell of fire, when Miss Aggington, crossing the hall of the mansion, met Abel Strong proceeding to the front door.

"Mr. Strong, where are you going?" she asked quickly, with heightened colour.

"I am going to give myself up to those men, Miss Aggington. They must not fire the house. They have done damage enough already. Good-bye!"

"You shall *not* go!" she cried, putting herself in his path, and holding the handle of the door. "You shall not go to certain death! No ; remain here. They cannot get in, and the police will return soon. I am glad mamma is not here—it would kill her. Listen!"

Another volley of stones was succeeded by a battering at the door, and cries for the "traitor."

"You are no traitor, Mr. Strong. I am sure of that. We can escape to the garden and the shrubbery. Come!" said Miss Mildred.

"Let me go, Miss Aggington—go alone if it will save you insult. There, the door is nearly down. Fly—save yourself! The servants have raced away long ago. Be persuaded."

"I will not go without you," she said firmly.

"Oh, do not try me," he cried, almost in pain. "The temptation is too great. Let *me* go out, and do you fly with your domestics. Oh, it is too late!"

"No, no!" she screamed. "This way, Mr. Strong, quick. If you care for me, come—I mean——"

"To the end of the world!" he replied, grasping her hand, which she did not at once withdraw. "Miss Mildred, this is no time for sentiment, but I love you with a love past telling!"

"Hush!" she whispered, as they sped along a dark passage. "We can reach the shrubbery in a few minutes. The door is locked. Oh, what shall we do? I have no key!"

"Is there no other exit?" he asked, as he pulled the door vainly. "Hark, some one is outside!"

A terrible thump as of some heavy instrument succeeded ; another and another. The lock gave way. Abel pulled Mildred flat against the wall. The door was burst open, and a number of men rushed in blindly.

"We have them now," they shouted, as they darted along into the house. Outside it was gloomy, and would have been darker save for the flames from the burning outhouses.

"Run!" said Abel.

"And you too," she pleaded. "Now the way is clear."

"For your sake?" he whispered fondly.

"Yes, for mine, and your own! I owe you my life. I will pay my debt *in full*. For *both* our sakes let us escape."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

MATED.

THE stables were burning, and the Hall was partly dismantled by the angry rioters, seeking they knew not what, save Abel, who, with Miss Aggington and the servants, was already in a place of safety. Curtis and his steady companions, assisted by a small *posse* of constables, succeeded in dispersing the mob, not before the men had done considerable damage to glass and furniture. Abel had escaped them, however. Miss Aggington had proceeded to the inn at Esthamlet, and when I returned to the cottage I found Abel there before me, radiant, and in the highest spirits as he told me what had passed.

Two days afterwards Mr. Aggington himself came to the cottage. He had returned with Mrs. Aggington, and they were living in the back rooms at the Hall, while the windows were being repaired in front. When Abel and I appeared, for I was present, Mr. Aggington grasped his hand warmly.

"Strong," he said, "I can never repay you! Mrs. Aggington sends you her best thanks, and is much desirous to see you. Miss Aggington too is full of praises for you, and cannot estimate your bravery half high enough."

"I am sure, Mr. Aggington, any man would have done as much," said Abel, blushing.

"No, I think not. Now, Strong, I am immensely in your debt. Can I do anything, no matter what, to forward your views?"

"Anything?" asked Abel, with a catching of the breath.

"Yes, ask what you please, and, if in my power, I will do it. I owe you too much already."

Abel glanced at me. I nodded. He got very red, and became greatly embarrassed. At length, standing by the table and fiddling the cloth with his fingers, he said nervously—

"Mr. Aggington, I *have* something to ask—a big

thing, in my estimation. If I can get it, I'm a made man. I have brains and I have application, and I can wait too. Now, sir, listen a moment, and don't be savage. I'm in love with Miss Mildred. Will you let me marry her?"

Mr. Aggington recoiled in surprise. "You marry Milly? Really your assurance——"

"Oh, don't finish yet, sir. Don't! Miss Aggington is aware of my affection, and——"

"You don't mean to tell me that Miss Aggington is in love with one of my own people? Ridiculous! Never heard such rubbish in my life. You are mad, Strong!"

"No, sir. Although only 'one of your people,' Mr. Aggington, I was born a gentleman. My father—ruined by a scoundrel, and my mother's trustee—was poor, but even the *disgrace* of being 'one of your men' is over. I am no longer employed in your factory. My machine is patented—my success is certain. My father's man of business is coming down; he will make you the first offer. I am no longer your draughtsman, Mr. Aggington."

"Nonsense!" was the reply. "I will see Miss Aggington, and meanwhile remember my debt is unpaid. Good day!"

"You hit him hard, Abel," I said. "Did you see him change colour and go livid while you were speaking?"

"I didn't pay much attention," said Abel. "But perhaps the day may come when he will be glad for me to marry his daughter!"

He walked away, feeling considerably hurt, but as determined as ever to win the prize on which he had set his heart.

Matters remained in this state for a few days. Mr. Ferrier, Strong's man of business, wrote to say that he intended to come down soon, and bring Abel some excellent news, which he trusted would quickly reinstate him in his proper sphere. By the same post came a missive from Mrs. Aggington, who wished to see him. Abel carried these letters to me in triumph.

"There! see! invited to the Hall! Good news from Mr. Ferrier! What do *you* think?"

I congratulated him, and he set out for the Hall that afternoon neatly dressed in his new black clothes, and looking really a gentleman, as he undoubtedly was. As regards his reception, I can give no details, but his manner on his return in the evening (for he stayed to dinner) was jubilant. They had all treated him well, and Miss Milly had sung like an angel—"as she is!" he added.

It is rather unfortunate that on only one occasion in these days was I present when Abel encountered Miss Aggington, but being an observer of human nature, I came to the conclusion that she liked him very much. His gentleness and deference of manner, his true diffidence, with all his manly qualities, and his undoubted good looks, influenced not only Mildred, but Mr. and Mrs. Aggington too. Moreover, since that evening at the Hall, it seemed to me that Mr. Aggington was by no means so averse to the match, provided Mildred consented. Would she consent? Would she give up her pride of place, and marry the former draughtsman?

Christmas came and went. Spring had arrived. Abel was prospering. He and I, by special invitation, went up to the Hall. I strolled through the grounds alone after awhile, and in my silent rambles came upon a couple seated in a rustic arbour, hand in hand. Hand in hand? Yes; and the pair of lovers were Mildred and Abel!

When we had returned that evening, Abel said, "I am going to marry Milly. Am not I a lucky fellow? Her father has behaved like a trump; Mrs. Aggington is pleased. Milly loves me after all, and we shall be married next month, I hope: six weeks hence!"

"Married in May," I said, laughing. "It is an unlucky month."

"Unlucky! Nonsense! Milly is enough luck for any man. My patents are all secured; concessions are being sought on the Continent; I shall be a rich man, sir! Mr. Ferrier is coming down soon, but I will not tell him my fortune till he comes. No man ever had such luck as mine!"

I smiled, and trusted all would be well. He laughed, and some days after, when the lady had consented to the fixture of the wedding-day—the 26th of May—Abel was in the seventh heaven. His connection with the factory had ceased, the men had gone to work after a three months' vain struggle, and applauded Abel's machines as highly as they had before condemned them. All were again happy at work, when one day in May a letter from Mr. Ferrier gave Abel the greatest pleasure. He said to me—

"Mr. Ferrier has at last succeeded in unearthing my mother's fraudulent trustee. The scoundrel will be arrested in a few days!"

Certainly events were gathering in a most fortunate way for Abel Strong. A year ago he had been hopelessly in love, a mere draughtsman in an office. His skill and pluck had served him well. People called it "luck" and "chance," but where are luck and chance in this world? No; determination to use one's talents aright, together with faith in Providence, constitutes "luck," as Abel Strong had found. His heart's desires had been accomplished, and he even felt some pity for the defaulter who in his need had robbed his parents many years ago.

Still the law must take its course, and in its course it brought Mr. Ferrier down to Esthamlet. His greeting was loud and sincere.

"I am glad to see you, my young friend. I knew your father for years, and your dear mother too. Yes, at last we will have the man who caused your parents such sorrow. His name was Fordingham."

Somehow I felt relieved, for a curious suspicion had arisen in my mind.

"Fordingham!" repeated Abel. "Where does he live?"

"Not far from here. His name now is AGGINGTON, of the Hall!"

Abel leaped to his feet, with an exclamation of terror and surprise. "WHAT!" he shouted, "are you mad?"

"What is the matter with you, Abel? Do you know the man? I mean intimately?"

"Do I know the man? Why, I am going to marry his daughter in a few weeks! Oh, Milly, my darling Milly!"

We were all silent for awhile. At length the old lawyer said—

"I wish you had confided your secret to me. I had my suspicions, but till a few days ago even I had no certainty that Fordingham and Aggington were the same person. We must proceed gently. The warrant is out."

Abel pushed me aside, and, seizing his hat, went out into the evening, bent on saving from punishment the man who had wronged him, and the girl he loved from the breath of disgrace!

He went alone. We waited till midnight, and he never came. Hour after hour and day after day we waited, and set inquirers on foot, but Abel Strong did not return. Was he dead?

Meanwhile we learned that Mr. Aggington had suddenly been called abroad. He had gone, leaving no address. His wife and daughter still remained at the Hall, and the Works continued as usual.

After a couple of months had elapsed, and the nine days' wonder had in a measure subsided, we in Esthamlet heard that the "Works" were to be turned into a Limited Liability Company, in consequence of the retirement from business of Mr. Aggington, the former owner. The Works changed hands, and Abel Strong, Esq., was the Managing Director.

I remained at the cottage, which Abel had surrendered by letter. He was abroad, it was said. But a few months after the re-arrangement of the Works, Abel appeared again in Westonbridge. His first visit was to me; his second to the Hall.

When he returned he sat down, and told me his errand and adventures.

"I saw him," he said. "You never saw such a state as he was in when I taxed him with the crime.

"'YOU SHALL *NOT* GO,' SHE CRIED" (*p.* 475).

He begged my pardon, grovelled before me, and said he would make any restitution in his power. He had thought *us* dead! The name haunted him, though, and, in his remorse, he looked after me, although quite ignorant of my real identity. He is a very superstitious man. Do you remember that evening when I told him I loved his daughter? Well, *then* he guessed the truth, and did all he could to persuade Milly to marry me. He gave his consent immediately afterwards, you know."

"And Miss Aggington?" I asked.

"Miss Aggington is not his daughter, but Mrs. Aggington's by a former marriage," replied Abel; "so I have seen Mrs. Aggington and Milly, and I am to be married on Thursday."

"On Thursday! Why, Abel, this is Saturday. In five days?"

"In five days. Mrs. Aggington and Milly kindly say they value me very highly. Neither of them knows why we so suddenly went abroad. Mrs. Aggington will join her husband after the wedding, and Milly and I will live at the Hall."

"Then all is right again, Abel?"

"Yes," he replied, in the same quiet, subdued tone he had hitherto employed. "Yes, sir, all is right. Milly will be my wife, and I am managing director of her father's business. Fortune has been kind to me!"

"And have not you been kind to others?"

"Mayhap," he said. "You will come to my wedding, won't you, now?"

I assented very cheerfully. Abel became more like his old self as the happy day approached. On the occasion he was looking his best, and Miss Aggington, in happy ignorance of her stepfather's misdeeds, was charming. She had accepted the postponement of the wedding, as inevitable business had come in the way, and business detained her stepfather abroad! And so Mr. Aitkin, a local magistrate, gave away the bride, at Mrs. Aggington's request.

The wedding was a very quiet one, but a handsomer bride and bridegroom had, by common consent, never been seen in the county. The men from the Works had a holiday, and cheered lustily; their daughters strewed flowers in the bride's path, and when the happy pair drove away, *en route* for Wales, where they intended to pass a short honeymoon, the cheers and good wishes were deafening. They were married —not in May after all—"mated!"

My tale is finished; the game is over. For many of us "life's little chess-board" is but a passing means of amusement; for me it is and was a reality.

So I have shown you one of its phases in the game, bringing happiness and good future to persevering merit and uprightness, through evil report and good report. *Vale!*

WHAT IS CHAMBER MUSIC?

WHEN we discuss chamber music we have in mind a large and important phase of the art, not popular with every musical enthusiast, but more present to the cultured and earnest student and amateur—a phase of music which, happily, is growing more understood and more acceptable. This comes of its satisfying properties. It wants something more than that which pleases the ear to engage the true musicianly mind and to induce reflection, and this chamber music adequately supplies. Some people may regard a set of fellows fiddling away a whole day, hardly allowing themselves a moment for luncheon, as a parcel of lunatics. Consult them! They will tell of the worlds of music they conquer, the fresh realms of art opening out, the ever-varying combinations of colour and outline disclosed, the almost illimitable range of sound which they scan—effects of finely-conceived combination, as when the mellow flute weaves its rich notes in delicious harmony with the tenor violin, or when the more coloured clarinet twines its voice around the dreamy and romantic tones of the horn. These and other ever-new delights are the portion only of the chamber-musician. To-day, when the art has branched off in so many directions, the old distinction that *musica di camera* (chamber music) is all that art-work outside the term *musica di chiesa*, or church music, no longer applies. The old madrigal music, and all that subsequent erudition which found vent on chests of viols, is set aside in the contemplation of chamber music proper. We begin to date matters from "Papa" Haydn's day, from which point the vision keeps clear enough down to the latest contribution of Dvoràk. This survey covers a wide stretch of perfected art, both of invention and practice; and it is surprising how securely it has settled itself into quite a unique world of music.

Chamber music is a growth of form, perception, and realisation which it would not be altogether untrue, though it might be unwise, to define as that species of music which is intolerable to the many. Admittedly it is the product of a filtering process which has surrounded music from the first. The true artistic mind has always yearned after the reasoning or higher properties of music, and this has conduced to that perfect phase of the art known as chamber music. It is only in the quiet atmosphere of comparative seclusion that the highest participation in the tone-world is possible, and when men dwell upon the ethics of the art it is

A SKETCH AT ONE OF THE MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

this chamber music which especially lends itself for mental occupation.

The first form of it was undoubtedly vocal. Venetian doge and English noble sang the madrigal, and gilded and illumined roof echoed to this, the chief phase of private music. Instruments were little known, and those mostly in vogue were carried by minstrels, troubadours, waits, and other essentially out-of-door performers. But in the sixteenth century instrumental accompaniments were added to the madrigal; whether for additional effect, which could hardly have been the case, or, as is more likely, to support the voices which fell in pitch, is debatable. Forthwith appeared *madrigali et aria per sonare et cantare—i.e.*, "madrigals for singers and instruments," "madrigals with various kinds of instruments," &c. It was the same in England as in Italy—works like Alison's "An houres recreation in Musicke apt for instruments and Voyces," and Byrde's "Psalmes, Songes, and Sonnets fit for voyces or viols," increased apace.

The instrumentally supported madrigal did not survive the century. A separation came, and despite the industry with which men of genius and lovers of the art multiplied their voice and viol music, a growing spirit for purely instrumental music asserted itself. Hitherto instrumental art had been far behind vocal; but immediately the new vista opened up, men perceived the wider range of musical possibility and realisation. Vocal music was a bounded field, but the new realm offered a reach with no limit. Instrumentalists—especially those with no voices—scorned the singers, and plumed themselves upon their increasing coteries of purely instrumental music. This breach is important; it drove vocal music out of the chamber, and made the way easy for instrumental art to take its place. It also broke down much of that contrapuntal severity which characterised vocal and even early instrumental music.

It was at the close of the sixteenth century that for chamber music purposes vocal and instrumental music began to part company. Much of that madrigalian austerity which had marked indoor music seemed likely to disappear—for the first writers for instruments aimed at a lighter and more flowing kind of music; they seized the dance tunes. Here and there the folk-songs were selected, but as a rule lute and viol were employed in giving expression to the gaillard and saltarello, or the more decided corante, saraband, and gigue, arranged in "suites" which could be played through, and thus constituted something of a sonata. A pioneer composer was Dowland (1562—1615), famous for his "Lachrimæ"—small pieces in various styles for instruments in five parts. He, too, like Jenkins (1592—1678) composed "Fantasias" for six instruments, called a chest of viols. Another was Allegri (*circa* 1590—1652), writer of a quartet for two violins, viola, and basso di viola. This is the earliest recorded chamber instrument music, and it is worth noting that the English composer was associated with it.

It is a coincidence that the new taste for instrumental art set in just as the world was to be enriched by its chain of greatest composers—that golden period during which all that is grandest and noblest in music seems to have found expression in some one of their compositions. These Titans of music embellished every musical form with their surpassing genius, but in no direction has their masterly labour and beauty of invention been more marked than in that of chamber music. Just a glance at all that these giants of the tone-art have done for it. Take the immortal Beethoven! His quartets for strings, the trios for piano, violin, and violoncello, his sonatas for piano and violin, as well as the famous sonatas for piano-

A SKETCH AT ST. JAMES'S HALL.

forte alone, arouse enthusiasm in every chamber. Other works safe for eternal fame are the septet in E flat for violin, viola, clarinet, horn, bassoon, violoncello, and double bass, and the quintet in C for strings (Op. 29). Haydn as a writer of string quartets is simply matchless. His *naïve* and pointed style charms a whole race of *dilettanti*—enthusiasts who revel in such quartets as the C major (Op. 83), D major (Op. 64), D minor (Op. 76), and the one with variations on "God Preserve the Emperor." The beautiful and emotional element in Mozart's music is nowhere seen with more transcendent grace than in his quartets and quintets, notably the G minor and A major quintets, and the D minor and C major quartets. Then his serenades for oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons comfort the souls of those who yearn for more colouring than strings afford in the sacred chamber. The youth and gaiety of Mendelssohn's rich genius reflects itself in his capriccios, trios, the "Midsummer Night's Dream" scherzo, and many of the delightful Songs without Words; all have an irresistible buoyancy which lifts the listener quite out of his work-a-day world. Spohr is a power. His rich harmonial combination and exuberance of colour appear impatient to disclose their beauty in his quartets, trios, and adagios—all most approved cabinet music. Spohr's nonetto in F major is a marvel of graceful orchestral combination. So, too, are his double quartets, and the C major sextet (Op. 140). Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Chopin with his dreamy berceuse, graceful nocturne, or more highly-coloured mazurka and polonaise—all are requisitioned for the inner temple of music. Here also is Bach! The classic purity of this composer of prelude and fugue, gigue, gavotte, and musette is at its greatest in works like the chaconne in D minor for violin; a prelude, saraband, and gavotte for violoncello; and the D minor concerto for two violins. A kindred master is Handel, whose fame in the chamber rests upon his piano suites, concertos for strings, &c. A notable score is Tartini's "Il Trillo del Diavolo," or Devil's Sonata, an inspiration which its composer is said to have received in a dream. The Italian school supplies also Boccherini, much liked for his playful vein—some of it downright fun; Scarlatti, famous for his harpsichord music; Veracini, Locatelli, Valentini, Marcello, and others. Nor does the English school neglect this delightful realm of art. Sterndale Bennett contributes a few choice works—notably a trio in A for piano and violoncello, and a sextet in F sharp minor. Macfarren is remembered by a quintet for piano and strings; and Purcell, Stanford, Loder, Balfe, Hubert Parry, Onslow, and Mackenzie have written compositions not unworthy of being interpreted at the highest class of chamber music concerts. Hummel, Ernst—famous for his *Elégie*, Dussek, Rubinstein, Raff, Grieg, Bottesini, Molique, Leclair, Dvoràk, and Piatti swell a survey of important names.

The *matériel* of chamber music claims notice. The design is not to shock but to lead the worker on to suitable mood of thought. In a sanctuary of art where perfection of execution, loveliness of detail, and highest mental participation become the aspiration, much that goes to make up outside-world music is not. Noisy and coarse elements are forbidden; each performer is a soloist. Especial care is taken with each part, that the skill of the player, the characteristic quality of the instrument, and the spirit of the composer are at one and the same time brought out to perfection—a zenith in genuine art familiar enough to frequenters of the Monday Popular Concerts, that extraordinary series of performances which for years have been devoted wholly to the cause of chamber music. Hence stringed instruments hold sway, as from the outset, when that household possession a "chest of viols" embraced a set of six fiddles, large and small. The almost illimitable range of tone possible, from the bass viol to the far-reaching violin, eclipsed the madrigal's scope, and it is scarcely surprising that composers made eagerly for a sphere so admirably suited for the expression of their choicest thoughts. The "strings," so alike in family, are yet distinct in individual quality. The expression each is capable of

is wonderful, as all who have heard a Joachim and a Piatti can testify. Their smooth, even quality of tone together or separately, their properties of blending in sweetest contrast, their effectiveness whether in vigorous or gentlest mood, their intensity of intonation when finely manipulated—these and more qualities single out the quartet of strings as the instrumental combination *par excellence*. Much has been achieved by its means, and the *répertoire* of chamber music would be no small one were there only those compositions written especially for the family of strings. But of the many composers who, from the blossoming of instrumental art in the sixteenth century, have adorned cabinet music, there have been bold spirits willing to give new colour, warmth, and variety to string combinations. Bach brought in the organ—quite a family instrument in his day; Haydn the piano—in those favourite trios in G, C, E, and E flat major for piano, violin, and cello; Mozart added untold wealth in his clarinet, horn, and bassoon parts; Spohr favoured the harp; the flute is worthy the chamber on the authority of Beethoven's serenade in D major for flute, violin, and viola; Bottesini pushes the double-bass into the sacred chamber; Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann—these have followed Mozart and Beethoven in recognising wood and reed as fit to join betimes in company with the immortal "strings."

With such instrumental addenda it is no wonder that chamber compositions multiplied amazingly. Much had been done for the four violins, together and separately; treasure upon treasure of string music had fallen from the ready pens of Haydn and Boccherini; now new delights were to mark the advent of reed and pipe. Instantly quintet, sextet, septet, octet, even the nonetto—for Spohr's Opus 31 is such—found favour among writers; and these pieces for five, six, &c., instruments

Astray
from The Christys

have ever since been recognised in the consecrated domain of the chamber, where some have become especial favourites. Albeit the string quartet has always stood safe—unassailable by any other instrumental combination. It cannot be surpassed. The most perfect form of all chamber music, it charms alike those who compose and those who listen to serious music. Many of the forms which play round it are beautiful enough, and to the lover of colour and variety they afford infinite pleasure; but the earnest amateur prefers the purity and grace of the four strings. Get over the quartet, and immediately the domain of the symphony is attacked; the perfect symmetry seems to disappear; there is a loss of that exquisite distribution of parts so possible in the strings. No; give the true chamber musician the quartet for perfect enjoyment. The great masters have expressed their greatest thoughts in this form; and famous artists who perform quartets declare Haydn to be their idol. His quartets are so finely drawn, so exquisitely balanced, so nicely distributed for the instruments, as to win fresh admiration at every hearing from those who know them best. The genial souls who spend hours amid the refreshing atmosphere of the music chamber, they know the ravishing and chromatic Spohr, the irrepressible Boccherini, the passionate Mendelssohn, Beethoven the sublime, the lovable Mozart—but give them Haydn. He affords a perfect sense of satisfaction and completeness. His quartet No. 63, or the 78 and 81, are marvellous examples of perfectly delightful tonal combinations—works in which the student can realise what the family of violins is capable of when under the sway of so great a genius as Haydn.

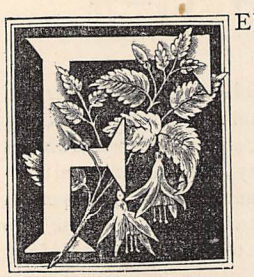
Music, happily, is not confined to one form, either of expression or practice. A variety of beautiful channels present themselves, and among these chamber music satisfies the artistic longing of an ever-growing class of art-labourers. To the composer pouring out his rich abundance of heaven-sent harmony, equally with the

lowlier soul content to listen thereto, this tributary of art offers a means at once delightful and satisfactory. No music is more beautiful than that born in the quiet and even mysterious atmosphere of the chamber. And its effect! No harmonies surpass the exquisitely tempered tones of a quartet for strings by a master-hand. No sweeter stream of melody exists than that of Mozart or Beethoven in their chamber compositions, or in music for violoncello and violin such as Boccherini and Spohr loved to compose. Truly in this realm of art the active musician and the passive listener are admitted to a perfect region of musical pursuit and highest artistic enjoyment. Greater reaches of the tonal art open out to master and student, but in no atmosphere of sound are musical effects more finely drawn, or more deftly conceived, than in this. And what emotional fervour all this music assumes and demands! One sweep of such a genius as Beethoven's and the forces of string music develop into a mighty mental and psychological study, to grasp which is impossible to other than the tried servitor of art. And what a company of such servants there be!

FREDERICK J. CROWEST.

AMONG THE TITMICE.

BY THE REV. M. G. WATKINS, M.A.

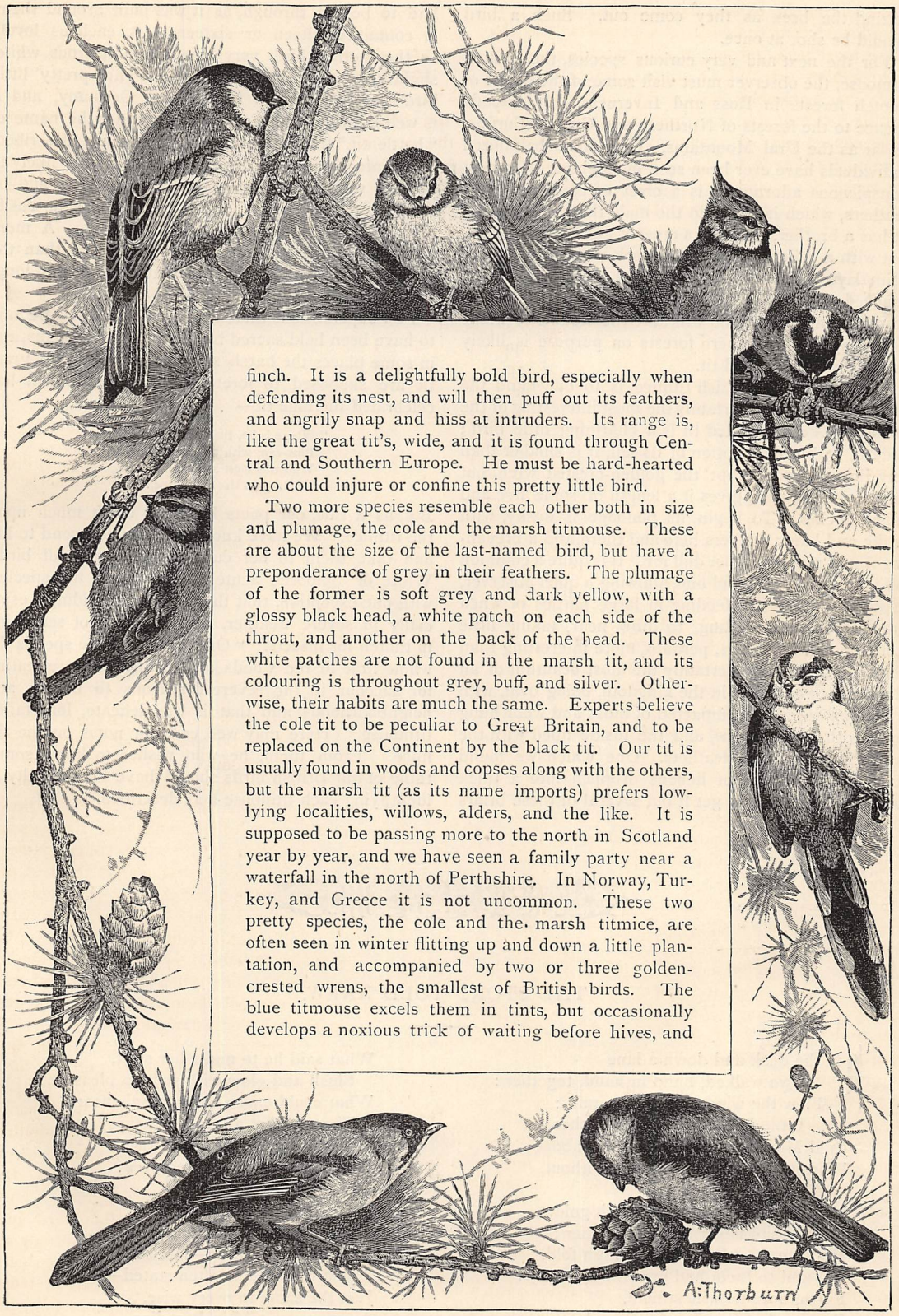


EW sights are more enjoyable to the country-lovers than a family party of tits. This can only be seen when the leaves are off the trees, for during summer the tit and its mate are busy with their nest and their little ones. Directly the trees begin to be stripped, the old birds and their brood, with several other families, draw together, and then is the time to see them in the larch plantations on the edge of a thick wood, twisting in and out between the twigs, hanging head downmost, lightly flitting from tree to tree, and all the time softly chirping and uttering their call-note to keep the flock together. Even more characteristic are they during deep snow in the woods, when no strength of frost seems able to chill their little forms or subdue their dauntless spirits, though much bigger birds, blackbirds and redwings, are found dying and emaciated under the hedgerows, or miserably dead, a mere heap of feathers covering a little bag of bones. The titmice and their associate, the golden-crested wren, fear nothing, and are apparently as blithe as in summer, still splitting off fragments of bark and fir-cones, and strewing them over the snow under their favourite trees. Every one must know a titmouse who has ever noticed country birds. It creeps up and down a tree like a mouse in its method of progression. And yet the bird's name has nothing whatever to do with mice. Philologists tell us it comes from an Icelandic name for a small bird, (we call a small horse a "tit,") and an Anglo-Saxon termination of the same meaning.

Titmice are chiefly found in temperate regions. Nineteen European species have been enumerated, of which the Boreal, the Lapp, and the Siberian titmice tell their own tale. With us the so-called bearded titmouse, a most beautiful moustachioed creature, found in England only in the fenny districts of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, and not very abundant there, is not a true titmouse, and may be omitted from our survey. Six well-marked species remain, and any one with an eye for colour can easily distinguish each of these in the hedgerows without taking their lives to compare them with book descriptions. The true naturalist shoots no small birds. All the titmice, it may be added, are fearless, and if the observer stands still, they will allow themselves to be watched through an opera-glass, which is much more humane than shooting them. A very easy mode of seeing them to perfection is to hang a bone with a little meat on it from the bough of a tree opposite the window. The birds will soon find it out, and their vivacity and activity will be well displayed.

The great tit, from its name, ought to come first, although it is rather smaller than a sparrow. Its predominant tint is greyish-blue, while the head is a glossy black, and a line of the same colour passes under the bird, strongly contrasted against the rest of its plumage. This bird is found through the whole of Europe. It is a bold and strong bird for its size, with the reputation of killing and eating other small birds at times. Professor Newton, however, thinks that it is not often a cannibal, save when caged with others. Insects and seeds ordinarily form its food, and it extends its range even to Turkestan and Persia.

The next to be mentioned ought to be the blue titmouse, or blue-cap, the most abundant, perhaps, and certainly the most sprightly of its family in the British Isles. It even visits town gardens, and is as beautiful as it is lively and active, being much smaller than the last, and thus better able to hang head downwards and perform kindred acrobatic feats. Its predominant tints are blue and yellowish-green. This is a bird much dreaded by the lovers of orchard and garden fruit, as it tears open blossoms, wantonly as many think, but really in order to obtain the insects that would otherwise speedily ruin the trees, blossom, and fruit. The blue tit must not, therefore, be classed with that wholesale bud-destroyer, the bull-



finch. It is a delightfully bold bird, especially when defending its nest, and will then puff out its feathers, and angrily snap and hiss at intruders. Its range is, like the great tit's, wide, and it is found through Central and Southern Europe. He must be hard-hearted who could injure or confine this pretty little bird.

Two more species resemble each other both in size and plumage, the cole and the marsh titmouse. These are about the size of the last-named bird, but have a preponderance of grey in their feathers. The plumage of the former is soft grey and dark yellow, with a glossy black head, a white patch on each side of the throat, and another on the back of the head. These white patches are not found in the marsh tit, and its colouring is throughout grey, buff, and silver. Otherwise, their habits are much the same. Experts believe the cole tit to be peculiar to Great Britain, and to be replaced on the Continent by the black tit. Our tit is usually found in woods and copses along with the others, but the marsh tit (as its name imports) prefers low-lying localities, willows, alders, and the like. It is supposed to be passing more to the north in Scotland year by year, and we have seen a family party near a waterfall in the north of Perthshire. In Norway, Turkey, and Greece it is not uncommon. These two pretty species, the cole and the marsh titmice, are often seen in winter flitting up and down a little plantation, and accompanied by two or three golden-crested wrens, the smallest of British birds. The blue titmouse excels them in tints, but occasionally develops a noxious trick of waiting before hives, and

seizing the bees as they come out. Such a bird should be shot at once.

For the next and very curious species, the crested titmouse, the observer must visit some of the oldest of Scotch forests in Ross and Inverness. It extends thence to the forests of Northern and Central Europe, as far as the Ural Mountains. Only some half-dozen individuals have ever been seen in England. Its most conspicuous adornment is a crest of black and grey feathers, which is larger in the male than in its mate. It has a brother, also with a crest of fine black feathers, but with a yellowish body and dark stripe on it, in the Himalayas, whereas our bird is of greyish plumage, touched with black. Unluckily, no one but a professed ornithologist who will take the trouble to make a journey to the northern forests on purpose is likely to see our rare crested tit.

The last of the British titmice is to our mind the most beautiful, and certainly the most interesting of the family. The long-tailed tit is a charming little bird; indeed, with the exception of its tail, it is smaller than any British bird except the golden-crested wren, but adding its tail to it, gives it a length of some five and a half inches. To begin, its plumage is dusky, with white and black feathers here and there, and a prevailing tint of pink, or rather dull red. It is quite a common bird, and a very trustful one, allowing a quiet observer, especially when it is feeding in large parties or when engaged in nest-building, to draw near, taking little notice. But its nest is, perhaps, more interesting than the little bird. It is certainly the most beautiful of all the nests to be found in the kingdom, being oval, with a hole on one side, compacted of moss and wool hung over with grey lichens, and the inside filled with the warmest and softest feathers. One which we found looked like a bunch of lichens dropped into a thick bramble-bush, and to get it out several of these briars had to be cut through, as it was built around them. It contained fifteen or sixteen eggs, each as lovely as the mother bird, very small, of a lustrous white, slightly speckled with light red. This pretty little bird is found also in France and Germany, and it is well known to all country boys under the name of "bottle tit," from the form of the nest just described. There are, therefore, only five species of tits likely to be met with in England, but all of these should be readily found by every bird-lover, and can be easily discriminated, as we have tried to show. A more charming family to study cannot be chosen than the great, the blue, the cole, the marsh, and the long-tailed tits.

Few superstitions attach to the tits. They are said to have been held sacred by the ancient Germans, and in some places the harsh saw-like notes of the great tit are supposed to foretell rain. Wordsworth has celebrated the blue tit—

> "Where is he, that giddy sprite?
> Blue-cap, with its feathers bright,
> Who was blest as bird could be,
> Feeding on the apple-tree!"

But, as a rule, our poets have not dwelt much upon the titmice. We have known a fox condescend to kill and take them to her cubs, with other small birds. White of Selborne acutely says of all the species, with one exception, that they frequent buildings, especially in severe weather, and are fond of searching in thatch for insects. "One species alone spends its whole time in the woods and fields, never retreating for succour in the severest seasons to houses and neighbourhoods, and that is the delicate, long-tailed titmouse." Here may well end our notes on the titmice. From them, he who wishes to know something of our British birds should have no difficulty in identifying each titmouse here described.

THE STORY TOLD ANEW.

IN the dusk and down a lane
Two walked, hand in hand, together:
Blew the wind and fell the rain;
Little heeded they the weather.
Cold March winds might storm about:
Warmth within mocked cold without.

Had the road been paved with gold,
They had never seen a shimmer;
Had the stars left heaven's high fold,
Night to them had grown no dimmer.
Earth, unto its widest hem,
Consisted of four feet for them!

What said he to make her start,
Flush and glow with sudden pleasure?
What could cause the woman's heart
Then to beat a faster measure?
Why did eyelids, prone to rise,
Hide the light of glowing eyes?

'Twas the story told anew,
Old, yet never antiquated:
Just the same words—just as few—
Just the case so often stated—
Just the same in every wise,
As once was told in Paradise.

J. T. BURTON WOLLASTON.

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

HELEN and Dorothea had lived for the last three years in London. Helen was twenty-one, Dorothea nineteen. Helen had, as she expressed it, fallen on her feet. She was secretary and amanuensis to an editor of good standing, and was well paid for her labours. She liked her work, which she did conscientiously, and with considerable ability. She had a native talent for adapting herself to circumstances, and for filling unexpected niches. The editor of the *Weekly Review* and one or two other papers, found that Miss Channing never required too long explanations, that she quickly mastered any problem set before her; in short, that her mind was of a high-class order, and that she bid fair to take a prominent position in editorial work herself one day. Helen represented a thoroughly well-educated girl. She had studied many branches of literature, and was well-grounded in what she knew. Her handwriting was clear and legible, her spelling and punctuation faultless. She had some knowledge of French and German, and could enter intelligently into most subjects of the day. Helen scarcely considered herself a specialist. "Specialists are narrow," she was heard to say, "they are all for their one calling, whereas I, in my profession, can glance at many things—philanthropy, philosophy, arts and sciences, even the current gossip of the times—nothing comes amiss. Mine is doubtless a happy lot, but it falls to few. There are few girls fortunate enough to obtain the post of secretary to a man like Mr. Russell."

Helen and Dorothea had not come to London penniless; they had a few hundred pounds on which they could draw when times were very hard. This being the case, Helen resolved that Dorothea should work at art so thoroughly and so methodically, that by-and-by she might take one of those positions assigned now and then to genius. Dorothea had remarkable powers; her crudest conceptions had strange new elements about them, her roughest sketches were more or less original. She was a queer, erratic creature herself, very affectionate, very capricious; she had fits of intense laziness, when it became almost impossible for her to work. These lazy times were followed by seasons of abnormal activity. Dorothea rose with the lark, and worked with pencil or brush from morning till night. She sighed and sang over her work, often despairing over her crude images, again rejoicing, and believing that the lamp of genius had been already lighted. Without Helen, Dorothea would have done very little; but whenever she felt most weak and reckless, Helen came forward and showed her how to persevere.

These girls led full lives, and yet in their very nature they were somewhat narrow, for they were self-centred; it needed a person like Emmy Thorn to wake them up, and to show them that there was a palpitating, rejoicing, eager, suffering world quite outside the existences of Helen and Dorothea—a world which would live and move and have its being whether they succeeded or failed. They might throw themselves into it, and sigh with it, and rejoice with it, or they might stand aloof; in the latter case their lives would be lonely, however large their personal successes.

As the two girls hastened home after their interview with Emmy, Dorothea chattered in her usual impetuous fashion, but Helen was very silent. Dorothea was in ecstasies with Emmy: was she not plucky? was she not a pretty darling? was not her story just delightfully romantic? She was engaged to handsome Captain Redfern—of course, everybody knew him—and she was going now to devote herself to the toilsome task of earning money to help her mother.

"She is better than we are," said Dorothea; "she is better even than you, my own splendid Helen, for she means to work and toil for others, and we only work for ourselves."

"For ourselves," repeated Helen, in a voice almost melancholy for her. "No, no, Dolly," she added; then, turning a fine face with a look of enthusiasm on it to her sister—"we work, we struggle to succeed, because we want to join the brave band of those women who have learned to help themselves, and can fearlessly stand alone."

"I suppose we do," answered Dorothea, "and art is delightful, and to have a sister like you, Helen, is almost as good as a husband to any girl. But for all that, I do think it adds to Emmy's charm that she is engaged to such a nice fellow as Captain Redfern, and I hope, when they are married, they will still continue to take an interest in girls like us."

"That time is a long way off," said Helen. "Captain Redfern is in India, and will probably not be able

to come home for years. Although his father is rich, he is the second son, and is not particularly well off. Don't talk to Emmy too much about her engagement, Dolly; she must concentrate all her thoughts now on her work, if she is to succeed."

By this time the girls had reached their own door; they let themselves in with their latch-key, and after they had made themselves cosy over a very nice supper, Dolly said eagerly—

"Why did you feel anxious over Emmy's fifty pounds, Helen? Do you not think it a good sum of money?"

Helen smiled rather sadly. "No, Dolly," she answered. "It is very little money to effect Emmy's purpose."

Soon after this Dorothea went to bed, and Helen prepared to resume the work which had been interrupted by her evening's visit. She wrote steadily for some time, then pressing her hand before her eyes, gave herself up to thought. That thought, whatever it was, seemed to come between her and her weary task of copying. The novel by the celebrated author progressed but slowly, for the young girl's interests were plainly elsewhere. At last, she shut up her task, with a sigh of almost disgust.

"After all," she said to herself, "to make a position in the world—in short, to succeed—is not the whole end of life." Then she went to bed.

The next morning before Dorothea started for her accustomed day's work at the Academy, Helen made a proposition.

"Dolly, you know our friend Miss Phillimore?"

"Our friend?" said Dolly. "Yes. Poor Miss Phillimore—I did not know you considered her a friend, Helen; you have been kind to her, for you could not help being kind to every one you came across, darling; but a friend, that is a different thing."

"She is our neighbour," said Helen, reddening a little, "and she is a good deal to be pitied; you know since she has been paralysed she has only occupied her sitting-room, and it has occurred to me that perhaps she would let Emmy have her bedroom, and would allow her to pay something for it; then we could share our meals with Emmy; for, Dolly, I do *not* think unless some arrangement of this sort is made that Emmy Thorn's fifty pounds will go far."

"Some arrangement of this sort!" repeated Dorothea, when she could find her voice. "Do you really mean it, Helen? How very good of you! I do love Emmy; I have always cared for her, and to have her living with us—only is not our sitting-room rather small? I mean, will not Emmy and I disturb you with our chatter, when you are very busy, Nell?"

"You must learn to be quiet at such times," said Helen, with a slight frown, which was quickly succeeded by a smile. "You had better go to your work now, Dolly, and I will run up to see Miss Phillimore, before I start for mine; if she approves, and says that Emmy may have the room, we can soon rig up a bed for her, and you and I will go to see her about it this evening."

"But what about the novel you are copying for Sir Taylor Mayhew?"

"I will sit up to-night to get it done; now, run off, Dolly; don't wait to listen to another word, or you will be late for your class."

Dolly bustled about in her usual impetuous fashion, hunting in quite the wrong corner for her gloves, declaring excitedly that her hat was absolutely lost, but in the end starting off for her daily work, looking as picturesque and fresh as possible, with her sunshiny face all aglow with happy thoughts, and hopes, and fancies.

Helen washed up the breakfast-things, tidied the little sitting-room, and then putting on her cloak and hat, ran upstairs to the small flat above their own. Her knock at the little hall-door was attended to by means of a wire, which pulled the door open. She crossed the tiny hall, and entered a sitting-room of the same size as the one she and Dolly occupied. It was not tidy like theirs; it was a dim room, the light shut away by heavy curtains, and the furniture of a sadly overgrown description for such a tiny apartment. A sofa-bed occupied the place of honour, and on it lay a woman with a small shrunken face, a peevish mouth, and eyes half closed, as though pain or indifference kept them from opening to their full extent.

"How do you do, Miss Phillimore?" said Helen, in her bright voice; "I am just going out to get through my marketing, before I start for Oliver Street. Can I do anything for you?"

"One twopenny loaf," said Miss Phillimore, beginning to count on her fingers; "a pennyworth of the best milk; be sure you buy the best, Miss Channing. I have two fresh eggs in the cupboard; Lady Martin brought me half a dozen at the beginning of this week. I do not think I want anything but bread and milk to-day, my dear; thank you, thank you very much—that will be threepence."

"You ought to have some fish for your dinner," said Helen, going deliberately across the room, and opening the door of the cupboard. "Your meat is finished, and you won't get strong unless you eat something more satisfying than tea and bread and butter. Shall I send you in a whiting? They are very nice just now."

Miss Phillimore's small eyes opened a shade wider; no one knew how tired she was of tea and bread and butter; but the little purse she held between her fingers felt terribly light.

"No, thank you, Miss Channing," she said, in a reserved and guarded voice. "Just now in the hot weather, I find that meat and fish do not agree with me. They are both a little too heating, my love. An egg, with a nice fresh loaf which you can order, will be just the dinner which I could best fancy."

Helen did not make any further answer, but she went and stood at the foot of the invalid's bed.

"How do you feel to-day?" she said.

"I have a great sense of numbness, my dear; but numbness is scarcely pain."

"Miss Phillimore," said Helen suddenly, "I have a proposition to make."

"My dear—a proposition? I am not quite in a state to hear anything startling.

"This is rousing, but not startling. Would you not like to have a little more money?"

Miss Phillimore's waxen, deathlike face assumed a faint tinge of pink; she clasped that very light purse as closely as she could in her trembling old hands.

"I have never repined, Miss Channing," she said. "Money is God's good gift. He has not favoured me with much; but no one can ever say—it can never be breathed against her—that Susannah Phillimore has repined."

"I was thinking," said Helen, in her clear practical tones, "that you might let that useless bedroom of yours. You know since you have been ill you have liked to stay always in your sitting-room. The bedroom belongs to your suite of rooms, and if you keep the sitting-room you must pay for it. Has it never occurred to you to sublet it? I wish you would think of the idea, for I am almost sure I can get you a very nice tenant."

It was part of Susannah Phillimore's temperament to argue and protest, to raise numerous objections for the sole object of getting Helen to knock them down again; but before that vigorous young lady left her, she had consented that Emmy should occupy her unused bedroom for the sum of five shillings a week.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

HELEN CHANNING was nothing if she was not practical. Thoughts with her almost always resolved themselves into actions; actions were quickly followed by results. The result of her short interview with Miss Phillimore was soon apparent in a cosily-furnished little bedroom, and a bright young girl occupant. Whoever in all the world before had such cause for gratitude as Emmy Thorn? The desire to help her mother had been put into her heart, the means to do so had almost immediately followed, and then the lonely girl had found friends, and a comfortable, cheerful home.

"I am as happy and as safe as possible, darling mother," she wrote. "My money will simply last for ages, for Helen Channing is so economical, and knows so well how to make a shilling do a shilling's work. I have my meals with the Channings, and pay my share of the expense, and it does come to so little. I have a very snug, bright little bedroom, and what with Miss Phillimore, who is a dear old thing, and who likes me to come in and talk to her, and what with Helen and Dolly, and what with my letters to you and Frank, I never know an idle or a lonely moment. But my real work, my real life-work, for in some ways I must call this so, has not yet begun. I will write to you about it later on."

Emmy posted her letter, and that very same evening had half an hour's conversation with Helen.

If Helen was practical, she was also energetic; her very conversation showed this; she was wont to clothe her remarks in short, terse sentences, and she had a way of looking towards her writing-table, and of glancing at the door while she spoke, which gave her listener always the sensation of believing that Helen Channing was in a terrible hurry, and wished the topic in question to come to an end as speedily as possible.

Helen was a kind girl, and would readily do anything for her friends, but this trick of hers often made her unpopular; and even bright, brave little Emmy felt a wee bit alarmed, as she intruded on such valuable time.

"I am ever so snug now, Helen," she began; "I have unpacked my things, and I have become thoroughly acquainted with Miss Phillimore, and know just when she likes me and when she does not like me in her room; and I have got over the strange feeling of living in London, and being away from mother." Here Emmy's voice broke, just a very, very little. "So," she added, with an appealing glance in her sweet face, "I am quite ready to begin."

"To begin what, my dear Emmy?"

"You know, Helen; to seek for employment."

"Helen had been standing, now she sat down, and gave vent to a slight sigh.

"Have you any idea what you would yourself like to undertake?" she said.

Emmy coloured and hesitated for half a moment.

"I do know what I would like," she said then, "but I don't think I will say anything about it just now. I have no doubt it is terribly unwise; what are your ideas, Helen?"

"My ideas," said Helen, "can be put into a very few words." Here, although she tried to keep her eyes away, she did glance towards her desk, and Emmy instinctively rose to her feet.

"Sit down, my dear Emmy; we have a few leisure minutes, and I must discuss this matter thoroughly. It is absolutely necessary that you seek for employment as soon as possible, for even here that fifty pounds won't last for ever. If I had time I would go about with you, my dear, but I haven't, and Dorothea is also busy all day long. I can tell you, however, at least three occupations for women, any one of which a girl, who is brought up as a lady, can undertake with advantage. I don't know a vast deal about any one of the three, but from what I have heard, I believe they do not require any large present outlay, and that in your case is essential, is it not?"

"It is quite essential," said Emmy. "Tell me about them, please, Helen."

"The first," said Helen, "is sick-nursing; you must be trained, of course, and that takes time, and I cannot tell you, for I do not know, how much money besides. But when once you are trained, and proved to be a capable and experienced nurse, you are practically provided for, for life. In other words, you can always earn your bread."

"Yes," said Emmy, taking out a tiny pocket-book with gold clasps, a present from Captain Redfern, and preparing to make an entry—"sick-nursing! I always take a deep interest in sick people; I should like to go to a children's hospital best. Yes, Helen, how shall I make inquiries about sick-nursing?"

"You must go to the hospitals," said Helen, in her clear determined voice. "You must go and state your object, and then you will see one of the sisters or nurses, and they will tell you all you want to know. There is St. Thomas's, and Charing Cross, and Guy's, and the London Hospital. There is a wide field for you in that direction, Emmy."

"Yes," said Emmy, and her soft eyes sparkled.

"Then," continued Helen, "there is type-writing. That is writing by means of a mechanical contrivance. It is becoming quite an employment for women now, as authors, and statesmen, and promoters of companies want such a lot of copying done for them. It is not very difficult, and it costs very little to learn. You would hear about that at the office of one of the companies in Chancery Lane. Then there is chromo-lithography. I know very little about it, but Dolly has a friend who earns her living in that way, and the work seems to be pretty and interesting; Dolly's friend says there is a large field in that direction for clever girls. You might inquire about it, Emmy; I will get you the address from Dorothea when she comes in."

Emmy entered chromo-lithography in her tiny note-book.

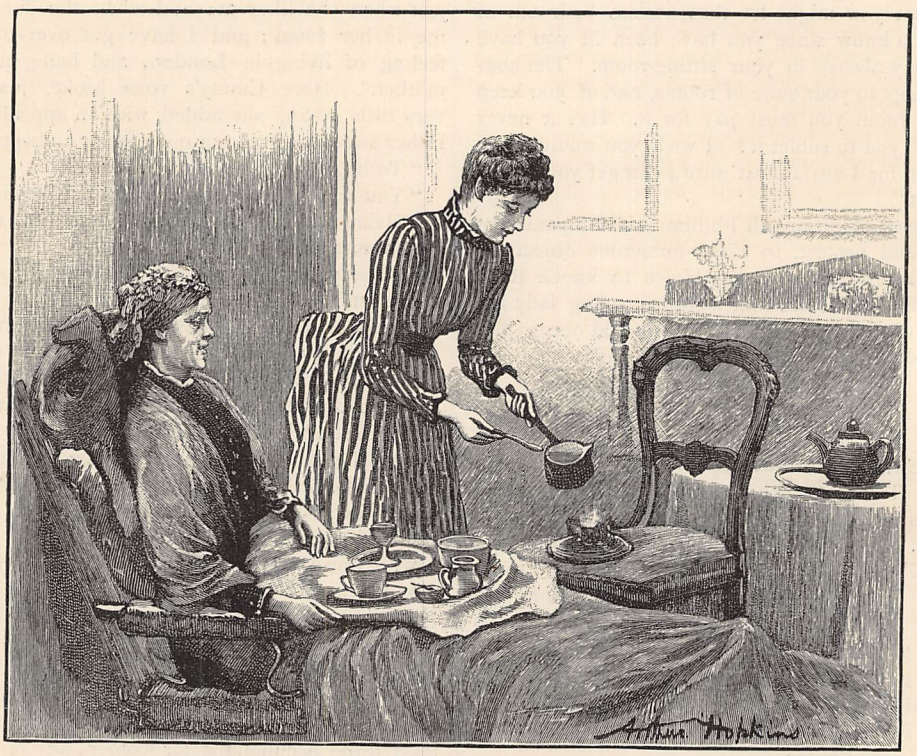
"Those are three employments for girls, Helen," she said. "Are there any more?"

"There are several more, my dear. Openings for women are arising on all hands; the days when women were regarded as idle drones, or as simply pieces of ornament, are gone by. I am thankful those dreadful days are quite over, and woman can take her place as a busy bee, I often think *the* busy bee, in the hive."

Helen spoke with enthusiasm, but Emmy's face was unresponsive.

"I have always been busy," she said at length; "even when I was at home, just helping mother, from morning till night I never had an idle moment. I hate idle moments, and I think I did useful work, for I made mother's life endurable to her; and the boys always came in, in the evening, when I was there, because I was so fond of reading story-books aloud; and I could help Bertha with her studies, although Bertha is much cleverer than I am. I shall have different work now—that is all, but I never at any time was a drone; I don't see how a good woman could be that."

"There are drones and drones," replied Helen sententiously. "If you have no objection, Emmy, I must now do some writing. I am copying for an author who is old-fashioned enough to dislike the type-writer, but I am firmly convinced he is the last of the race. If you take to type-writing as a profession, Emmy, you will soon know far more of the plots of our great authors before they appear than I shall."



"IT WAS A DELIGHT TO THE LONELY WOMAN TO LOOK AT HER" (*p.* 490).

"That would be interesting," cried Emmy, as she left the room.

She went upstairs and read to Miss Phillimore. Miss Phillimore pretended to dislike fiction, but when Emmy declared stoutly that she would read her a story or nothing at all, the good woman submitted to what she expressed as "the caprice of my young friend," with a fairly good grace, and Emmy observed that she was soon far more interested in the story in question than she was herself.

The next day Miss Thorn started off, a brave though lonely little figure, to find, as she expressed it, her fortune.

She was a very intelligent and observant girl, and although she had been scarcely a fortnight in London, managed to get herself conveyed to Chancery Lane without any great difficulty. She found the number of the type-writing establishment, and a moment or two later was in the presence of a quiet-looking, kind-mannered woman, who asked her to sit down, and did not notice the trembling of the young voice, nor the added colour which rose to Emmy's cheeks.

"Can I help you?" said the lady; "can I give you any information?"

"I want to earn money," said Emmy. "I have been told that girls can earn money now by type-writing. Is that so? and if so, can you, will you, teach me?"

Certainly Emmy was not the least like the conventional young lady who endeavours to step into the ranks of labour; she was all softness and dimples, and timid smiles, and she looked exactly as if a blow or hard word would fell her to the ground.

"Poor little girl!" thought Miss Martin, the Superintendent of the establishment. "She is not fit to enter the battle of life, she ought to go home to her mother; or better, far better still, she ought to have a good husband to guide and govern her. How exceedingly pretty she is!"

"My dear," she said—rapidly, for her thoughts did not at all interrupt her speech—"our establishment is very full, and even if we teach you, which we will do with pleasure, we can by no means promise you employment. You must take your chance, and will be put on our books in case a vacancy should arise. Now, do you mind my asking you a few questions? Have you any means, or are you dependent altogether on what you may chance to earn?"

"I have a little money for the present," said Emmy; "not a great deal, but something. When that is gone I must depend on myself."

"Ah, yes; thank you for confiding in me. I will trouble you with one more question. Why do you select type-writing as a possible means of support?"

"I have been recommended to come to you," said Emmy, and here she coloured deeply. "I don't really know anything about this special employment," she added, "except that it sounds easy."

"Oh, it sounds easy, and you don't know anything about it," said Miss Martin, who could not help throwing a little sarcasm into her voice. Surely such country ignorance was only safe with its mother! "May I ask if you know shorthand?"

"No," said Emmy.

"That is a pity. Shorthand is a most invaluable accomplishment for the professional type-writer; a girl who understands shorthand and type-writing is almost always in requisition, and can earn as much as three pounds a week. You have some knowledge of languages, I hope?"

"I can read French—I cannot speak it. Oh, no, I am so sorry I never had any opportunities for studying German—and Spanish, no, I don't understand Spanish."

"These languages are very useful in our profession," said Miss Martin, rising, "and give the girl who knows them a great pull over the girl who does not. Well, Miss——"

"Thorn," said Emmy.

"Miss Thorn, we shall have much pleasure in training you here on the ordinary terms. That means that we will give you six weeks' instruction from 9.30 to 5 daily for the sum of two guineas. At the end of that time, if you are neat and clever and accurate and above all things painstaking, you will probably be able to use the machine with a certain amount of dexterity. As to our finding you employment, that, as I said before, must depend on our vacancies, and as you neither know shorthand nor foreign languages, we shall be obliged to place you low on our list of candidates. If you are lucky enough to become a member of our staff, you may, after a time, earn wages to the amount of a guinea a week, or a little over. Will you decide now to come here to be taught, or would you rather think it over?"

"I will think it over, and write to you if I may," replied Emmy.

With burning cheeks she left the office.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

"I MUST not be a type-writer," she said to herself, as she walked down the Strand. "It means work at first, and no money—no *certainty* of money at any time, and at the best but small pay. Type-writing will not be the profession that makes Emmy Thorn rich and famous, and lifts her mother and her family and some one else out of the reach of poverty for ever. Ah, Frank, you do not know that I am working for you, too, when I try to seek my fortune in this great London. Now then, where shall I go? Perhaps I had better try the chromo-lithography, for Helen spoke of that special profession as very refined, and interesting, and artistic—although I am scarcely an artist," added Emmy to herself, with a little sigh.

She called a hansom, and drove to the address in her note-book, but here again disappointment awaited her. She was kindly received, and given plenty of information, but the result of this information was that for her, at least, chromo-lithography was even more impracticable than type-writing. A technical knowledge of drawing was absolutely indispensable, and all students were obliged to pass through an apprenticeship at the Royal Female School of Art in Queen Square.

"This profession requires even more time and more money to enable a girl to take it up," thought Emmy. She thanked the kind lady who had answered her many questions, and went away with a very sinking sensation at her heart.

"Now for nursing," she said, "and then I shall have completed the list of those advantageous callings for girls which Helen has mentioned. Oh, how tired I feel, and how little inclined to do anything but lie back in the rocking-chair in mother's little parlour, and wonder if the next post will bring me a letter from Frank! By the way, what an age it is since I have heard from that naughty boy! He did not write by last mail, nor by the one before. Well, mother may have got a letter for me by the mail which arrived yesterday, and if so she will be sure to forward it at once."

Emmy smiled at this thought, and quickened her steps.

"A letter may be waiting for me at home," she whispered under her breath. "What a rested heart I shall have after I have read it!"

Emmy Thorn was a very thorough-going, matter-of-fact little creature, and she went about her hospital inquiries with spirit. The hospital life, as described to her by the sisters and nurses, seemed full of interest, but to earn a living as a nurse required what appeared to Emmy a large present expenditure, and the results when fruition came would be only sufficient to maintain herself.

"I should like it—I should love to help you with your sick babies," she said, tears springing to her eyes, "but the life is not for me; I have come to London for another purpose. I must not think only of myself. If I were alone in the world, then I would come to you to fill and satisfy my heart."

The lady to whom Emmy spoke looked at her with interest, and said, with much feeling—

"I believe you are cut out for a nurse. I wish you could see your way to joining us."

"But that would mean that I should have to go through great trouble," said Emmy. "That would mean fearful loss to me. I do not mind telling you that I am engaged to be married, and that now I want to help my mother."

Troubles never come singly; this is a true saying, and its truth has been tested by almost every one. Emmy had had a day full of disappointments, but she pictured a very sweet home-coming, for surely Frank Redfern's letter would await her, and he would explain why he had missed the last two mails, and in short make her feel quite cheery and comfortable and brave again. There was certainly a thick letter waiting for Miss Thorn, but it was one of Bertha's effusions, and contained no Indian enclosure.

"I did not know I had a temper," thought Emmy. "It is quite horrid of Frank not to write. No, I won't read this at present, for I feel so bad;" and she tossed poor Bertha's letter to the other side of the table.

She was standing in her tiny little bedroom, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Mother warned me that I should have fits of low spirits," she said to herself, "and of course this is one of them. I was so sure Frank would have written. Well, no doubt there is a good reason, and I must fight off the dismals, and have fresh occupation. No, I am not quite fit for Bertha's budget of home news yet. I'll just go and see if Miss Phillimore wants anything."

She brushed back her soft hair, washed her hands, and looking neat and fresh, and not the least tired, tapped at her neighbour's door.

"It's Emmy Thorn. May I come in?" she demanded.

There was a rather hoarse response from within, and Emmy entered.

Miss Phillimore raised a flushed face to greet her young visitor. She was busily engaged boiling an egg for her supper over a small "Etna" which stood on a chair by her side. The occupation was heating, and not without danger, for Miss Phillimore was very feeble, and the smallest tilt of the little machine would have sent it over, when disastrous consequences would certainly have ensued.

Emmy flew like a little bird to the rescue.

"The idea of your tiring yourself like this!" she said. "Now there is nothing I should love so much as getting your supper for you; and let me open the window for you, and draw down the blind. "Oh, how hot you are! Yes, it is a hot day, but this room is close as well as hot. Now, is not that better?"

Miss Phillimore's back ached badly, and she was only too glad to have the sun shaded from her eyes, the hot "Etna" removed from her side, and a pleasant, fragrant little tea prepared for her by another. That other, too, looked so fresh, so charming, so pretty, that it was a delight to the lonely woman to look at her.

"My dear, how good you are to me!" she said with sudden effusion. "You are better even than Helen Channing."

"I think you are mistaken," said Emmy. "In many ways I never saw so noble a girl as Helen, but she is busy; every moment of her time is occupied."

"Precisely so, my dear. It is that sense of hurry which always puts me into a fret when she comes into the room. I, to whom time is so much too long, am oppressed by it. Now you, Miss Thorn, are never in a hurry."

"I have nothing to do at present," said Emmy, with a little sigh. "But in any case to hurry is not my way. I understand what you feel about Helen, and I wish she would not look at the clock so often."

"You are a dear little thing," said Miss Phillimore, kissing her. "Sit down by me now, and tell me all about your adventures."

"My adventures," answered Emmy, with a smile which was outwardly very bright and allowed no one to get a peep at the heart-weariness which she really felt—"My adventures can be summed up in one word—failure. Type-writing would only be successful for those girls who have accomplishments and acquirements about which I know nothing.

Chromo-lithography is for artists, and Dorothea Channing might take it up with advantage and profit; and nursing! that seems to be the profession for a lonely girl who has no mother to love, and no particular future to look forward to. That also is not for me."

"My dear," said Miss Phillimore, who was by no means altogether selfish, or unobservant, and who recognised the tired ring in the brave young voice, "I never did know any one who could cook an egg to such perfection as you have done. And this cup of tea—ah, yes—you made it with the water when it came to its first boil. I know, my dear, I know. These are considered only little things, but they make an old woman comfortable and happy. If you had not come in, I could not have touched the meal I was preparing for myself. Now I am enjoying it, and my back won't ache so badly to-night. It is very good to be clever at little things, and I dare say that type-writer who knew languages so perfectly would have made a sad mess over my tea."

Emmy smiled. "All my life I have been accustomed to this work," she said, and then she added affectionately, "It does me the greatest possible good to hear you talk like that, Miss Phillimore; and now I am going to reward you by letting you into a secret of my own."

Miss Phillimore's face was quite cool again, and she looked refreshed and happy.

"What is your secret, dear?" she asked kindly.

"Why, I expect I shall have to earn my bread in my own way after all."

"Ah, my dear, and what is that?"

"It will do me good to tell it to you first, for I am really quite shy about it. I know how Helen will look, and even Dolly, dear darling! she will think me sadly presumptuous. Miss Phillimore, crowded as the ranks are, I mean to try to join the noble band of authors."

"An author—oh, my poor child—a journalist, you mean, a literary hack. But are they not always very badly paid? A penny a line, I've been told, or something of that sort."

Emmy's face flushed. "I did not expect *you* to be disagreeable," she said, laying her pretty hand on the old woman's. "Do go on being nice and charming, as you were just now about the tea. You don't know how I rest on you, Miss Phillimore. Of course, Helen will have to discourage me for my own good, but I shall look to you for the little word of praise and the little kindly nod which mean so much."

"You shall have them, dear child. I am sorry I even began to throw cold water on you. You are to be an author—that means that you will write. Well, my dear, what? Poetry?"

"No, I cannot make verses—but all my life I have told stories, and I have also written them. Now, I want to study, and write with system and observation. I want to fill myself with a theme, and then I believe I can put it on paper. I have made my own brothers and sisters both laugh and weep. Perhaps they were a prejudiced public, but they were certainly also critical, for one's own people, as I dare say you know, Miss Phillimore, are always delightfully frank."

"I had twelve brothers and sisters," said Miss Phillimore. "We used often to quarrel, and then we made it up again. The reconciliations were delightful, and there is no doubt we rubbed off each other's angles. Yes, there were twelve of us, and I am the last left—I will tell you my story some day. But now, dear, to go on with your concerns. You must read me one of your stories—I can quite believe that they are life-like."

"No, I will not read you one of the old stories, but the fresh one that comes to me through observation, and through watching my new life and surroundings—that you shall be the very first to hear. I always had an idea and a hope that I might take up this particular work, but I knew that it also required study and severe application, and so I came to London to find the advantages which were not mine in the country. Helen may propose some other occupation for me, but I think, after all, I had better try my fate as a writer. When I have written something that moves me very much, then I will read it to you; and if you, too, approve, then I will begin to look out for a publisher. Oh, I am sure the life will be full of interest, and I shall be working on the lines I have always loved."

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

WHEN Emmy joined the Channings that night, she found them in considerable excitement over their own affairs. An offer had been made to Helen which tempted her sorely. Mr. Russell, the gentleman whose secretary she was, required some one to go to America for him, to make notes on a literary subject of large importance. Helen was well versed in the subject in question. She had heard it discussed at his office from its very commencement, and as he could not possibly leave England himself, he was anxious that she should go, make his inquiries for him, take the necessary notes, and bring him back the desired information by the end of the year.

It was a tremendous undertaking for so young a girl, but Mr. Russell said, frankly, that he knew no man of his acquaintance who would execute this special task so thoroughly. Helen was grave, self-reliant, old beyond her years; and she would be furnished with introductions of such a nature, that when she arrived in New York her difficulties would be smoothed step by step. During her stay in the States, she would be the guest of friends of Mr. Russell's; and her expenses would be paid, and in addition, she was to receive for the time of her absence double the salary she now had.

"If you go for me, and if you succeed—and remember, the affair requires nice tact and diplomacy—your reputation will be made," said Mr. Russell, smiling kindly at his young favourite. "Go home and think it over, and come to me prepared to say yes, to-morrow."

Helen felt her head in a whirl, and under such cir-

cumstances Emmy's small affairs most naturally sank into the background.

"Of course you will go," said Dorothea. "It is perfectly splendid. Just the thing to set you up, Nell, and you know, whatever you may say, you are looking rather fagged lately."

"Nonsense," said Helen, almost sharply. "I am perfectly well. There never was a stronger girl than I am." Then she added, her voice softening, "I thought you would miss me so dreadfully, Dolly. I thought you would be the very first to say, 'You cannot possibly leave me.'"

"I am not selfish," said Dolly, colouring. "At least, I mean, how selfish that would be!"

Here her large violet-blue eyes filled with tears.

"I have got Emmy," she continued, after a pause. "If Emmy and I are together, I shall not be lonely; and I never could bear, I mean I never could know a happy moment if I stood in your way, Nell."

"I have thought of Emmy," said Helen, as she helped herself to another cup of tea. "Her being here certainly makes a difference, and then, if I go, I need not touch our balance at the bank, for I shall have earned quite enough to support us both for some time to come, and also to pay your art expenses, Dolly."

"Of course you will go," said Dorothea, "it would be very wrong, very wrong indeed, to lose such an opportunity; and you know Helen, when we started on our own account, and came up to London against the wishes of those two tiresome old aunts of ours, we solemnly declared that we would not let our affection for one another, or anything soft and sentimental of that sort, stand in the way of our ultimate good."

"You mean," said Emmy, speaking for the first time, "that you, Dorothea, are willing to let Helen go because you love her so much, and Helen is willing to go because she loves you—that is what you really mean, is it not?"

Emmy's face had flushed, and her voice was quite anxious.

"Why, Emmy, what is the matter?" asked Helen. "You look absolutely distressed, my dear."

"So I am," said Emmy boldly, "for I hate to hear affection spoken of in a slighting way. Is it not our life, the whole of our being? You spoke just now, Dolly, of love as though it were a weakness to be ashamed of, whereas you know, you must know, that it is a strength to be gloried in."

The two girls stared at the little speaker in astonishment. Dolly said—

"Oh, how you have taken me up, Emmy!" but a beautiful light came into Helen's fine face, and she said in a low voice which vibrated with feeling—

"Thank you, Emmy, for putting us right."

After this little episode, the Channings had time to discuss Emmy's own affairs. She related the experiences of the day with spirit, and then, warmed and animated with her theme, boldly announced her own proposition, to try to earn money in the way she loved best.

It may have been the thought of the American trip, or it may have been something else, but to her surprise Helen scarcely said a word in opposition.

"People like you," she said, "almost always do succeed—I have often noticed it. At first outsiders are apt to consider girls like you weak, but I have read your character during the few days we have been together, and I believe you have both firmness and strength. You don't really yield, you only appear to yield. A girl like you is sure to do best if she is allowed to follow the calling she loves, for a girl like you is sure to have very strong likes and dislikes."

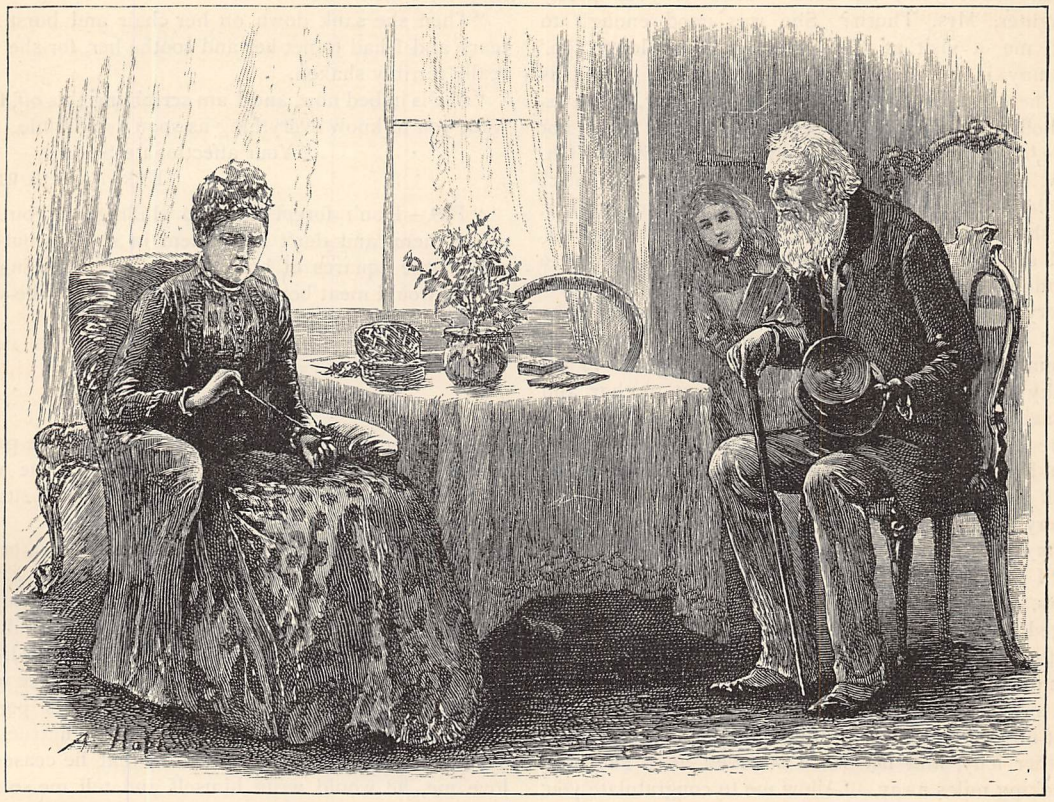
"Oh, but I don't dislike any one," said Emmy.

"Not yet," said Helen, shaking her head emphatically, "but given certain conditions and you could be a very fierce hater, my dear. Now, if you have really made up your mind to write a book, and then to offer it to the public, we had better get you a ticket of admission to the Reading-Room at the British Museum. That Reading-Room is an untold blessing for girls and men who want to study. You can have easy access to almost every book in the world, and you will be yourself in the atmosphere of work. Dorothea and I studied there for a year, and we were happy, were we not, Dolly?"

"It was delicious," said Dolly. "We had our own desk each, and our own special snug little corner of the table, and our books were kept for us day by day; the attendants were so kind, and as for the superintendent, I have a very soft place in my heart for him still. You will like the Reading-Room, Emmy, you will feel that you must write when you get there. Oh, my dear, do produce a lovely book soon, and let me illustrate it. Would it not be just perfect, Helen, if I illustrated Emmy's first book?"

"Emmy's first book," echoed Helen, and a curious expression crossed her face. "It is not written yet, and then—then—it has to find a market. But I tell you what I will do for you, Emmy: if the book when written proves worthy, I will introduce you to Mr. Russell—he is the very best person to give you advice with regard to it. And now," she added, with a sigh, "I suppose all the breezes of circumstances are wafting me in the direction of America. You, Emmy, and you, Dolly, can spend your mornings and evenings together, and as far as possible you can have your meals together. I should recommend you in some things to share one purse. Oh, I can put all the housekeeping on a comfortable footing, and, of course, I shall be home before you have time to miss me."

After this the girls had a long and eager consultation, and it was late before Emmy went to her room. She felt a good deal excited, considerably animated, very hopeful, but she was conscious of a little chill, and a queer revulsion of feeling, as she saw Bertha's unread letter, lying where she had tossed it on her dressing-table. The same bitter sense of loneliness and disappointment, which had oppressed her when she saw that the letter in question contained no enclosure from her lover, again caused her heart to sink. She sat down by the side of her bed, and pulled out of its envelope Bertha's closely-written and somewhat untidy scrawl.



"NEITHER SAYING WHAT THEY WANTED TO SAY."

The opening portions of the letter contained the usual home news: how she, Bertha, had won a prize at school, and how very tired mother still looked, and how noisy and unruly the boys were in the evening, because there was no Emmy to keep them quiet and amuse them.

"Mother," said Bertha, growing eloquent with her theme, "will *not* give herself any of the little comforts which you wished her to have. I sometimes cannot think what is the matter with her; we never had large means—I know we were always awfully poor—but mother seems afraid to spend a halfpenny, and I really do think, Emmy, she does not eat enough; she won't do what *I* tell her, of course, and she pretends she's not hungry, but I know better. I do wish you were back, and that it was not necessary for you to go to London to make money to help us all. Have you made much yet? Have you sold any of your stories? I wish you would send me a shilling or two when next you write, for I want to buy some cheap lace to make tuckers for my school frocks. I *do* call it a shame that I should be the shabbiest girl in the school. I *do* hate being poor. Oh, Emmy, I was just forgetting. *Who do you think called on mother to-day?* No less a person than the great Sir Percival Redfern! He arrived in all his splendour—in that poky old carriage of his with the yellow wheels. Mother was mending some socks for Bob when he marched into our little parlour. Mother motioned to me to go away, but I pretended not to see her, and kept my head well down, and appeared to be awfully busy over my French exercise. I am glad I did stay, for I heard every word the old wretch said, and now I'm able to repeat it to you, for it is extremely likely mother would have kept it to herself; she is always so afraid of paining people, particularly her own children, but that's not my way. I say, let's hear the truth at all hazards, so I will just tell you now exactly what Sir Percival said. You need not fret, of course, for it is safe to be a falsehood, but I want you to know what an old wretch your beloved Frank's father is. Well, he sat down on a chair opposite to mother, and was *so* polite, and he said, 'It's a long day since I have seen you, cousin.' Mother got quite rosy when he said 'cousin,' and I kept my head very well down, for I was dreadfully afraid I should be dismissed, and so lose the fun. Mother said something quiet in that dignified little way of hers, about their not meeting being Sir Percival's fault, and then it was his turn to be uncomfortable, and I made a noise like a hen clucking, for I was so delighted that I forgot myself, and I was all but sent out of the room, only I wasn't quite. Then they talked, you know the way, as stiff as possible, and neither of them saying

what they wanted to say, until at last Sir Percival asked about *you;* he said—'How is your pretty daughter, Mrs. Thorn? She was good enough to pay me a visit at Corcastle, not very long ago.' 'Emmy is quite well,' answered mother. 'And is she here?' asked the old hypocrite. 'For, if she is, I should like so much to see her again.' 'She is not here,' said mother. 'She is in London. She'—(Oh, how soft and interested the old villain *did* look! his looks seemed to draw mother's heart out of her, for she went on)—'Emmy has been left a little money, and she is a dear, brave child; and she has gone to London to try to make a little more to help me.' 'Very wise of her,' said Sir Percival, tapping the floor with his gold-headed stick. 'Very, very, uncommonly wise.' Then he stumbled up on to his shaky old legs, and he looked down at mother, and he said, in a most off-hand manner, 'By-the-way, I believe you have some slight acquaintance with my son Frank.' 'Certainly, we know Captain Redfern,' said mother. 'Oh! then you will be pleased to hear a very happy piece of information with regard to him; he is engaged to be married.'

"I was very nearly saying, 'Thank you for stale news, old hypocrite; your son Frank has been engaged to our Emmy for a year and more,' but mother looked up at me so pale and beseeching, so I just drove the nails into the palms of my hands, and put myself to good sharp pain, I can tell you, to keep that impulsive tongue of mine quiet. 'Indeed?' said mother icily, and her voice sounded as if she were speaking miles away. 'Allow me to congratulate you, if the news is true!' 'True, my dear madam—true!' said Sir Percival, 'the news is as true as gospel. Frank, lucky dog, has gone and engaged himself to General Sir Harry Hotspur's daughter—a fine lass, just eighteen, and will have a very tidy fortune of her own. Ah, I always said that Frank was the boy who would set Corcastle on its legs again.'

"'But not by this marriage,' said mother, who had suddenly got back her colour and her spirit, 'for you know as well as I do, Sir Percival, that your son has been engaged to my little daughter for a year and more.' 'Oh, pooh, a boy and girl attachment,' said Sir Percival. 'Well, that is at an end, anyhow, now, for I have heard this good news from the boy himself, and by-the-way this brings me to the principal reason of my visit here to-day. I want your daughter to send me back that ring which Frank gave her; she, of course, has no right to wear it now, as it is a family heirloom, and for that reason is of value. Will you get it back for me, Mrs. Thorn? Tell that wise, sensible little girl of yours that I will give her five pounds for it—there, do you hear? Five pounds!' Then the old wretch waddled out of the room, slamming the door after him, for you may be quite sure neither of us showed him into his carriage.

"'Bertha,' said mother, the moment we were alone, turning to me with her cheeks flushed and her eyes shining, 'you quite understand that I don't believe a word of this?'

"'You would be a horrid old woman if you did, mother,' I answered.

"Then she sank down on her chair and burst into tears, and I had to pet her and soothe her, for she was really terribly shaken.

"She is in bed now, and I am scribbling this off, for I want you to know everything as soon as possible.

"Your affectionate Sister,

"BERTHA THORN.

"P.S.—Don't forget the two shillings if you can spare them, and don't send them in stamps, but cut some little squares of bread and slip the shillings in as you would meat between a sandwich. By-the-way, no letter has come from Frank by this mail."

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

EMMY'S fingers did not shake as she turned the pages of Bertha's letter. She read on quietly to the very end, then laid it on the bed by which she was sitting, and gazed straight before her.

"Am I going to be an utterly miserable girl, or am I not?" she queried to herself. "How did Frank look when I saw him last? Had his eyes a truthful look in them? was he the sort of man who would be likely to break a girl's heart? No, he was not likely to do this; I should not know Frank, if his face wore a double expression. I don't suppose he is perfect but he could not, I know he could not, be untrue. If such a terrible thing happened as that he ceased to love me, he would write himself and tell me so; he would not first engage himself to another and then allow me to hear of my miserable fate from an outsider. That would certainly not be Frank's way. Mother and Bertha were right, the information Sir Percival brought was quite false, and I am not going to allow it to trouble me. Now, to prove how little it affects me, I will burn Bertha's letter and not even read it again."

Emmy rose, took the letter, tore it into little pieces and then set fire to it in the grate.

"So will I burn this falsehood out of my heart," she murmured, and then she undressed herself rapidly, and got into bed.

By the morning, Helen Channing had absolutely made up her mind to go to America; and she and Dolly were, of course, much absorbed over this great topic, and the large changes which it must involve in their small household economy: but Helen was an observant girl, and she did see the weary look in Emmy's eyes, and the pallor of her face. Usually, Emmy had a colour soft and delicate as the flush of a rose, and Helen missed it, as she would miss any other pretty thing. She was distressed at its absence, and wondered if Emmy was as strong mentally as she had given her credit for being.

When Dorothea had gone away to her work, Helen drew Emmy, with some tenderness, to her side.

"You are tired to-day," she said; "at least, you look tired."

"I am tired," answered Emmy. Then she added,

with a little return of colour to her cheeks, "I have also had an uncomfortable letter from home; mother is by no means as strong as I could wish."

"Poor child!" said Helen. "I knew that it was your spirit that was wearied. That kind of look does not come into a young girl's eyes just from bodily fatigue. Was there any other bad news in the letter, Emmy?"

"No," said Emmy, flushing hotly now, "but there was a false report, and those things are always disagreeable to listen to."

"A false report of your lover, dear?"

"Yes, but I would rather not tell it, please."

"You certainly shall not tell it; slander, when not repeated, quickly dies a natural death. You love Captain Redfern very much, don't you, Emmy?"

"Love him?" said Emmy, her eyes dilating. "Love him? Do I love the air I breathe? He is necessary to me; he is my life."

"Poor child! And you think you can fight your way in the world with a soft heart of that kind?"

"Helen! I think my heart is strong; it makes one's heart strong to love unselfishly."

Helen Channing sighed. After a pause of a moment or two, she said abruptly—

"You must gang your own gait, Emmy, and you may be right, and I wrong. Only it seems to me that a woman who has a mission, and means to put herself forward in the band of workers, and be a kind of beacon for other women to follow in the noble paths of independence, is better off without this all-absorbing affection; in short, she is better off unmarried. Dorothea and I don't intend ever to marry."

"Has Dorothea said so?" asked Emmy in great surprise.

"Many times; her art is her passion. Dorothea has great genius, and genius such as hers is all-sufficing. Emmy, I want you to do something for me when I am away."

"That I will, Helen, and most gladly. What can I do?"

"Take a great interest in Dolly's work, talk to her about it; make a point each day of inquiring how she spent the day; what particular drawing she is engaged in; and if her idle fits come, for she is a capricious creature, and sometimes will scarcely work for days, try, if possible, to idle with her. Go with her into the parks, or Kensington Gardens, and let her talk out her heart to you. The reaction will soon set in, and she will return to her work with double zeal; but I have always found it necessary to let the idle fits have their way, and always, every day, to give her large sympathy. Dorothea is almost exacting in her craving for sympathy."

"She shall have mine," said Emmy. "I can easily give it, for I love her well."

Then the two girls went out, and Helen, busy as she was, took steps to procure Emmy's ticket of admission to the Reading-Room at the British Museum. Emmy felt, more or less, in a dream all day, and now and then Helen's theories would recur to her with a dull sense of pain and wonder.

"Will that beautiful and gifted Dorothea always remain faithful to the cold and lonely life laid down for her by her sister?"

A week afterwards Helen sailed for America, and Emmy and Dolly found themselves very much alone, and quite unprepared for a train of circumstances which would soon alter their lives.

END OF CHAPTER THE TENTH.

THE GARDEN IN THE SULTRY MONTH.

THE months of June and July are those, perhaps, in which, more than any other, true lovers of the garden enjoy their labour in it. For already they begin to see in all directions the fruits of their labour; the flower garden is all a-blaze with colour, and so in a more substantial and practical way is the fruit garden. A month in which results are so general and so gratifying calls for a few hints in each department of the fruit, flower, and kitchen gardens.

And first of our flowers. In July we shall begin to notice the great advantages accruing from the triple combination of perennials, annuals, and our bedding-out plants; for here and there in a hot and dry season we shall begin to notice a failure or two whose place requires filling up; a few successionally sown annuals we should have ready at hand for this purpose, sown in pots at intervals of every two or three weeks from the end of April, and kept in the background to supply the place of faded sweet peas, imperfectly developed flowers, or any that have given us dissatisfaction from the first. Biennials—such, for example, as sweet William—and perennials may well be sown in July, and as soon as they are large enough—say in three or four weeks after sowing—they may be planted out in the spots in which you wish them to remain; they will then readily acquire strength enough to bloom in the following season. And among our perennials, very much akin to one of the old friends of our English homestead, the ragged robin, and belonging, indeed, to the same natural order, is the *Silene Schafta*, admirably well adapted for planting on rock-work, or even for growing in pots. Its pretty bright rosy flowers are a pleasure for three or four months of the year, from June to October, so

that it is naturally a favourite. Its natural home is among rocks, but if you use it when bedding-out, surround your plant with two or three blocks of stone, or some such work, and you will find the branches of your plant will readily overspread the stonework. You can multiply it from cuttings, but bear in mind that, being a perennial, if you raise it from seed, it will not bloom before the second year. Our greenhouse — assuming that we only rejoice in the luxury of one which we make use of more as a preservative house than one for show—may yet be utilised this month for exhibition purposes if we stand on our shelves some few large-growing plants, or a few giant pelargoniums; but along the top shelf, where we shall have the advantage, probably, of the wall at the back, we can force on our tomatoes, nailing them for support to the wall. There are many summers in which, in our uncertain climate, these universal favourites will not probably ripen; indeed, in a sunless or a wet season they will often only partially colour, and sometimes decay, instead of ripening, so that the advantages to be gained

by the dry heat of our greenhouses are at once apparent. Your camellias and azaleas will, by the end of June, have made their growth; they will be benefited now, therefore, by a removal from your greenhouse to any sheltered situation out of doors for a couple of months at least.

And in the kitchen garden one of our troubles this month is certainly the weeds. Not only our crops but our very garden paths want constant hoeing and clearing.

Our cabbage beds should also be attended to; have your ground prepared, and then sow for spring use towards the end of this month, while cabbage plants that you want for use in autumn and winter may now be planted out.

Cauliflowers, too, that you may, perhaps, have sown in May, may now be pricked out and set in a rich and warm border, and a little successional planting out of celery is admirable just now. The great fault and mistake in our domestic gardening is, for the most part, that thoughtless one of sowing everything at once; one great crop of peas, one great crop of beans, and so on. Many families could supply a boys' school with peas for a single week, but for the rest of the summer could not find a dish for their own use. Successional sowing is the only remedy for this idle waste and extravagance. By the end of the month or in August the onion bed may be sown.

While, however, we can contrive to have several crops of one vegetable throughout the summer, by means of successional sowing, we have to be content with a single crop of our fruits, such as our strawberries, currants, and gooseberries, for which this is our harvest month. For preserving, choose a dry day for fruit-picking, and even then do not begin in the early morning. Fruit gathered for preserving which is not dry will only result in disaster. The strawberry crop, however, will go on bearing for some little time, and you will help the fruit-bearing properties of your plant by gathering some few at least *as* they ripen. And then we must have a word as to our cucumber and melon frames. A little clear manure-water, though very much diluted, helps to keep the bearing cucumber plants in vigour. Stop and regulate all shoots that are disposed to go ahead too much; they only tend to exhaust the plant, and will make it cease bearing earlier than would be otherwise the case; nor should you allow too many cucumbers to be ripening at once.

A DAY IN A PROOF-READER'S LIFE.

I HAVE often thought of writing a description of my present course of life, a life so different from that in which I formerly had a share. After the perusal each of my readers will, no doubt, answer the first advertisement he sees for a proof-reader.

To begin with, night work of this kind cuts me off from all social enjoyments, my work-time being other people's play-time, and *vice versâ*. The afternoon I have to myself, and this would be a great advantage were I strong enough to take a long walk every day: as it is, I have to stay in the house, and amuse myself as best I can, generally by a little light reading. I dare not read long, for fear of sore eyes; serious or hard reading would give me a headache, and spoil me for my long night's work. Once I tried to get a smattering of German, but found it altogether too much.

Six o'clock finds me ready for work. The composing-room is a large, rather low room, at the very top of the newspaper building, the roof-beams being its only architectural adornments. Half is occupied by the rows of tall wooden frames, on which the compositors place the cases of type they are using; the other half by the "stones"—in this case iron-covered tables—on which the type, when "set," is arranged in columns and pages. The walls and ceiling (in this particular newspaper office of which I write) are whitewashed once a year or so, but the floor has never been washed since the place was built, and as the ventilation is imperfect, the atmosphere which greets one on going into the room on a warm summer evening may be imagined. At one side of the room is the overseer's raised desk; on the other side are the three little boxes for the readers, resembling Dutch ovens (and just as suitable for roasting us), and scarcely large enough to hold a desk and two people. Here I sit all night, with a blazing gas-jet a few inches from my head and the hot-water pipes at my feet, scarcely once leaving my box from six till half-past three. The only break is the supper half-hour, but the work slackens considerably after two o'clock, when the first edition has to be ready, to catch the early trains, and most of the compositors leave.

Most people know what correcting a proof is. But it is one thing now and then to correct a proof of something in which you take an interest, and quite another to be obliged to read proof after proof as fast as possible for hours together, the contents, whether advertisements or what is ironically termed "news," being quite uninteresting, and often disgusting. I have to contend with broken type, and badly-printed proofs—anything is good enough for the reader; I must mark every mistake of compositor, reporter, telegraph clerk, and editor, from the smallest "printer's error" up to mistakes in grammar and construction,

and in statements of fact; and I must make no mistake myself. As you may imagine, this becomes very monotonous; but it is hard work, demanding constant careful attention; and try as one may, the chances are that if the compositor makes a really bad mistake the reader will not notice it, and every copy of the paper will contain it.

Such is my "daily round." Perhaps something about the men amongst whom I work would be interesting. My companion in my box is the reading-"boy," who reads over the manuscript copy to me, so that I may mark the compositor's deviations on my proof. Though quite uneducated, he is very intelligent, and has often helped me in a difficulty; indeed, I am constantly incurring new obligations to him for his attention. The most irritating and depressing thing about him is the contrast between the indifference with which he reads a literary or scientific address, and the zest with which he goes through some miserable police case.

The overseer is the most important man in the place; he dismisses compositors and readers at his pleasure; and even the editors have to attend to what he wants. So far as I am concerned he has been civil, even considerate; only in the matter of overwork and holidays have I any grievance.

The men are fair specimens of the "respectable British working man." As compositors their trade itself is an education, continually requiring the exercise of their minds, if only within a limited range. Some few grave faults and defects I have noticed, but it would be most ungenerous for me to dwell upon them; for, if I can find only one or two whom I would care to have for friends, I owe much to all of them for the civility and good-will they have shown to me. I came here as an outsider, and had they chosen to take offence, as would not have been unnatural, they could easily have made my position untenable. They have done the very reverse. To mention only one thing: again and again when I have passed some gross or ludicrous blunder, the corrector has brought the proof back to me, and asked me to put it right. You will see how different this might have been when I tell you that I have known a compositor, in correcting a proof, to come across a silly mistake unnoticed by the reader, leave it uncorrected, and next day himself call the overseer's attention to it on finding that none of the editors had made complaint about it. So you see that even in this prison-house I have something to be thankful for.

So much for the newspaper office. The longest night is over at last, and I set out on my three-miles' walk home. Occasionally snow or rain makes it one continual toil and wretchedness; but, in compensation, I have sometimes a fine starlit sky, or (in summer) a beautiful sunrise to gladden my eyes and occupy my thoughts as I pass along the deserted streets. I am thoroughly tired in body and mind when I get home, but "the rest of the labouring man is sweet," even if he does not have enough of it.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

WHAT TO WEAR IN JULY.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS: FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

THE French capital is so crowded with foreigners that it is more difficult than usual to define what really fashionable women are wearing. This point is certain—they have completely banished dress-improvers, pads, steels, and all appertaining thereto. There is no compromise: they are things of the past, and yet there is no trace of that lanky thinness to be seen in England, where women have had the pluck to conform to the fashion, but not the judgment to know how to have the skirt re-arranged to suit the exigencies of the new style. An easy method is to gather the back breadth separately and very close, set it in a narrow band, and attach three safety hooks, matching eyes on the skirt, so placed that the band rests on the bodice, and the gathers rise a little at the waist.

The dress in our first illustration, with the gathered plastron, is thus planned. It is made of nun's veiling in two shades of vieux rose, trimmed with white braid, which is carried along the hem of the plain full skirt at the back and up the sides, resting on two side pleats, which, with the back, are all of the darker tone. The back and the bodice are just one shade lighter. The former is arranged in a perfectly new style, worth special attention. In the first place, it is very full and gathered closely round the bodice and the sides; the material is arranged to fall double in a cascade on either side. All round the bodice and skirt are sewn together, almost at the waist-line. A frilling of striped material appears on the front of the bodice, a combination of the two shades of pink and white, and the opening is bordered with a piping of white. Low down, just above the junction of skirt and bodice, are two tabs fastened with gold buttons, and below the high collar to the top of the full front there is a double row of gold buttons united by crossed cords. The sleeve, high and full in the armhole, has a deep cuff, striped with white, into which the sleeves are again gathered. Almost any of the now fashionable materials might be adapted to this style, and the bordering in bordered stuffs might be made to replace the rows of braid.

The other dress illustrated is a new, simple, and pretty style of making up all the many cottons and washing silks which are exercising the minds of those who, in this month, hope for the hot weather we have a right to expect now, if at no other season. The colour is a bright rich mauve—a very favourite tone—and the style of the dress makes it suitable for morning wear or demi-toilette. The sleeves come only to the elbow, and they are very fully gathered in the armhole; for day wear, long gloves would be worn. The under-skirt is made entirely of Valenciennes piece lace in box-pleats divided in front by bands of mauve, with loops and ends at the foot. The upper portion is cut in one as a polonaise, bordered all round and on the left side of the bodice with lace, which is turned upwards. The bodice is full and fastens diagonally; there is no draping. Nothing could well be more simple or more graceful. It is well suited for a home dinner-dress in the many country homes of England, where in the height of summer the womankind like to go out in the garden after dinner, and open bodices are not always desirable. Among the more fashionable materials just now are diaphanous crêpe, Ganges mousseline de soie, and mousseline chiffon. The last-named is, as its name implies, rag muslin, which is allowed to fall in its natural folds as it will, and is extremely graceful for young girls' evening dresses. Several flounces with the selvedge edge are placed at the foot, headed by a fringe of lilies of the valley. Most of the other stuffs are richly embroidered in infinitesimal floral patterns, and many of them can be worn over almost any coloured silk skirt, and curiously enough, be the ground what it may, it seems to adopt the tint of the silk.

The caterers of fashion in Paris (bearing in mind that the Exhibition would bring hundreds to this capital whose purses were not sufficiently long to enable them to invest in the artistic triumphs of leading dressmakers, male and female) have flooded the shops with ready-made articles of attire, which have so excellent an appearance that even I, who make dress a study, have, in some instances, thought that they were the carefully evolved productions of a well-known modiste.

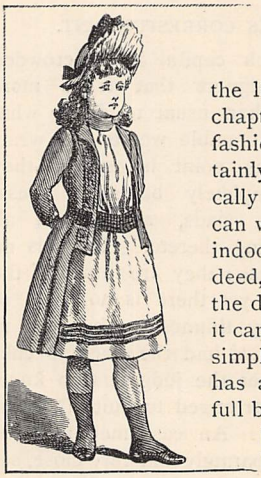
An Englishwoman coming to Paris could, in a few hours, "rig herself out" at a by no means ruinous cost at any one of the large Parisian establishments with dresses far better suited to the requirements of this side of the Channel than in England, and at a cheaper rate—always supposing that she is neither much beneath nor above regulation size. The French shopkeeper, with a keen eye to business, has several sizes for selection, and with the present style of draped bodices his difficulties are minimised. Frenchwomen have always looked with favourable eyes on the jerseys and garments of that ilk, and these and the fancy Louis XV. coats with their embroidered waistcoats and smart lace jabots contribute much to the sale of the ready-made skirts, which are exquisitely draped. Revers of some kind, either of contrasting material or colour, appear on nearly all the bodices, and on most of the skirts, while accordion and kilt pleatings assert themselves in the fronts of many costumes. I have just seen one of the most noted of the American ladies (married to an English statesman), who certainly buys most of her

dresses in Paris, in such a simple but stylish make of gown, that I am tempted to describe it. The material was a deep navy-blue foulard, printed all over with a design in white. The skirt, which was narrow and close-fitting, was arranged in accordion-pleats all round; there was no drapery of any kind, save two tricornered pieces just at the back of the waist; the bodice was pleated also, and ended at the waist beneath a wide sash, which had ends falling at the side. It proved becoming, and is a style within the reach of everybody, especially as in London any material can be pleated to order in a few hours.

Young girls wear these soft silks and cottons made as long blouses touching the ground, with a yoke to the bodice, the back of the skirt arranged in simple folds, the front gathered; a wide sash knotted at the side goes twice round the waist, and large bows of the material placed on the shoulder give the necessary length to the sleeve. The full sleeve has a band at the wrist, and again half-way down the arm. The Eton jackets, cut quite straight at the waist, are as much worn in Paris as in England, only the front revers are wider, and there is always a piece of galon trimming placed at the edge to finish off the waist. One of these jackets made in black watered silk is a most useful adjunct to a wardrobe.

"THEY WILL BE HOME THIS WEEK."

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.



I SHALL begin by asking you to look with particular attention at the little figure which heads our chapter, for, among a variety of fashions for children, it is certainly one of the most practically useful styles that a child can wear. It is suited both for indoors and outdoors, and, indeed, the jacket at the back of the dress is often made so that it can be removed, leaving a very simple frock beneath. The dress has a plain full skirt, and plain full bodice confined by a ribbon belt round the waist, and a band at the throat. It fastens at the back, and has four rows of braid or ribbon of the same tone as the sash around the skirt-hem. The jacket is more elaborate, for it opens with slight revers at the throat, and is bordered with braiding corresponding with some on the wrist of the sleeve. It should be made of two distinct materials. For a washing and useful garment, holland may be combined with dust-coloured jean, or two tones of serge or nun's veiling answer well. Our little figure is made complete by a hat which has a wide brim in front standing up above the face and lined with lace. The crown outside is surrounded by ribbon, and has a large bow in the front.

During these warm July days the huge washing hats will be found acceptable to young people. They are made mostly in drawn jaconet; the brim is bordered by a wide fall of embroidery, which screens the face most becomingly. When dirty they may be consigned to the wash-tub without fear.

Care and thought have been specially bestowed on children's garments of late, with a view to combine health with a good appearance. Cotton gauze is a new fabric used not only in millinery but dresses, also soft yarn soie. For mantles for very young children, this is used, made with capes gathered with many runners at the top, and lined with sanitary crêpe instead of with silk, the skirt portion smocked, the smocking visible beneath the cape. Smocks are such universal favourites that any new ideas connected with them are acceptable. Some of the newest are made with deep transparent

embroidered cuffs, the yoke matching, the sleeve gathered into the armhole with a wide heading and smocked below, also round the waist and under the embroidered yoke. Sanitary wool crêpe is used for simple tucked frocks, as well as a great deal for linings in place of silk.

The all-important question of how to make dresses for grown-up people is, I think, satisfactorily answered in the two accompanying figures. To begin with the one without a mantle—it is made in green silk, with the front of brocade having a darker design in velvet thrown on the light green ground. This is employed as revers to the bodice and for the sleeves, which are quite distinct from the bodice, but have one full puff of plain silk to form the epaulette. The front of the bodice is full, disappearing in a soft fold edging the bodice. The back is made as a coat with wide side pieces, diminishing the width of the front, the back closely pleated in wide pleats; the toque is made to match. Like all the skirts now, it shows a decided absence of bustle.

The other figure displays a good arrangement for stripes, and every woman has a striped dress in her wardrobe. It is made with broad box-pleats, over-draped with a low falling piece of the material, coming in a point the same as the back, and forming a sort of cascade; the sleeves are full, gathered into a wide band, and the bodice also.

The mantle is quite one of the best patterns worn this year. The habit-shirt is made of an appliqué of velvet on silk, bordered with drops, from which hangs a deep flounce of lace. The sleeves, composed entirely of lace, are treble box-pleated outside the arm, with three bands of velvet introduced; and they come only to the elbow. At the back the mantle ends at the waist, but it descends in a point on to the skirt in front. A wide band of moiré ribbon encircles the waist and falls in looped bows at the side.

The accompanying hat has a soft silk crown, the brim diminishing to a mere nothing at the back and wide in front. A bunch of flowers is added outside.

Beads are employed as trimmings this year with tinsel thread, and frequently braiding, a variety of combined colourings asserting themselves in one piece.

One use for beads I have remarked lately may interest those who do not care to be always replacing tuckers, for whether made of silk ribbon or lighter material they soil easily. The bead tuckers may be made in jet beads or in any colour to match the dress by those who can knit. Use spun silk, wool, or cotton, and on these thread a good quantity of beads. Cast on six stitches and knit in plain knitting, and at the beginning of every alternate row slip up ten beads, and knit as usual. This forms a series of loops, and in time a good firm edging for collars and cuffs, which will last almost for ever. They look well in white beads.

WATCHING THE MATCH.

One of the prettiest parts of the extremely becoming Normandy costume is the cap, of which there are many varieties, from the high, square-topped cap, and the pointed cap, to the form in which Evangeline has always been portrayed. This particular shape is being now adopted for daily wear by those who consider caps a necessity. It would be difficult to find one better suited for the display of their charms. The caps are made either in fine muslin or net, with an upstanding crown gathered at the back and front like those worn by Quakers. The front is made with a two-inch-wide band of velvet, bordered on either side with a fancy ruching. This rests on the front of the head. It is quite the best head-dress of the kind seen for a long time. Every woman knows what a difficult thing it is to find an every-day cap for every-day people that is not dowdy, and here it is.

SCARS.

BY S. BARING-GOULD, M.A., AUTHOR OF "MEHALAH," "JOHN HERRING," "THE PENNYCOMEQUICKS," ETC.

IN one of the valleys that penetrate into the great dorsal chain of mountains separating Lancashire from Yorkshire, lies the manufacturing village of Winterscales. When we say that it lies in the valley, we are not stating the exact truth, for it scrambles about the hill-sides, but the mills and the street of shops occupy the bottom. The church stands on a height, on the top of one of the hills, looking down on the glens that unite below, and form a sort of basin—a very contracted one—in which stands Winterscales. There was a disadvantage, certainly, in the factories occupying the bottom, for the tops of the chimneys came level with the doorsteps and windows of a good many houses, and when the wind blew from the chimney-tops to the doorsteps, it carried the smoke into the houses and filled them—that is to say, if doors and windows were left open; but the wise and experienced on such occasions kept both shut, and went in and out of their cottages by the back. Nevertheless, the smoke penetrated by keyholes, down chimneys, under doors where the sandstone threshold was worn, and could not, would not be wholly excluded. The houses on the slopes—say rather, the steeps—of the hill-sides were almost wholly occupied by operatives at the silk-mills; the manufacturers had their houses below, near the factories. But these cottages for the hands by no means contained all who were employed at the mills. The men, boys, and girls—that is, a good proportion of them—lived away on the moors and fells in houses by themselves, or in little clusters, two and three, and even four miles distant. It was a pretty sight of an early morning in summer, or when "mill loosed" in the evening, to see the trains of merry girls on their way to or from work, with their white pinafores, and pink, crimson, and blue kerchiefs over their heads, the sun blinking on their tin cans, which they swung in their hands, and that contained, or had contained, their dinners.

In one of the cottages that occupied the side of the road to Todmorden, that crossed the fells from the valley, ascending by a series of sweeps and doubles like a cracker, lived Mrs. Haigh, a widow with one daughter, Ruth, and a son, Samuel. She kept a little shop; oranges and ginger-beer bottles were temptingly offered in the window to such fagged foot-passengers as had climbed the hill from Winterscales, or who had passed the fell and were desirous of refreshing themselves before entering the place. Bottles of pink, yellow, and white lemon-drops, and of sticks of twisted crimson and white peppermint, brandy-balls, and toffee, exercised a fascination quite overpowering on the mill-girls as they went by to their work, or when returning from it; and if they had a stray copper in their pockets, it was certain to find its way into Mrs. Haigh's till, and the equivalent in sweet-stuff to find its way into the lassies' mouths.

What a difference there is between the girls of these mountain moorland factory districts, and those in the great manufacturing towns! In the latter there is the dusky complexion, the pale cheek, and only now and then a pretty face; whereas in the country district the complexions are transparent, the colours bright, the eyes sparkle, and a plain face is the exception. Verily, he who wants to see sweet faces, bright, happy, and full of every charm, let him visit the upper dales of Yorkshire and Lancashire. Mrs. Haigh was an infirm woman. She had lost her husband through decline, the fine pieces of silk had got into his lungs and killed him, some sixteen years ago, leaving her with Samuel, only a baby, and Ruth but four years old. Since his death she had lived a precarious existence on lollipops and oranges and ginger-beer. When ginger-beer failed to fascinate, owing to the decline of temperature, then oranges came in; and when oranges failed, then the ginger-pop excited its attractions. And as a sure, unfailing fund of revenue remained the peppermint sticks, the brandy-balls, and the toffee. It might have been supposed that under these circumstances Mrs. Haigh's income would not have been at all precarious, but it was so.

This is an age of competition, and Mrs. Cardwell, across the road, had filled her window with similar bottles, and also with oranges. Human nature is fond of change, and the girls who had dealt with Mrs. Haigh, turned to the rival establishment when it was opened, not that Mrs. Cardwell's wares were better, but because—because—because—they liked change.

The stars in their courses fought against Mrs. Cardwell; to be more exact, the sun ranged himself on the side of Mrs. Haigh, and as the rival window faced the sun, bright Phœbus darted his hot and glittering rays at the bottles of ginger-pop and peppermint sticks, lemon-drops, brandy-balls, &c. Now when Mrs. Haigh first saw the glorious display made in the rival's window by the sun, that brought out all the colours of the lemon-drops, and coruscated in the peppermint sticks, she thought that her own establishment was eclipsed, and would sink into nothingness. But she was mistaken. The sun that enveloped Mrs. Cardwell with splendour, wrought irreparable damage on her goods. When it grew hot it popped her bottles, and never paid three-ha'pence for those it popped. It melted her sweets into conglomerate masses, from which there

was no recovery. Then, with cruel irony, the sun showed all the havoc it had worked, glared on the desolation, and brought into conspicuousness all the disaster it had wrought. Thereupon the mill-girls deserted Mrs. Cardwell and drifted back to Mrs. Haigh.

This is but a single instance of the little perils that beset the course of trade, and made Mrs. Haigh's revenue uncertain. However, that protection which is extended to fatherless and widow did not desert her, and she lived on, kept the wolf from the door, and when both Ruth and Samuel were able to work in the mills, then her little shop was no longer essential to existence, but fell into a position of subsidiary profit. As, however, Ruth and Samuel earned larger wages, so did her health begin to fail, and she was no longer able to leave the house.

Ruth was a tall, upright girl, with dark hair and grey eyes, not handsome, but pleasing, with one of those faces that inspire confidence. It had on the broad brow the stamp of intelligence, in the firm lips the character of determination. As for Samuel, though aged sixteen, he was a child in mind, in spirits, in humour; merry, good-natured, and simple; not lacking in intelligence, but guileless as a child.

"Why, Sam!" exclaimed Ruth one day, stopping and staring some while before her mother's window, "the bill is down." She had stopped in order to allow Sam to come up with her, for it is not the custom—it is hardly permitted by the unwritten code of etiquette that prevails in a factory district—for a brother to walk home with his sister; he would be cruelly chaffed as a milk-sop were he to do this.

The bill was down. "Lodgings to Let"—that had figured in the window above the bottles of sweetstuff for a twelvemonth—figured there no more.

"Well now—whoever!" exclaimed Sam.

"It's the paste has become dried up, and it has fallen off of itself," said Ruth.

But she was mistaken. Whilst she and her brother were away at the mill that day, a stranger had come to the cottage and had taken the room and bed that had been so long to let; he had engaged them by the week.

He was a young man, tall, dark, not bad-looking, but shy and uneasy, and his shyness and lack of ease gave to him a certain uncouthness that was at first unprepossessing. He gave his name as Michael Derby. He said he was on the look-out for work. He took his meals with the family. He spoke but little, and seemed depressed. But that was explicable. He had been to each of the manufacturers of Winterscales soliciting work, office work, and had failed to obtain a situation.

"Mother," said Ruth, one day shortly after Derby had come into the house, "I don't like him. There is something in the background. He has something on his mind."

"Perhaps he's in love, Ruth," answered her mother. "I remember when your father was just the same, because he thought I didn't care for him."

"I don't think he is in love, mother, I think he has something troubling him, something he can't shake off."

It was strange that, although Michael Derby had been to every factory in the place, and had failed at each, he remained on at Winterscales lodging with the widow. He was unsettled, it appeared, in his mind. He gave her notice that he would leave next week, but when next week came he remained on.

One day—it was, as it happened, a Saturday—Ruth found on her return home early that the wind was from the south-west, and was blowing the smoke of a chimney in the valley against her mother's house. On such occasions Ruth knew very well that her afternoon must be devoted to cleaning the house. She was a tidy girl, clean and tidy in her person, clean and neat in all she did, and could not endure that the house and its scanty furniture should be other than bright and furbished.

When, therefore, she had spoken to her mother, and made some remark about the smoke, instead of removing her mill suit, she set to work to clean and rub down everything in the house. The windows must be left till a change of wind, but the furniture could not be so neglected.

She was engaged on the room occupied by Derby, who was out, after having done what she could to the other apartments. In the corner was a picture with a gilt frame, and this she was engaged in dusting, when the door was thrust open and the young man entered, and going up to the chimney-piece, leaned his arms on it, laid his head on them, and groaned. He had not noticed that any one was in the room.

Ruth hesitated what to do, whether to leave noiselessly, or to speak. He was breathing heavily; he raised his head, rested it again on his arms, and groaned again.

Then Ruth rested the picture against the wall—she had held it in one hand whilst cleaning it with the other—and went to him, and lightly touched him on the shoulder. He started in manifest alarm, and looked at her with a vacant expression in his eyes.

"I beg your pardon, Michael Derby," said the girl, "but I have long seen that you are unhappy. Why do you not tell my mother or me, that we may assist you? Or are you unwell and in pain?"

"I am not ill, I am very wretched."

"What is it? Can we help you in any way? Is it that you are unable to find work?"

"No; it is not that. I cannot tell you what troubles me. It would do no good if I did. But I thank you for speaking."

"Have you no friends?"

"I had, and have lost them."

"From what part do you come?"

"That, I will not tell you. And whither I shall go, I do not know."

"Now, look here," said Ruth; "if there be something in your heart that makes you miserable—best have it out. Like a thorn, if allowed to work in, it may produce a stiff joint; if cut out, you are soon well."

He shook his head.

So ended that interview. It had its effect, for the young man drew insensibly towards the girl, and she felt her interest quickened in him, and for a girl to feel interest in a man, young and unhappy, is dangerous to her peace of mind—sure in the end to lead to love. She made no further attempt to win his confidence, but she saw how he sought out occasions of being near her; how, when he was alone with her, he seemed to be irresolute whether to speak out what was on his mind or not. His eyes followed her, but always fell if he perceived that he was observed.

So matters went on for some weeks. An imperceptible tie was formed between the two; each knowing that the other possessed the regard, the sympathy of the one; but neither said the smallest word that could express what was in the heart.

It was autumn. The berries were ripening, if not already ripened in every hedge.

One day, Mrs. Haigh said to Michael Derby, who was in the house, "The elderberries are ripe, and I should like to make wine against the winter. Wil'ta go up t'tree and pluck me the berries?" This referred to a large bush or tree of elder in the small garden. He readily agreed to do so.

Whilst he was thus engaged, Ruth came into the garden and stood under the tree. She saw what his employment was, and held a basket into which he cast the bunches of purple-black fruit. Now and then some leaves came fluttering down about her head and shoulders from the shaken bush. The sun was bright, the day warm; it was one of the last days of summer weather, before the storms and gusts of winter set in.

For a moment or so, a little brightness came over the troubled face of Derby, he forgot his brooding cares, his cheek flushed, he laughed and threw some of the bunches at the girl's head, and one fell on her hair and there clung entangled. As she put up her hand to remove it, she inadvertently let go her hold of the basket, and all the load of elderberries was poured forth on the ground.

At once Michael came down, and kneeling on the grass beside her, assisted in collecting the fruit. As he did this, his hand continually touched hers, and then a tremor passed over him. He laid hold of a large bunch at the same time as she did, and neither let go. They involuntarily raised their eyes, and their eyes met. In that meeting of the eyes the story of their mutual love was told. Neither let go of the bunch of elderberries, but Ruth rose from her stooping position, and Michael from his knees, and in so doing the bunch of elderberries was parted between them, and he kept half in his hand, she half in hers.

Then he spoke. "Ruth," said he in a low tone, quivering with emotion, "I love you, but I am not worthy of you. I would have gone from this place before this, but I could not leave the house where you were. But I am not worthy of you. Now, I will go—I will go to America, and I will take this half-bunch of elderberries with me. It shall remind me of you."

He said no more—strange, unaccountable man that he was. He turned and went into the house, carrying the riven elderberry-bunch, and she—she said nothing, but her eyes filled with tears, and she placed the little fragment of the berry-bunch in her bosom.

That night when she prepared to go to bed, and took off her kerchief and gown, the elderberries lay where she had placed them, but bruised, and a stream of their purple juice, like blood, stained her bosom. That night Michael Derby was gone.

By no outward token did Ruth show that she felt the loss of the lodger. The little bill was again wafered into the window, and would probably remain there appealing without response for some time to come. Mrs. Haigh was somewhat particular whom she would receive into her house; she would accept no lodger who was not quiet and well-conducted.

Then came the fifth of November, when bonfires would be kindled and Guys be burnt throughout the country. Great preparations had been made both in Winterscales and the neighbourhood. Below in the valley there was to be a large fire; and coals, tar-barrels, and brushwood had been begged and bought to make a magnificent blaze. But then such a fire in the valley could not produce the effect of one on the hills, and the young people of the district agreed to have a second, on a patch of waste ground close to the house of Mrs. Haigh. The widow was vexed at this, as it occasioned uproar for half the night, but dared not express her objections, lest she should offend her customers; moreover, she was well aware that any objections she raised would be disregarded. And, indeed, she had an enthusiastic advocate of this very bonfire in her own house, in Samuel, her son, who was most energetic in collecting materials for it.

A goodly bonfire it promised to be: below, a pile of shavings and chips, begged from a carpenter; above, three tons of coals, bought by subscription; on top, a tar-barrel, into which were inserted Roman candles, squibs, flower-pots, rockets, and other explosives.

"I shall look at it from the window," said Ruth.

"Nay, thou shan't," answered Samuel. "I'll hug thee out if thou won't come o' thysen."

And when the bonfire was lighted, urged by Samuel, Ruth was by. Now the chips and shavings flared up white, and then ignited the coals, and they glowed a livid red, sending up volumes of smoke.

A shout of applause from the gathered crowd, capering, screaming, and laughing round the fire. The tar-barrel was flaming.

Then suddenly an explosion, and in all directions shot tongues and drops of flame; up roared a rocket into the air, another struck a wall and fell fizzing on the road, dispersing all who were near; crackers snapped and bounced like fiery scorpions among the feet of the lads and lasses, who laughed, and shouted, and danced. But among the cries were not only exclamations of delight and of astonishment, but also those of fear and pain, for the fireworks in exploding had exploded the barrel, and sent a shower of flaming tar over the heads of the bystanders. Many of these drops fell innocuous, extinguished before reaching those

they touched, or only scalding, but this was not the case everywhere; one blazing clot of tar fell upon Samuel, who was in a cotton blouse, ran down it flaming, set it on fire, and in a moment he was in flames. Those who stood near scattered screaming on either side, all fearful for themselves lest the fire should communicate itself to their clothes. Only Ruth had presence of mind. She was wearing a thick woollen shawl drawn over her head, and seeing the peril in which her brother was, without a moment's hesitation, a moment's question whether it would be risking her own self, she whipped off the shawl and flung it round the boy, wrapping it about the flames and stifling them.

Was the fire subdued? She held the shawl about him tightly, forced him down on the ground, and rolled him over to extinguish every spark that appeared, every flicker that manifested itself, but—in so doing, was herself caught. She had a light cotton kerchief round her throat. Whether this were ignited by Samuel's blouse, or whether by a falling drop of blazing tar, could not be said, but probably it was set alight by the dress of her brother, as there was no second explosion of the barrel. She felt the hot tongue of fire rush up her face, and for one instant—for one instant only did her hands relax their grip of the shawl, as instinctively she would have drawn the shawl from him, and wrapped it about her own neck for her own preservation. But the temptation to save herself at his expense was momentary only; one

UNDER THE ELDER-TREE (*p.* 504).

hand gripping him tightly in its folds, with the other she tore off the flaming kerchief from herself, and then remained silent, self-controlled, holding Samuel till she was sure the fire was extinct about him. Then only did she allow the boy to get up and lead him home.

He had not been burnt. The flame that had caught his blouse had burned that in great holes, so that it fell to rags, but had not hurt him otherwise than that his hands were somewhat blistered where he had tried in the first paroxysm of terror to beat out the flame. It was otherwise with Ruth. She had for a moment been exposed to the breath of fire, and the flame had licked the side of her neck and ear, and had singed her hair. For some time she was laid up, she had received a bad burn, and when finally she was able to go about again, the side of her throat and neck were permanently scarred.

When she wore her red kerchief over her head, the mark did not show; but when it was removed, the disfigurement attracted attention, and was somewhat distressing. A stranger would notice it at once. But with what love did Sam regard that mark! He knew what it meant—that his sister had sacrificed herself for him.

Ruth went about her work as usual when recovered, and said nothing about what had taken place. She had no thought that she had acted nobly, heroically. In the mill, with want of taste, but hardly want of kindliness, for it was not maliciously intended, Ruth was given the nick-name of "Scarry" Ruth; she bore with the designation without resentment. Hitherto, Ruth had been somewhat admired by the young lads. A quiet, reserved girl, she had given them no encouragement, but at one time or another, three or four had tried to cultivate acquaintance with her, to walk with her to or from mill, or on Sundays into the country, but had met with no encouragement. Now, none came near her. Her scars deterred them.

"I tell thee what, lass," said one of her mates to her one day, in the mill, "thou'lt never get thee a husband now wi' thy scars, that's certain."

"I do not suppose I shall," was her quiet reply.

* * * *

Twelve years had passed. Ruth was still working at the same silk-mill, occupying the same cottage. Her mother was dead. Samuel was married, and he and his young wife were in the cottage. The wife managed the shop and sold the oranges, ginger-beer, and various sweet-stuffs. Mrs. Cardwell was gone, there was no longer competition to be feared. A couple of children had come to Samuel. Ruth was reserved, diligent, orderly as ever; the freshness of girlhood had passed from her face, which had, however, gained in sweetness of expression. Samuel's wife was a trial to her, a wayward exacting young woman, who could not feel with Samuel the debt of obligation due to Ruth, that reverence with which he regarded his sister, and she was continually urging her husband to get Ruth to leave the house. She said sharp things to her, was snappish in her conduct, and once or twice, out of her husband's hearing, called her "Old Scarry."

Ruth kept herself to herself, and gave the young woman as little cause for annoyance as possible, but Samuel's wife had made up her mind that the house was to be her own, and that she would not have another woman in it. Unconsciously she was envious and jealous of the regard with which Samuel treated his sister. Ruth saw that a longer continuance there would jeopardise the domestic tranquillity of her brother, and she resolved to leave. She had said no word of her intention to Sam, who was uneasy and annoyed at the friction between his wife and sister.

One autumn evening—it was a Saturday, St. Luke's summer was over the country, soft and warm, with a hazy light—Ruth stole into the garden, and seated herself under the elder. Sam's wife was in the shop; the children were in the road. She was unobserved.

She drew from her bosom a piece of paper and unfolded it, and spread it on her knees. Within was a dried half-bunch of elderberries. She looked up—overhead were the berries, glossy, full of juice, and ripe, warmed by the sun. This poor little shrivelled cluster had been as they. So is it with life—once fresh, sweet, full of succulence, it dries up, becomes juiceless and dead. Twelve years had passed, and she had heard nothing of Michael Derby, not a letter had come from him, no tidings by word of mouth. What had been his trouble? What had driven him from England? How had he fared in the far world? Was he alive? And if alive, had he thought of her?

All at once she looked up. Before her stood a gentleman with a grave, handsome face, and a touch of grey in his hair, and beside him her brother—smiling, happy. Samuel without a word went back into the house.

Ruth started to her feet with a cry, and as she did so the withered half-bunch of elder slipped from her lap. The gentleman saw it, stooped, picked it up and returned it to her. Then, without a word, he put his hand into his breast-pocket, and produced a little case, opened it, and lo! in his palm he held the other half of the dried-up elderberry-bunch!

"Ruth!"

"Oh, Michael!"

Would she have fallen into his arms? He put out his hand and checked her.

"Ruth," said he, "you must first know all. When I was here twelve years ago, it was with a dishonoured name. I had been in an office in Manchester, and there had forfeited the trust reposed in me; I had taken money. I was discovered, dismissed. I owed it to the mercy of my master that I was not prosecuted and sent to prison. My father bade me leave, and show my face no more among those on whom I had brought disgrace. Now you know my past history up to when I came here. I loved you, but I dared not speak to you and exact a pledge. I was unworthy of you."

She looked at him with trembling lips and filling eye, holding the little dried bunch of elderberries before her in quivering fingers. She was speechless.

"Ruth," he continued, after a pause, "I have been a prosperous man in the States, and have made my-

self a name. I have returned to England, and finding the firm at Manchester, in which I had been, fallen into some difficulties, I have been able to lend it a large sum of money, which will be the means of saving it from failure. Now you know the whole of my story—what do you say? Will you take one with so blemished a character—one on whose conscience lies such a disfiguring scar?"

Then, still without a word, Ruth drew the kerchief from her face, and exposed the sadly marked neck.

"Oh, Michael!" she said, "look at me—at my scar."

Instantly he had her in his arms, his lips on the poor, maimed, disfigured neck, and kissed the scar passionately.

"Dearest, noblest Ruth," he said, "I know all—how that was *won*—yes, won! A mark of glory to be proud of, a badge of your own perfect unselfishness and self-devotion."

"And your scar, Michael! I love it," she said—trembling, throbbing in his arms. "For your wound is healed, and marks the man who, though wounded, has had strength to recover."

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

Parlour Gymnastics.

Our contributor, "A Family Doctor," writes: "Mr. R. Parke has lately introduced a new form of parlour gymnastics, which bids fair to be of considerable service in those cases of spinal curvature where there is no actual disease. Two weighted poles moving on pivots on a foot-board constitute the whole apparatus. One feature of the system is certainly novel — the motions are gone through to music, and are, therefore, less monotonous."

A Submarine Ram.

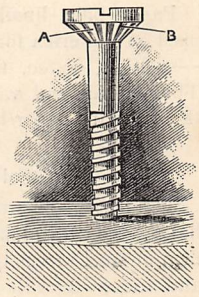
A sunken vessel, which runs flush with the water-line and carries a powerful ram or piston driven by a steam cylinder for the purpose of ramming an enemy's vessel, has been designed in the United States. The ram will be driven by a force of 150 tons, which is sufficient to pierce the side of an iron-clad. The speed of the vessel will be about 20 knots an hour.

A Hybernating Swallow.

At a recent meeting of the French Society of Naturalists, M. Leroux exhibited a live swallow wrapped in a deep sleep in which it had been since last October, when it was disabled from flight by a coachman's whip. As it was insensible at the time, a child picked it up and put it fast in a box among wadding. After a discussion on the possibility of swallows hybernating, the swallow was awakened in presence of the Society and set at liberty.

A Self-Countersinking Screw.

The figure illustrates a screw-nail, which is fitted with cutting teeth on the under side or bevel of the head. The teeth, when the screw is driven home, cut into the wood, and thereby enable the head to countersink itself. They are so formed as to allow the sawdust to escape by the channels between them to the top of the head. For this purpose the channels, B, and the teeth, A, are both wider in going from the shank towards the top of the screw.

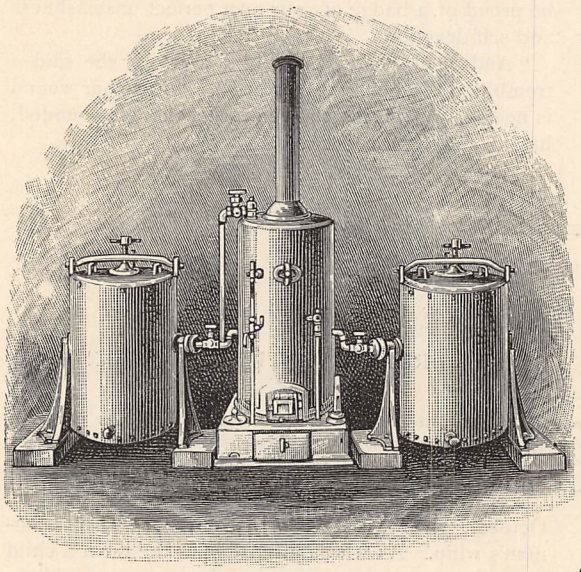


Another Music Turn-over.

Another very simple and easily-applied music turn-over has just been issued. It consists of a long strip of stout paper with one side gummed, which is to be pasted down the outer edge of the music folio, and then cut away in accordance with the printed lines upon the ungummed side. These lines divide the slip into equal lengths, and by cutting away one for the first leaf, two for the second, and three for the third, there can be no difficulty about turning over the exact page required, especially as the strip has the double effect of making the turning over easy and strengthening the edge of the folio.

A New Farm Steamer.

Our figure represents a new steaming apparatus for the use of farmers, in which to steam corn, grain, roots, and so forth, for stock purposes. The arrange-



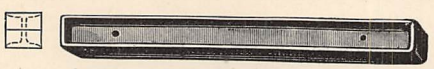
ment consists of a steam boiler, two steaming pans, and a water tank, which is not shown. The iron pans are mounted on trunnions, so as to be turned over and emptied with ease. The arrangement is likely to be useful in districts where the breeding and rearing of sheep is carried on to a large extent.

Waxed Paper Bags.

Paper bags lined inside with paraffin wax are now used in America for holding articles of various kinds —such as coffee, flour, furs, fruit, and confections. They are air and water-tight, and cost little more than the ordinary paper bag.

Steel Props for Mines.

The figures illustrate one of the steel stays which have been introduced as props for mines by a Leeds firm of steel merchants. They are said to be stronger and more durable than timber props; and, being



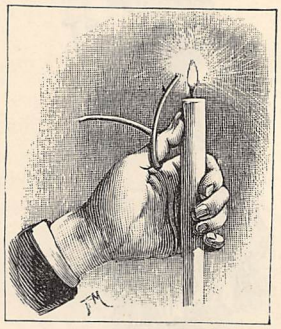
made of rolled steel, they cannot be so easily broken as cast-iron ones. The prop we illustrate is of angle steel, with the flanges turned over at top and bottom. The smaller figure shows a cross-section of the prop.

Floor-Deafening and Health.

Floor-deafening usually consists of coarse mortar and smithy ashes; but in some cases it is of a more questionable character, and as it is much used for preventing the noise of one floor reaching to that below, Professor Carnelly and Miss Etta Johnstone have undertaken to investigate its sanitary properties. They procured a number of samples from various classes of houses in Dundee. The results show that the insanitary qualities of deafening, as indicated by the percentage of chlorine, nitrogenous organic matter, and combustible ingredients, run parallel with the class of house, being worst in one-roomed houses, and best in the largest houses. The deafening of ordinary middle-class homes is in almost all cases practically free from nitrogenous organic matter and chlorides, as well as noxious odours, so that no objection can be taken to it. In the poorer houses of three rooms or fewer, organic matter and chlorides are always present, the percentage being higher in the older houses. In many cases, too, the odour is objectionable. It would, therefore, appear that the air in such houses may give rise to ill-health. Professor Carnelly and others have shown that the air is more impure in one or two-roomed houses than in three or more roomed houses, especially as regards micro-organisms. The present investigation shows that the sanitary condition of floor-deafening similarly corresponds. The deafening, in fact, is a suitable medium for the growth of micro-organisms, and gives off fœtid gases from putrefaction, provided the necessary factors of moisture, warmth, and nitrogenous organic matter are present.

A Magnesium Burner.

At a recent meeting of the French Academy of Sciences, MM. Guebhard and Rangue described a new method of burning magnesium wire. The apparatus consists of a small tube, 10 centimetres (practically 4 inches) long, and 0·4 centimetres (about $\frac{5}{32}$ of an inch) in diameter inside, twisted to form a loop, as shown in the accompanying figure. At one end a small quantity of magnesium "photo-powder" is introduced: two-tenths of a gramme serving for the object-glass of a photographic camera of 2 centimetres ($\frac{25}{32}$ of an inch) aperture, and 10 centimetres (4 inches) focal length, when the light is at a distance of three metres (9·840 feet) from it. At the other end of the tube is attached a small india-rubber bulb, such as is used in ejecting liquid from a bottle in the form of spray. The loop of the tube is then inserted over the thumb, while the hand holds a lighted candle, as shown in the figure. The open end of the tube is thus obliquely presented to the largest part of the flame. A flash is thereby produced, giving a richly actinic light, lasting long enough for the purposes of photography. The device is so new that we are unable to say whether or not it is made for the market; but it is so simple that an amateur can readily make it for himself.



A Sand and Salt Shedder.

We illustrate herewith a new vehicle for distributing salt and sand on roadways whenever the weather demands it. The body of the machine consists of a large hopper containing a cubic yard of sand. A slide at the bottom regulates the rate of delivery, and a roller is placed underneath the opening. This roller is made up of loose rings on the shaft, and the sand falls in an even sheet on the distributing sieve. It is driven directly from the wheels. The machine is made in two sizes—one for a common road, the other for a tramway.

A SAND AND SALT SHEDDER.

A Japanese Plum.

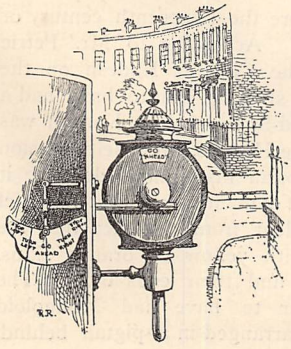
The Japanese fruit-shrub, known as the Kelsey plum, has been introduced into the south of England. It bears a heart-shaped plum, attaining to nine inches in circumference, yellow in colour, tinged with red on the sunny side, and very luscious to the palate.

Sugar-Cane Paper.

The stalk of the sugar-cane makes very good paper, and as much of the crushed fibre, called "megass," is burnt in the crushing mills for fuel, there seems to be an opening here for a new industry. The sugar-planters of the West Indies are not in flourishing circumstances, and the recent exhibition of cane paper in New Orleans may turn their attention to the matter.

A Cab Signal.

It is desirable to have a means of signalling between the fare and driver of a cab or hansom. This is provided by the apparatus we illustrate. It consists of a dial with a pointer in the cab, the dial showing directions, such as "Stop," "Turn to the left," &c. When the pointer is moved to one of these directions, a bell rings, and an indicator at the back of the lamp presents a corresponding direction to the driver.



A Word-Building Slate.

A little slate for use in the teaching of very young children or in Kindergarten classes has quite recently been patented. Into a groove at the top of the slate, blocks, upon which are printed various letters, may be inserted, and by their means children may be very quickly taught the changes which the addition or subtraction of a letter makes in the building up of words. A row of beads sliding on a rod in the frame of the slate serves also as a miniature counting frame, so the children may be taught other lessons than simple spelling by means of this slate.

A Light Pyrometer.

A new pyrometer, based on the colour of heated iron at different temperatures, has been introduced into France. Iron changes from red to orange, and then to white, as its temperature is raised. The eye, however, cannot distinguish the different shades without

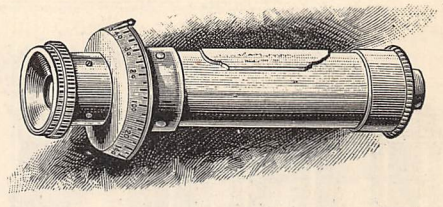


FIG. 1.

assistance, and hence it is aided by a telescope fitted with two Nicol prisms, one on each side of a plate of quartz. The light from the iron in passing through the first prism is polarised, and the plane of polarisation is turned in the quartz plate through an angle

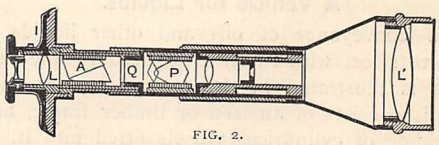


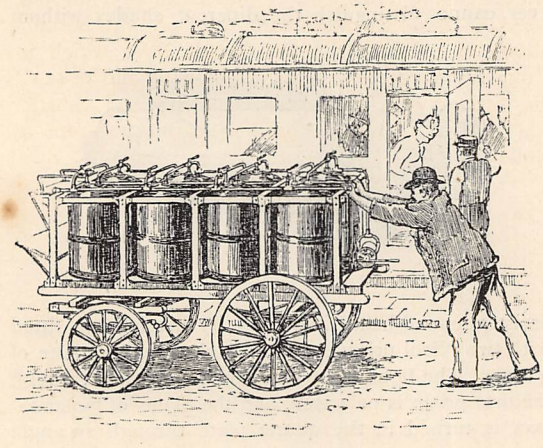
FIG. 2.

proportional to the wave-length, that is to say, the colour of the light. The second prism is used to measure this angle, and thus determine the colour of the iron. It is carried by a tube fitted with a graduated

head, and the graduations indicating the angle through which it turns correspond to the colours of the light. The apparatus is illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, where L′ is an objective lens receiving the light, P the first Nicol prism, Q a quartz plate, A the second Nicol prism, L the eye-lens, and I the graduated head which measures the angle. This pyrometer is now used at some of the largest ironworks in France.

What is Lanoline?

Among recent discoveries for the preservation of the skin, "lanoline" deserves attention. This substance has been calling forth considerable inquiry in scientific circles; so much so, indeed, that the well-known Professor Leibreich, of Berlin, took the matter up, and embodied the results of his investigations in a paper, which was read last year before the British Medical Association. The use of lanoline in its various forms, the professor declares, is scientifically proved to be highly conducive to the preservation of the health of the skin, for this reason — lanoline returns to the skin the emollient and stimulant which is often lost in the course of ablution. This it does from its power of easily penetrating and being readily absorbed by the skin. Soaps, chiefly composed of glycerine fats, cannot do this to the same degree. Lanoline, on the other hand, consists of cholesterine and cholesterine fats. As a basis for ointments, therefore, it is spoken of most highly by scientific men; and if experience should prove that Professor Leibreich's estimate of its powers is justified, lanoline will earn for itself a widely useful future.

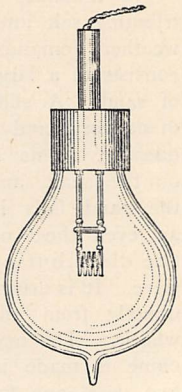


A Vehicle for Liquids.

The conveyance of oils and other liquids from street to street with safety is insured by the vehicle which is illustrated in the engraving. As will be seen, it consists of an iron or timber frame, having a number of cylindrical vessels fitted into it. The frame is readily lifted from a railway truck, and placed on a trolly, thus forming a vehicle. Both frame and carriage are provided by the makers. Two sizes are made, one capable of holding 400 and the other 800 gallons.

An Optical Electric Lamp.

When the electric incandescent lamp is used for optical purposes, with a reflector to concentrate the rays, it is an advantage to get the filament in the focus. Ordinary incandescent lamps are, however, not adapted for that, and hence the new form of Edison-Swan lamp, shown in the accompanying figure, has been introduced. It will be seen that the filament is in the form of a spiral, which makes it compact and capable of being wholly placed in the focus of a lens or reflector, when required for optical purposes.



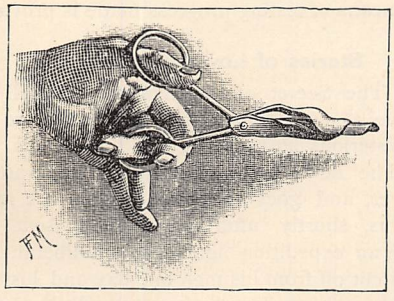
Printing Ink from Cotton Waste.

Printing ink is now made from the refuse oil extracted from cotton waste. Hitherto, when cotton refuse was cleansed, the oil was thrown away in the form of soap produced by boiling the waste in caustic soda liquor. Mr. Bastand, however, heats the waste in a close chamber, and pumps a solution of bisulphate of carbon on it. This disengages the oil and grease, and the combined bisulphate and oil are run into a second hot chamber, where the bisulphate is vaporised and collected for use again. The oil is then freed from moisture in a copper, and subsequently converted in another copper into the varnish from which printing ink is made by admixture with colouring matters.

The Blond Race of Palestine.

Professor Sayce has recently drawn attention to the fair-haired, blue-eyed people met in the mountainous parts of Palestine, and sometimes supposed to be descendants of the Crusaders, or other Europeans who found their way to the Holy Land during the Middle Ages. Recent discoveries of Mr. Petrie in Egypt have, however, thrown a new light on these peculiar folk. The ethnographic types depicted on Egyptian monuments at Abu-Simbel represent blue-eyed, red-haired persons, known as the "Shashu of Kanana," and the "Amaur." The former dwelt to the south of Hebron, and the latter are the Amorites of the Old Testament. Hence, a blond population existed in Palestine before the fourteenth century or period of the Crusades. According to Mr. Petrie there is a painting of the Chief of Kadesh on the walls of a Theban tomb, showing him to have had a white skin and light red-brown hair. Kadesh was the southern capital of the Hittites, after their invasion of Syria; but the Egyptian inscriptions describe it as being "in the land of Amaur," and that its chief was an Amorite is evident from the fact that the Hittites are depicted with yellow or orange skins, their hair being black, and their eyes dark. The Hittites, indeed, appear to have had Mongoloid features, the hair being arranged in a pigtail behind.

The Amorites, on the other hand, are represented as a tall and handsome people, with large sub-aquiline noses, a short pointed beard at the end of the chin, and long-skulled heads. The Egyptian monuments tell us that Palestine contained a white race before the arrival of the Israelites, and that it continued in the land after the Jewish conquest. Professor Sayce points out that the captives taken by Shishak from the cities of Judah in the time of Rehoboam have Amorite, not Jewish features. There is nothing in common between them and the Jewish-looking tribute-bearers of Jehu seen on the black obelisk from Nimroud now in the British Museum. Hence he infers that in the tenth century B.C. the main population of southern Judea was of Amorite origin.



A Pen Extractor.

The figure illustrates a pair of nippers designed to catch and draw out nibs from pen-holders without soiling the hands. The instrument is used like a pair of scissors, as will be seen from the cut. It will remove old and rusted pens without any trouble.

Non-Actinic Electric Light.

Electric incandescent lamps are sometimes used in the dark rooms of photographers; and, in order to render the light non-actinic, it is recommended that the bulbs should be painted over with a mixture of the red "fuschine" in negative varnish. It may be remarked that the lower the current the redder the light from an incandescent lamp is, and hence the less need there is for the paint.

New Silkworms.

The oak silkworms of China and Japan (*Attacus Peryni* and *A. Yama-mai*) have been acclimatised in Germany, by protecting them with gauze or wire nets, and changing them from branch to branch as the oak-leaves were consumed. In spite of late frosts and droughts, which proved injurious to the caterpillars in depriving them of food, considerable success has been met with. In California a new wild moth has been found on the poisonous species of *Rhamus californicus*. Its silk is as good as that of the domesticated Bombyx. In Yucatan another wild moth has been met with which produces a silk of a bluish tint, but the gum enveloping it is difficult to remove. Mr. J. MacIntyre, a recent traveller in Manchuria, met with several new species of silkworms. One of these fed on the Chinese pine, forming handsome cocoons of strong silk, but unfortunately mingled with the pine-needles, and therefore difficult to unwind. Another he observed on the walnut-tree, having a reticulated cocoon like a Chinese lantern. Two others were mulberry silkworms, very hardy, and capable of feeding on dandelion and lettuce leaves. One of them stayed in the same spot, the other roamed from branch to branch. It may also be mentioned that the cultivation of the Mexican *Attacus orizaba* is to be tried in France.

Tubular Solder.

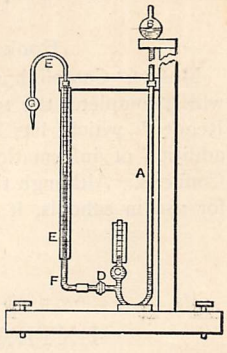
A handy form of solder has been introduced by Mr. Sinclair, a telephone engineer of Glasgow. The solder is cast in hollow tubes, which contain the resin used as a flux, so that both are melted by the soldering iron together, and the resin is kept clean. Resin, we may add, is a safe solder for electrical work, being dry and incorrosive. It is much used in connecting telephone wires.

A Sawdust Filter.

Carbonised sawdust, saturated with chemicals, has been introduced into Germany as a filtering and discolouring material. Sawdust is treated first with alum, then with sodium carbonate, and becomes impregnated with a precipitate of aluminium hydrate, which firmly adheres to it. After being washed with a solution of barium chloride until no precipitate is given, the sodium sulphate simultaneously produced is entirely removed, and the prepared sawdust is ready for use. Coloured liquids filtered with it have their colour entirely removed by the formation of lakes with the aluminium hydrates present in the filtering material. Sawdust saturated in this way with barium chloride is used for filtering liquids from which it is required to remove calcium sulphate, and a sawdust treated with magnesium sulphate and caustic soda is used to remove calcium carbonate from a solution.

A Thermo-Barometer.

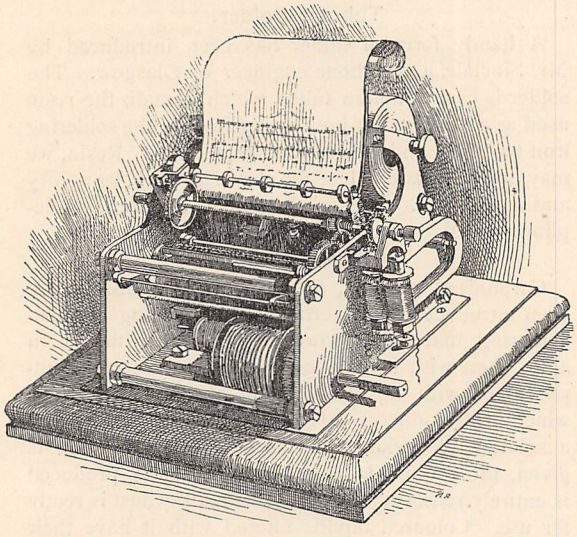
The figure illustrates a combined thermometer and barometer, G E F being the thermometer, connected with C A B, the barometer. The latter is purposely shortened in the figure by severance, the tube being too tall to show in a small figure. The scales of the two instruments are seen in their proper places; and the whole is mounted on a stand. The combination in question is recommended for hospitals, meteorological stations, and such-like places.



A Telegraphic Type-Writer.

A drawback to the type-printing telegraphic instruments which print off the latest intelligence and market prices in clubs and exchanges, is that the

message is all in one line on the running slip of paper. Messrs. Moore and Wright have, however, recently brought out a telegraph receiver of this kind which prints the message line after line, like the page of a book, or the sheet of a type-writer. This is effected by having two trains of clockwork, one to move the type-wheel which prints the message, and the other to shift the paper up when a line is printed. These trains of clock-work are controlled by the electric current in the line, through the agency of two electro-magnets. It



would occupy too much of our space to explain the whole action of the instrument, a general idea of which will be gathered from the view we give of it. The "column" type-printing telegraph, as it is called, will be useful for private work and exchanges, in place of the ordinary type-printer. It only requires one wire to convey the current, it works noiselessly, and it gives the items of news under appropriate head-lines in the form of columns and paragraphs.

Books for Citizens.

Messrs. Cassell have just issued a new edition, which completes the 100th thousand, of their "Citizen Reader," which has been revised to date by the addition of information respecting the new County Councils. Although the work was primarily intended for use in schools, it has been found serviceable by many who have left their school-days long behind, and in its improved form it should prove even more widely useful.—What the "Citizen Reader" does for our country, "A Ramble Round France" (Cassell & Co.) does to a large extent for our neighbours across the Channel, and teachers should find it useful for giving their young charges a correct picture of a land whose history brings it and its people so constantly in connection with our own land and people.

"Advice to Singers."

All singers, and all who would be singers, will find Mr. Frederick J. Crowest's "Advice to Singers" (of which Messrs. F. Warne & Co. have just issued a new edition) full of valuable hints and suggestions, and in the exercises with which they are accompanied a ready means of testing progress made is provided.

Stories of Love and Adventure.

In "The Secret of the Lamas" (Cassell & Co.) we have a story full of stirring adventure among the mysterious surroundings of the Lamas of Thibet. The hero, Cecil Aylward, is separated from his lover, and goes to India to join his regiment, which is, shortly after his arrival, sent to the front in an expedition against the Thibetans. Here Cecil is cut off from his men one day and lost on the hills, where he is found after some little time by a body of Thibetans and taken prisoner. He is well treated by his captors, and initiated gradually into all the mysteries of the Lamas; and in course of time acquires many of the powers of mesmerism and command over natural forces which are attributed to them. After a while he makes his escape from the Thibetans and reaches England, to find he has been given up for lost, and his lover is married to a scheming financier, who has won her hand but not her heart, through his command over her guardian. We must leave the book to tell its own story; but the reader will find in the work an abundance of marvellous adventure and keen interest.—Of "The Admirable Lady Biddy Fane," which has just been added by Messrs. Cassell to the same series as "The Secret of the Lamas," we need only say that it is a single-volume edition of a story by our contributor, Mr. Frank Barrett, which has already found many readers in another and more expensive form. We are sure that readers of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE will be glad to find Mr. Barrett's story in so accessible an edition.

EXTRA SUMMER NUMBER OF CASSELL'S MAGAZINE.

Simultaneously with this Number of the Magazine is published **"THE CROWN OF THE YEAR,"** *our Extra Summer Number for* 1889, *containing a Complete "One Volume" Story by the Author of "A Man of the Name of John," entitled "King or Protector?" as well as other Complete Stories and Papers. The price of the Number is Sevenpence, and it will contain the usual number of high-class illustrations by well-known artists.*

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

DOROTHEA'S hair was of the brightest gold—it was crisp, and waved about her forehead. It was not particularly long, but it was so thick and so curly that it could be arranged with a touch or two. She generally folded it tightly round her shapely head, but bright tendrils and curls would soon escape their bondage, and once or twice that charming bright head of hers was by very particular people termed untidy. Her eyes were dark, and of a violet tint, and both lashes and eyebrows were nearly black. This peculiarity gave to her face a distinguished appearance, and this, joined to a very changing expression, caused her to be considered not only beautiful but *piquante*. No person looked once at that fair face of hers who did not want to glance at it again. In figure she was tall, slightly above the average height; her movements were light and agile, and the slender proportions of her young frame were graceful.

In addition to beauty Dorothea had the rarer grace of absolute unconsciousness. There was something within her greater than her beauty. When engaged in her work, when occupied with that beloved art which seemed to fill all her soul, she had no time to remember that her hair was golden and her face fair. She loved beauty, as such a nature must, and when a great many people told her that she herself possessed it, she believed them and was thankful, but she never dwelt upon the fact, and so absorbed was she in other things that she absolutely forgot her own appearance, except when she was gazing at the pretty reflection of herself in the glass.

Helen, too, was a handsome girl, but she did not possess Dorothea's brilliancy. The two sisters, however, were sufficiently remarkable to cause many to notice them, and to predict for them both a distinguished future.

Dorothea was one of the pet pupils at the Academy Schools, and her masters often said that if she would only persevere, and work always as she worked sometimes, she might adopt any career in art, and bring to herself distinction in it.

Dolly, however, although beautiful and a genius, was one of the most capricious mortals under the sun. She had her up fits and down fits. One day her industry would be almost painful to witness, and the next her idleness would be a proverb in the school.

"I can neither think nor work," she would say, and her dark, deep, earnest eyes would look straight into her master's face, and fill with tears.

No man was proof against those violet eyes, softened by unshed tears, and Dolly generally had her own way, and idled on her idle days to make up for these fits with extravagant energy on her busy ones.

She passed through her career as an Academy student with a certain amount of distinction; her knowledge and her power grew, her results were already lovely, but those idle days prevented her from taking any large prizes, and Helen at last felt sure that this gifted and peculiar sister of hers would do better in a private studio. She consulted her good friend Mr. Russell, and he took steps to introduce the sisters to one of the most distinguished artists of the day. Mr. Anstruther refused to instruct any pupils who had not achieved a standard which he himself set up. He cared nothing for prize-winners or gold-medallists, but he adored freshness and originality. After five minutes' talk with Dolly, and a careless and apparently uncritical glance at one or two heads in black and white which she ventured to show him, he put his hand on her slight young shoulder, looked full into her face, and said—

"I will give you what knowledge I myself possess, and I may as well say at once that you have it in you to excel your master. You have got individuality—you can express your thoughts in your own way. Come to me for technical knowledge, if you will, but for goodness' sake be yourself, not me, in your pictures. To have a touch like this, a freedom and breadth of treatment like this, reduced to mere copyism, would be a degradation."

Helen was delighted with these words of praise, and Dolly, too, listened with glowing cheeks and a beating heart.

"Dorothea," said her sister, as they walked home, "if I live on bread and water to secure it for you, you shall work under Mr. Anstruther until he himself is satisfied and sends you elsewhere. Oh, Dolly! can you not rejoice at the thought that you may show to the world that, even in art, a woman may hold her own, and more than her own? You may be a Rosa

Bonheur—you may be even greater! Dolly, after what Mr. Anstruther said to-day, you surely feel that nothing in the way of art is impossible to you."

"On my working days I always feel that," said Dolly. "Yes, I will give myself up heart and soul to my grand beloved mistress, for I love her."

Before Helen went away, Dorothea had joined Mr. Anstruther's select band of pupils, and all was going well.

Emmy answered Bertha's letter, assured her emphatically that she was not troubled with regard to the false report about Captain Redfern, said a word or two further, and then lightly dismissed the subject. She knew that this way of treating it would comfort her mother more than anything else she could do, but she could not help partly undoing her own work by adding a fervent postscript, in which she begged of Bertha to forward her Indian letter to her the very moment it arrived. For the rest, Emmy's long epistle home seemed to bubble over with cheerfulness and hope; she told about her own prospects, and described in an amusing way the present state of affairs between herself and Dolly Channing. She said a great deal about her mother, begging of her to take care of herself, assuring her that she, Emmy, had two strong mainsprings of action. "One of them is centred round Frank," she said; "the other round my mother. Take either of them away and I am maimed and wounded—in short, I falter and fail in the fight. Tell mother, for my sake, if not for her own, to take care of that most precious life of hers." Then Emmy wound up her letter with a loving message to each of her brothers and sisters, and, finally, she made Bertha a very happy girl by the substantial gift of two shillings, which were forwarded through Her Majesty's post in the way indicated by that astute young lady.

Emmy obtained her ticket for the British Museum, and then her daily labours began. She worked, and read, and wrote, tearing up many pages of manuscript, altering her ideas from day to day, sometimes conscious of mild fits of despair, and at others of strong and stimulating hope. Still, she never faltered nor gave way, knitting her pretty brows and thinking hard.

A fortnight or three weeks passed in this way. Helen Channing was well on her way to America, Dorothea was established in her new art school, when one day as Emmy sat at her desk in the Reading-room, a pile of books at her side, some blank manuscript paper before her, a new pen in her hand, she was conscious of a strange face gazing at her earnestly. The face belonged to a tall, slight, foreign-looking man; he wore a short beard, and his hair was curled tightly over his head. He was standing not far from Emmy, by one of the bookshelves, and when she raised her eyes, she again encountered his piercing gaze. It troubled her intangibly, for the face of the stranger resembled some one she knew. She could not tell from where the likeness came for some moments, and she went through the somewhat irritating process, which every one knows, of trying to trace a likeness to its source. Then it flashed before her, and she smiled, the soft dewy colour rising into her cheeks. The stranger bore a fleeting likeness to Captain Redfern; he was different, for Captain Redfern was not very dark, nor as tall as the man who had favoured Emmy with those two quick glances, still he was sufficiently like to cause the girl's heart to beat with a mixture of both pleasure and pain.

She looked down again at her blank sheet of paper, and felt all in a moment that this curious fleeting likeness had been the cause of bringing to birth within her brain an idea which would serve as her first essay in writing for the public. The schoolgirl and schoolboy stories were set aside; the grander and more exalted ideas of showing up abuses, of teaching this somewhat unteachable world, were abandoned on the spot, and Emmy determined to tell those who cared to read, the simple and yet the great story of her own heart. She would put a young girl in her own position and talk about her; she would give the girl a faithful heart, and let her walk through the fires of doubt and anguish without faltering or failing. The girl should have a lover, and the lover should to all appearance be false, whereas in reality he was true in heart, word, and deed.

"I can write about this," thought Emmy Thorn, "for I am going through it," and then her pen flew rapidly, and she no longer looked about her for an idea.

Emmy generally stayed at her work till four o'clock, then, for Dolly's sake, she left off Dolly was home soon after five every day, and Emmy, remembering Helen's injunction, had taken this brilliant and somewhat difficult young lady more or less under her charge. She put by her books, rolled up her manuscript, and started to walk home. She went rapidly down Oxford Street, and turned into the Park at the Marble Arch, then she slackened her pace, for this was the part of her daily programme which she enjoyed most. She walked slowly, pausing to smile at every pretty childish face which met her own. The midsummer heat was now on, but Emmy was strong, and rejoiced in the warmth and sunshine. She could not help, however, giving a brief sigh for the fresher green of the country, for the trees in the Park had already lost their brightness, and looked in many cases both dark and dusty. Passing the Albert Memorial, she turned into Kensington Gardens, and then uttered an exclamation and prepared to quicken her steps. Coming slowly down a grassy sward in her direction she saw Dorothea. Emmy prepared to run to her; then she stood still, somewhat startled, with a curious feeling of dismay creeping into her heart. Although advancing in the direction from which Emmy Thorn was coming, Dolly evidently was not looking at her; some one else came up and joined her, and they both turned their backs and walked slowly away in another direction.

This some one was the stranger who had attracted Emmy's attention in the British Museum Reading-room.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

THE two walked away under the summer trees, and Emmy went home. She blamed herself for the feeling

of dismay which this small incident had excited. Why should not Dorothea meet a friend, and walk with him for a little under the trees in Kensington Gardens? On such a lovely evening, even a casual acquaintance might tempt this fair maiden to extend her walk a little.

"I am very silly to mind it," thought Emmy, as she left the Gardens, and walked quickly up Campden Hill. "Why should not Dorothea have a friend? Why should she not walk with him? Probably she knows him very slightly—doubtless she will tell me all about it when she comes in."

Then Emmy stopped in her walk, and gave vent to a short laugh, half of envy, half of pleasure.

"Poor Helen!" she said to herself, "does she think that that sister of hers—does she think that Dorothea the beautiful, the gift of God, for that is the meaning of her name—will always live for her cold mistress, Art? that nothing nobler or warmer will touch her—that art and fame alone will satisfy her? No, poor Helen! you must prepare yourself for disappointment, for now that I have come to let my true heart speak about this meeting, those two did not greet each other as casual acquaintances do. I know Dorothea, I know that gesture of her outstretched hands. I know that proud and yet glad way she has of holding her head when she is pleased, when her eyes are full of emotion. And he—he reminded me of Frank, and they both reminded me of Frank and of his poor Emmy Thorn, when they walked away together. This disturbs and agitates me, and I am both glad and sorry. I do trust that Dolly will tell me everything."

Emmy reached home, and ran up at once to Miss Phillimore's room.

"I have brought you some strawberries," she said, coming in, in her bright, brisk way, "and you know we saved some cream this morning, so you are going to have a feast to-night. Oh, I hope your back did not ache very badly to-day!"

"You are a blessed child," said Miss Phillimore; "and the sight of your face is the best medicine for my back. Oh, yes, it aches, dear; it always does, and always will. When I get to heaven I shall have fresh nerves in perfect order, and every day I am nearer to that consummation. Now, love, don't trouble about me; you have brought some good news. I know you have, your face is so bright."

Emmy laughed, and tossed her hat on the table.

"Is my face bright?" she said. "Well, think what cause I have to be cheerful—a glorious day, sun shining, birds singing, all the world, even the London world, looking its best. And then, to-day, *the* idea came: the great idea for the book which I am to write. I have begun it, and I know at least that it is truthful: two items for wearing a bright face, Miss Phillimore. And the third is that I am very well, and have plenty of hope."

"You are a dear child," repeated Miss Phillimore. "If I were a man I should like to have you for my wife. I once had a brother—such a grand fellow—and he married, no, not a nonentity, but a peevish, poor soul, who always lived in the shadow, and kept him there. He died young, and I always said it was Theresa sent him to his grave. Now, with such a wife as you, Emmy——"

"But was I born when he died?" asked Emmy.

"No, dear, no; I keep forgetting. My brother Jacob has been in his grave for four-and-twenty years. But I suppose there have been Emmy Thorns in all ages. Now run downstairs, love, and get your tea, for I'm sure you must be very hungry."

Emmy left her old friend, propped up by pillows, and slowly partaking of her strawberries and cream. A book lay open by her side, two roses in a glass gave both colour and perfume to the scene, and the evening sun came in through the open window. Nobody would now recognise Miss Phillimore's room; it was both bright and fresh, and she herself, always patient, looked now nearly happy.

"And that little creature made no fuss, but just did it," she said to herself. "A touch here, a touch there, and the difference was made. Helen Channing was kind, but she was always so terribly busy. What a blessing it is that there are some people who are not too much occupied in this bustling world! Why, Emmy Thorn has time to think of her mother, and of that fine fellow Captain Redfern; oh, of course he must be a splendid fellow, or Emmy would not care for him. And she can struggle to earn her daily bread, and yet she has abundance of time to take a daughter's place to a poor, useless old body like me."

Dorothea was late for tea that evening. She came in about seven o'clock, her eyes bright, and a faint glow on her usually pale face.

"I feel radiant," she said, flinging herself into the only easy chair the little room contained. "Oh, what an evening this is!"

She tossed off her hat, and pushed back her bright hair with her long white fingers.

"You'll have some tea now, Dolly, won't you?" said Emmy.

"Tea? Yes, thanks; I'm frightfully thirsty. Oh, those strawberries look good. Where did you buy them, Em?"

"In the Tottenham Court Road; they are much cheaper there than here."

"And you carried them all the way home?"

"Of course I did, dear—in a nice little basket which I bought for the purpose."

Dorothea's eyes wore a pensive expression. She looked out across the street, and sipped her tea with a sense of enjoyment.

"She won't tell me anything," thought Emmy. "I am sorry for that. But it would never do for me to tell her that I saw her this afternoon."

After tea Emmy took out some needlework, but Dorothea lay back in her easy chair, not offering to move. As a rule she was a talkative creature, but to-night she was silent, tapping her foot now and then with a certain rhythmic motion on the floor, and smiling to herself as she gazed out at a wonderful summer's evening, which even reflected some of its beauty into this very quiet and thoroughly town-like sitting-room.

"How soon do your holidays begin, Dolly?" suddenly asked Emmy.

Dorothea roused herself with a start.

"My holidays? I don't know. Mr. Anstruther keeps to no given rules. I suppose when he feels the need of fresh country air himself he will dismiss us."

"Are there many of you to dismiss?" asked Emmy.

"My dear good little soul, I really don't know. I generally work in a room by myself. To-day he brought me two models, a child and an old man, and he said, 'Make what picture you can out of these, and ask me for any background you think most appropriate.' He gives me my accessories, and then he leaves me alone, and I build up ideas day after day."

"And then?" said Emmy, her eyes shining—"Pictures come, don't they? Oh, I can see what you did to-day. I can see the child; the child meant youth, and was all curves, and rounds, and graces. And the old man—of course he was aged, and his face was rugged, as if it had encountered heaps of storms, but his eyes were calm, and he looked glad, as one does who sees the haven full in view. He knew that his discipline was nearly at an end. Of course you made a lovely picture out of such subjects. How did you pose them, and what background did you have?"

"I won't tell you that," said Dorothea, rising, and clapping her hands, "for that would be to publish my own shame. Why, Emmy, you are a painter yourself; you have got ideality, and you can see. Technical knowledge, with that gift, is soon acquired. No, Emmy, I did not pose my models as youth and age, and the child was not fair, and the old man had not the calm eyes of victory. I composed a picture, it is true, and I put in the first colours; but when Mr. Anstruther saw the dawning of my idea he shuddered, and washed the whole canvas over, and told me to try again."

"Oh, poor Dolly! how trying to have your whole day's work go for nothing!"

"It did not quite go for nothing, for I tried a certain effect, and found the result grotesque in the extreme: thus I am warned off that rock for the future: a very good lesson for one day, I can tell you, Miss Emily. Oh, dear, how soft and gracious the evening is! how I wish we were in the country!"

"Will you come down to my home with me when your holidays do begin, Dolly?"

"I should like it, dear; but there is no use promising so far ahead. This is only the middle of June, and Mr. Anstruther is certain to keep us to our work until August."

"I wonder where Helen is now?" said Emmy; "she must have landed by now. The heat in New York will be almost unbearable just at present. I do hope it won't knock her up."

"I don't think so; Nell is very strong, and the friends she is to stay with are sure to take her away to some cooler part of their world almost directly."

"You will be glad when she comes back again," said Emmy.

At this innocent speech a great flood of colour spread itself over Dorothea's fair face.

"Yes, I shall be glad," she said. "She is the best of sisters. Do you know, Emmy, that early as it is, I feel so dead beat, that I think I shall go to bed."

The next morning there was no doubt whatever that Dolly was oppressed by one of her lazy fits; she had not had one since Helen left, and Mr. Anstruther had never yet seen her on the days when she simply could not work.

"Is it worth going?" she said to Emmy. "Why, the brush will fall from my hand. Oh, how sleepy I am! Oh, how I hate the eternal grind of art!"

"Dolly! your beautiful art—your adored mistress!"

"Don't talk to me about her; she rules me with a rod of iron. This is a day when one should lie on the grass, and make daisy-chains."

"Dolly, you look very pale. Are you ill?"

"Only incorrigibly lazy, my dear. There! Helen knew the mood; it will pass, if you only give me time."

"Would you rather not go to the studio? I will leave a note for Mr. Anstruther."

"No, dear, I must struggle to my feet and get there somehow. It is only fair that that dear disciple of art should not be deceived in me. He will know to-day what chance Dorothea Channing has of distinguishing herself."

Dolly went to her bedroom, attired herself in a very becoming soft grey washing dress, put on her shady grey hat, and a small black lace scarf round her neck, and started off in a very unwilling frame of mind to her daily task.

Emmy went to hers, and worked with energy, but between her and the mind-pictures which she was conveying to her paper came the vision of Dolly's sweet, proud, tired-looking face. Helen had been so anxious about her when she had these lazy fits on. Had Emmy acted rightly in not forcing her to lie down on her bed and sleep off her fatigue? These thoughts occurred again and again, and at last Emmy resolved to sacrifice an hour of her own work, and call for Dorothea at her studio. She did so, to be greeted by the information that Miss Channing had left early in the day. In alarm Emmy hastened home; but no Dorothea was there, nor had Miss Phillimore heard any signs of movement in the girls' sitting-room. At seven that evening Dolly again came back looking bright and radiant, and having shaken off all traces of fatigue.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

DOROTHEA CHANNING had not left Mr. Anstruther's studio with any double thought; the fatigue and drowsiness which were but the natural reaction of her intense moods had simply overpowered her; she felt that she could not work, she could not keep her heavy eyes open. Rising at last in haste, she went to her master and told him so.

"This is one of my bad days," she said. "I cannot work to-day. I am subject to fits of helplessness and idiocy, and I do hope you will not subject me to the terrible mortification of making a worse blunder than

I made yesterday. May I go home now, and come back my brightest and best in the morning?"

No one could resist such serious and appealing eyes, and Mr. Anstruther did not even pretend to be proof against them.

"Go home, my child," he said; "such fits of indolence are but the natural reaction which must set in, in natures such as yours."

softly, under her breath. "It is not yet three o'clock, and I don't believe he ever walks in the Park so early. He won't be here, but if he were, if I saw him, and if he spoke to me, then my laziness would vanish, my sleepiness would go. I want strong excitement to shake off such fits, and he could do it."

She walked along, quickening her pace a little, and looking eagerly straight before her. Already her eyes

"THEY BOTH TURNED AND WALKED SLOWLY AWAY IN ANOTHER DIRECTION" (*p.* 514).

He smiled kindly at her, showed no sense of disappointment, as on previous occasions some of her masters at the Academy had done, and Dorothea left the studio.

It was still early, the heat was great, and she walked very slowly. She had money in her pocket, and could have driven home in a hansom if she had pleased; more than one omnibus also invited her into its shady retreat, but Dolly preferred to walk, and, when she came to the Park, she entered it with a sigh of relief.

"Of course he won't be here at this hour," she said

had lost their cloudy expression, and were bright, and yet soft, with a scarcely acknowledged hope.

"It will be impossible for him to be here, and, of course, Nelly won't want me to-day, as I saw her yesterday; and yet—and yet"——Dorothea drew up hastily at one of the gates; a girl with a basket of roses was standing there. Dolly beckoned her to her side, and there and then made lavish purchases. The price of two cabs home was expended on a glowing mass of radiant blossoms. Dolly pressed her face into the delicious fragrance and walked on.

"Nell would like these roses," she said to herself,

"and we don't want them in our house. We are always out, both Emmy and I; the roses would bloom and fade without our knowing it. What a pity he does not come!—I mean, what a pity it is this is not his hour for walking in the Park, for he could take these roses home to Nell."

Here Dorothea stopped, sighed, and coloured.

"What would Helen say if she heard me?—if she thought that *I*, Dorothea, who had vowed that art should be my one resource, that fame should be my one goal and object, could talk or think of any 'he,' as if it mattered whether I met him or not! And of course it does not matter," she added, with a ring of insincerity colouring even her thoughts. "Only he amuses me when I am bored, and he helps to lift me out of myself."

"Miss Channing!"

She started, her face turned crimson, her heart seemed for one moment to stop beating, then it bounded tumultuously in her breast. So loudly was it beating, that she surely thought the one who accosted her must hear it.

"Mr. Marston," she said, in some agitation.

"Yes, is not this lucky? I came out on the chance, and lo, and behold I saw a young lady, and a great bunch of roses. My fortunate star is in the ascendant to-day."

They had come to a part of the road where two ways meet, and Marston, without a word of explanation, led Dorothea in the direction away from her home. She neither noticed nor heeded this, but walked on, only conscious of the loud beating of her heart and the tumultuous sense of happiness which was surging through her frame. After the first exclamation not a word passed her lips, but she buried her face again in the great bunch of roses, and took a long draught of their sweetness. Dorothea's complexion was of the pure pale sort, which is perhaps the healthiest in the world. When she flushed, the roses on her cheeks were even then but blush roses, and it was only the strongest excitement which gave her any colour.

The blush roses on those fair cheeks of hers were now, however, in perfection, and her lovely eyes glanced shyly before her.

"Dorothea," said Marston, after a pause, "look at me. What is the matter? How is it you have played truant, and come out of school so early to-day?"

"You have no right to call me Dorothea."

"I beg a thousand pardons. You looked so like a happy child, I could not help it. Will you forgive me if I promise never to transgress again?"

"Never?" said Dolly, in a tone of almost fright. "Oh, I did not mean that. Of course I forgive you. The fact is," she added suddenly, and with a great effort resuming her usual sprightly manner, "I have had one of my lazy fits, and so, as I have a very indulgent master, he allowed me to leave school before the conventional hour."

"Good master, and good child for coming! And so you bought the roses, and you walked in the Park, and you looked for—me."

"I did not—I had no hope of finding you. I—I—bought the roses because they are always good for headaches, such as I suffer from when I am lazy."

"Does your head ache now?"

"Oh, no."

"Do you feel lazy?"

"Not in the least."

"That is good. Suppose we have a boat; it is a frightfully cockney amusement, but no matter. Shall we have a boat for an hour, and then go home to tea to Nell?"

"But she does not expect me to-day."

"Yes, she does; she sent me out to look for you. The fact is, she is in the most irritable condition, and wants your soothing touches."

"Poor dear—but I never yet soothed any one."

"I cannot say I agree with you."

"It is perfectly true, Mr. Marston."

Dorothea turned her eyes full upon him now, and spoke earnestly—

"I am the reverse of a soothing factor in life; I excite those who come in contact with me. I either make them furiously angry with me, or now and then, when the mood is on me, I give them a sense of rejoicing."

"I can testify to the latter part of your speech. The 'mood,' as you call it, must be always on you when we are together."

Dolly once again hid her face in her roses. They had reached the Serpentine, had secured a boat, and were now floating idly down the stream. Dolly sat in the stern—she had pushed her hat forward over her eyes, and Marston, who was rowing, could see nothing of the upper part of her face, but he noticed that the pretty mouth trembled.

"What an intense young soul!" he murmured to himself; "and what a terrible capacity that girl has for suffering! You will come to Nelly?" he said presently.

"Yes, if you and she wish it; there will be no one at home, and Nell may like these roses. Mr. Marston," said Dorothea suddenly, pushing back her hat, and flinging the roses on the seat by her side, "I want to confess something to you—it is this: when I meet you, thus, when day after day I come into the Park, or into Kensington Gardens, and you come to me, and we talk, and have what is a very good time to me, I am doing wrong—I know, in my heart of hearts, that I am doing wrong."

"You are making me happy," said Marston. "I fail to see where the wrong comes in."

"But Helen knows nothing of this."

"How can she, when she is in America?"

"I could write to her."

"I would if I were you," said Marston, after a pause. Then he added, after a second pause of greater duration than the first, "It would not sound very much to tell—your meeting a friend once or twice in the Gardens."

"I am uncomfortable at her not knowing," said Dolly, in a low voice.

"From the tone of your voice, you doubtless fancy she would not approve?"

"I know she would not; she thinks I am devoted to art, as she is to learning and improvement of all sorts; she thinks that art will quite satisfy me, and that I may become a great painter, as she most certainly will be a great and learned and respected woman some day. She pictures this time, she works so hard for it, she lives so entirely for it—the time when she and I shall have reached our goal, shall have found our mission, and shall live together happy in the consciousness that we are helping other women."

"Happy in that consciousness?" said Marston. "Good gracious! she wants you to be an old maid, I suppose."

"I never thought of that," said Dolly, catching up her roses, and pushing her hat forward again. "I mean," she added, after a pause, more truthfully, "that I have thought of it, and so has Helen. Helen thinks it best, best for themselves and for the world, that a certain number of women should put marriage altogether out of their calculations."

"She expects you to join this select band?"

"Well, we always did arrange it so. I was perfectly happy in the thought."

"And you are still happy in the thought?"

"I was going to confess something," said Dorothea. "I am not exactly happy about anything just now, and art does not quite content me."

"Good. The absolute folly your sister talks will not come to pass in your case, Miss Channing. What a lovely day this is! Why, even the Serpentine acquires sylvan charms when I sit in a boat with you facing me."

The talk drifted into airy nothings—very delightful to the two who were at present in the blissful condition of unacknowledged lovers. They played hide-and-seek with the subject, and found the occupation engrossing. Time flew by on golden wings, and smiled at the two happy hearts. Marston was a handsome fellow, athletic and wiry. If he had weak lines in his face they were hidden by his beard and moustache; the upper portion of his clearly-cut features looked reposeful and strong; and as his eyes glanced at Dolly, they certainly assumed a very tender and sympathetic expression. Dorothea was acknowledged by all who looked at her to be beautiful; and to-day excitement and tenderness and emotion added new charms to her face—something deeper and greater and more divine even than genius shone from her lovely eyes. Many people turned to look at the pair.

After rather more than an hour thus spent on the Serpentine they walked slowly in the direction of Marston's house. He lived in a pretty little house in Bayswater, with one sister — the Nelly of whom Dorothea spoke.

Nelly had been a student in the Academy, and had met with a bad accident there, to the extent of severely spraining her ankle, a little time ago. She and Dorothea had always been friends, and on this occasion Dolly had taken her home. Here, for the first time, she had met Marston, to whom, however, the gifted girl's name was by no means strange. He was an artist himself, had gone through the usual curriculum of art education, and was already rising high in his profession.

The two now turned into the Bayswater Road, and walked slowly, very slowly, in the direction of Marston's home.

"Nelly will be waiting for us, and have tea ready," he said. "She cannot put her foot to the ground yet. I never could have believed that a simple thing like a sprain could have so upset any one's nerves. Nelly is simply fractious from morning till night."

"Oh, Mr. Marston!" exclaimed Dorothea, suddenly stopping short; "do you see that child with blue eyes, in the middle of the street? How she does gaze at my roses!"

"Hungrily, poor little mite," said Marston. "She is a pretty little creature; shall I give her a shilling?"

"No, no, she does not want money; money would hurt her. Do you observe the intense look in her eyes? Oh, I cannot help it, I must——"

She ran impulsively across the street, and thrust the great bunch of flowers into the girl's hands.

"There, darling, take them as the gift of God," she said. And without waiting for a word of thanks, she returned to her companion's side.

"What about Nelly?" asked Marston, when they had walked a little way in silence.

"She must do without; I gave them to the one who needed them most. Oh, what a sad world this is! it goes through and through my heart to see a look like that on a little child's face."

"Be comforted, Miss Channing; for the present, at least, that little child's heart is full of unspeakable bliss. You did not see her face when she darted away with her flowers."

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

THERE was a curious little wall of reserve between Emmy and Dolly. This might not have existed if Emmy had not known that Dorothea possessed a secret which she was keeping from her. In that case Emmy at least would have been frank and outspoken; but now both were a little conscious, both had a sense of having something to conceal from the other, thus the intercourse between the two girls became more or less stilted.

Emmy was working hard, straining every nerve to acquire knowledge, occupying every moment of such valuable time, and now and then, it is to be feared, in the silent, friendly darkness of the night, crying herself to sleep. For one or two more Indian mails had come in, and no letter had arrived from Captain Redfern, and Emmy could no longer disguise the fact from her own heart that she was anxious. Of course Frank was true, but he might, he must be ill, poor fellow; something must have happened to him.

Emmy told her troubles to no one; about herself she had always been reserved, never making any fuss about her happiness; she would certainly, therefore,

hide her wounded heart; she would rather die than make an audible moan.

Dorothea got over her lazy fit, and worked again with fresh zeal and energy. Although she was pale her complexion now was almost brilliant in its rare delicacy; her eyes had such a happy light in them that she often drooped her lids, fearing that Emmy might read the secret hidden in their depths. She was making rapid progress in her work, and being, unlike Emmy, the reverse of reserved, amused herself evening after evening in recounting her master's praises to her sympathising companion.

Dolly turned her back, and began to pull the flowers out of a vase.

"I did think of it," she said, in a would-be careless tone; "but I have changed my mind. Nelly Marston is not well enough to come, and there is no—certainly, there is no one else."

"Who is Nelly Marston?" asked Emmy. "I don't know her name."

"You don't know? How very funny! She is one of my greatest friends. She sprained her ankle some weeks ago, and is lying on a sofa, poor dear, all through the lovely weather. I have often told her about you, and

"FLOATING IDLY DOWN THE STREAM" (*p.* 518).

One morning she told Emmy that she had completed an original painting which Mr. Anstruther considered so good that he had asked three or four artists, whose opinion he valued, to come and pass judgment upon it.

"They are to come this afternoon," said Dorothea, "and I am to meet them, as he would like me to know, he says, some of the world in which I am certain to move; he says, also, I may bring any friends of my own, so will you come, Emmy? Will you meet me at the studio this evening at four? Oh, you are not to coax the subject of my picture out of me, you are to keep your curiosity back until you see. When you see, oh, when you see, I wonder what you will think!"

Dorothea clapped her hands, rose from her seat, and began flitting restlessly about the little sitting-room.

"You will come, Emmy, won't you?" she said—"you will faithfully promise to come?"

"I will come, of course," answered Emmy. "But are you not going to invite any other friends?"

she would like to know you. Will you come with me to see her after we have left the studio to-night? It would amuse her to hear of my little triumph, and I can introduce you to her. She is just one of your sort."

"How do you mean one of my sort, Dolly?"

"She is one of the sick and tired people who need comfort—just like the old lady upstairs, who fairly worships the ground you walk on. You will be sure to come, won't you, Emmy?"

Emmy promised, and a few moments later Dorothea went away.

Punctually at the hour Emmy arrived at the studio that evening; she found several visitors had already arrived, amongst them some artists of note, and some girls and men who belonged to Mr. Anstruther's studio. Dorothea was evidently the main object of attraction. She was in white, and her cloudy golden hair surrounded her fair face like a halo. Her spirits

were evidently at their highest point of exuberance; she talked brilliantly, and her repartees as well as her beauty attracted attention. Emmy slipped away into a corner, and sat down quietly to await the result. Presently Mr. Anstruther came in; he was a little man, with a wiry frame, and a dark, resolute face; his keen eyes appeared to see every one and everything at once; nothing escaped his quick glance, and Emmy was not surprised when he looked at her. She did own, however, to a feeling of astonishment when his second sharp glance provoked an exclamation of wonder.

"The original of the picture!" he exclaimed. "Miss Channing, your secret is out; pray introduce me to your friend."

At the same time he drew aside a curtain which concealed a canvas standing on an easel. When he did this every one in the room understood his sudden exclamation; there were simply two Emmy Thorns—a pictured one and a real one—present. Dorothea blushed, her eyes sparkled, and, taking Emmy's hand, she led her forward, and made her stand beside the representation of herself portrayed upon the canvas. The real Emmy wore her favourite soft grey dress, she had a bunch of roses in her belt, and her black lace hat was pushed a little back from her low forehead; the pictured Emmy was differently attired: she had on the dress of a Sister of the Red Cross, and that, and a certain added pathos in her soft brown eyes, and a little addition to the patient waiting, the gentle expectancy which seemed ever to sit round the sweet curves of her lips, made the pictured face look so much sadder than the living one, that Emmy herself clasped her hands almost supplicatingly, and said, with tears springing to her eyes—

"Oh, Dorothea, that is not a prophecy?"

"No, it is a conception, born out of your character, and indebted to your face for its life," said the artist. And then she bent forward and kissed Emmy, and, turning to her friends, said—

"She would suit such a vocation, would she not? Should you not like to engage her to nurse you if you were very ill, and very, very sad and lonely?"

Emmy did not know why those words brought to her an absolute sense of distress. She was glad to turn away from some rather meaningless compliments which began to be poured forth, and to take up an unobtrusive position behind the window curtain.

Art jargon began to be spoken on all sides, and Emmy heard phrases which seemed to her absolutely meaningless. Miss Channing had shown very nice feeling in her delineation of her subject; she had not "frittered" any of her "values," and the background, boldly executed in the same colour as the prominent central figure, was a courageous conception, and showed the originality and genius of the young painter.

Dorothea listened and chattered and argued. She was not overcome by conceit, she was simply elated, and childishly pleased at so much praise; each word of approval was tasted and appreciated as if it were a bon-bon, and the blush roses came and went on her lovely cheeks. People who looked at her this afternoon predicted that the young girl would have success in more ways than one. Before the assembled visitors departed, the general conviction was that Dorothea's simple little picture would most likely receive a place of honour on the line at the next year's Academy.

"Was not it all splendid?" said Dolly, as she and Emmy Thorn walked through the Park on their way to Miss Marston's. "Of course I could not tell you the subject beforehand, but your face was as good as a play when Mr. Anstruther pounced on you. You will forgive me now for having studied your face so long and so often, darling; and you must at least own that I have achieved a success with you."

"You have idealised me," said Emmy. "But why did you make me a Sister of the Red Cross?"

"Oh, you fitted the part so perfectly. Everybody saw it, and said so. Emmy, dear, I did feel triumphant when everybody began to praise us both—me for my talent, you for the sweetness of your face."

"I wanted Helen to be there," said Emmy. "She would have been proud of you, Dolly. When they spoke, as some of them did, about your future being an assured success, I know the tender kind of light that would have filled her eyes. Helen lives for you, Dolly. I never saw a sister so devoted to another."

This remark, for some reason, seemed to damp Dorothea's spirits. She made a somewhat lame reply, and soon changed the subject. The two girls hastened their steps, and found themselves at the Marstons' pretty little house in Terry Street, Bayswater, soon after six o'clock. Nelly Marston was lying on the sofa in the drawing-room. She was an *empressée* little sort of personage, with a small face, very dark hair and eyes, and an expression at once eager and fretful. She looked at Dorothea evidently with adoration, and pulled her down to kiss her.

"So you have come at last; and this is Miss Thorn? Sit near me, Miss Thorn. I have heard a great deal about you. Will you take that chair, please—that chair facing me, please?—I should like to see your face when you talk. Dorothea, darling, here is your arm-chair, just where you best like it—Edgar placed it there himself; he is in his studio, I know; he will be in directly."

Dorothea removed her hat, darted a very quick glance at Emmy, who did not return it, and lay back with a slight sigh in the depths of a very luxurious chair. Emmy and Nelly Marston began to talk, but Dorothea hardly joined; she pretended to be resting, and yawned once or twice to show how weary she was, but in reality every faculty in her was absorbed in watching the door.

It opened at last, and Marston, looking picturesque in a brown velveteen coat, came in; he spoke to his sister, was introduced to Miss Thorn, whom he scarcely noticed, and then he and Dorothea moved away to the further end of the somewhat long drawing-room. Presently Marston's voice was heard addressing his sister.

"Nelly, I am going to take Miss Channing to see my peasant children; let us know when tea is ready."

"Certainly, Edgar," replied Nelly Marston, in a somewhat prim voice. She glanced at Emmy, who suddenly felt herself redden, and could not understand why she felt so remarkably uncomfortable. Edgar Marston had again in an intangible manner reminded her of her own lover. She hastily repressed a sigh, and turned her attention to the invalid girl who had been anxiously scanning her face.

"What do you think of him?" asked Nellie, bending forward and throwing off any semblance of disguise. "Do tell me that you think him worthy of her; that you believe it will be the most perfect thing in the world for them both."

Emmy felt herself turning stiff and cold.

"I cannot affect to misunderstand your meaning," she said, after a pause, "but as Dorothea has never discussed the subject with me, I would rather not talk of it now. Can I read to you, or do anything to amuse you?"

"One's guests do not amuse one, as a rule," said Nellie, with a petulant little frown. "It is, as a rule, the other way."

Then she smiled, tossing brightly aside her momentary ill-humour. "I forgot that you were out of the common," she said. "You are Emmy Thorn, of whom I have heard so much."

"And I never heard of you—never, until to-day," said Emmy.

Nellie laughed quite merrily.

"Oh, what a reserved Dolly she is!" she exclaimed. "Of course, you know why she could not speak of me." Then she added rapidly, "I must say one thing to you: you don't suppose that Edgar has discussed this thing with me—neither he nor Dorothea has said a word, only, of course, one sees; any one who watches them together cannot help seeing. Is not that so?"

"I believe you are right," said Emmy, with a sigh.

"Yes, I know I am right. Now, I want to tell you about Edgar. He is the dearest fellow—a little eccentric, perhaps, and with peculiar views, but he is a genius, just as your Dolly is a genius, and they both love the same thing. To them both, art means much. You cannot imagine how changed Edgar is since he has known your friend. She has seemed to supply to him just what he always lacked; he is very uncommon, and very peculiar, and he needed sympathy, and she can supply it. Before he met her he had only me, and I am commonplace. I went to the Academy Schools, certainly, and studied art, because we are a family of artists, but I have none of the higher elements in me. I should probably have gone in for decoration, and I have no particular ambition, except, perhaps, just to please Edgar, and you know I am not beautiful. I am dark, like Edgar; but I am insignificant, and I have none of his good points. I know I must have been a wearisome sort of companion for him, although I tried my best; and I am glad, very glad that this has come to pass, and that he is likely to be abundantly satisfied."

"I know one thing that you have got," said Emmy bending forward, and taking Nelly Marston's thin little hand between her own; "you have got one rare and beautiful thing."

"I? You excite my curiosity. What can it be?"

"You are unselfish, and that is greater than beauty or genius; oh, yes, much greater—in God's sight much greater."

END OF CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

AN UNBEATEN TRACK IN DONEGAL.

THOROUGHLY done up and suffering from all-overishness, I turned in to see a friend in Victoria Street, and I told him how I felt.

"Take a prescription I will give you," he said, "and I will engage a cure inside of three days."

"Oh, yes," I said; "Boulogne, Brittany, &c., of course!"

"No such thing," he replied, "I mean a trip quite new, out of the beaten track and free from all conventional restraints. Promise obedience."

"I promise," I said.

"Then take your note-book. Route, Liverpool—Transatlantic steamer to Moville, where they take in the mails; go ashore and strike right into Innishowen."

"But," said I, "where and how am I to go from that?"

"Never mind," he replied; "'stand not upon the order of your going, but go.' It will be revealed to you then and there. Don't forget your sketch-book, and take this geological map and notes. You will see something to interest you in that way."

"We are nearing Moville, sir," said the steward the second morning after, "and I believe you are going ashore here—the shore boats will be alongside in twenty minutes."

A little later I was standing at the gangway.

"I hope, sir," said the captain, "your luggage is clear."

"Thanks," I said, "it is all here," pointing to a very small bag.

"Ah!" he said, "that is well. I landed a young couple here not long ago, and they managed, how I cannot tell, to have everything they had in the

world at the bottom of the New York luggage—of course they had to land without it, and we took it to New York, and home again, and they had to pay the freight both ways! Adieu."

A handsome pinnace came alongside, and a voice sang out—

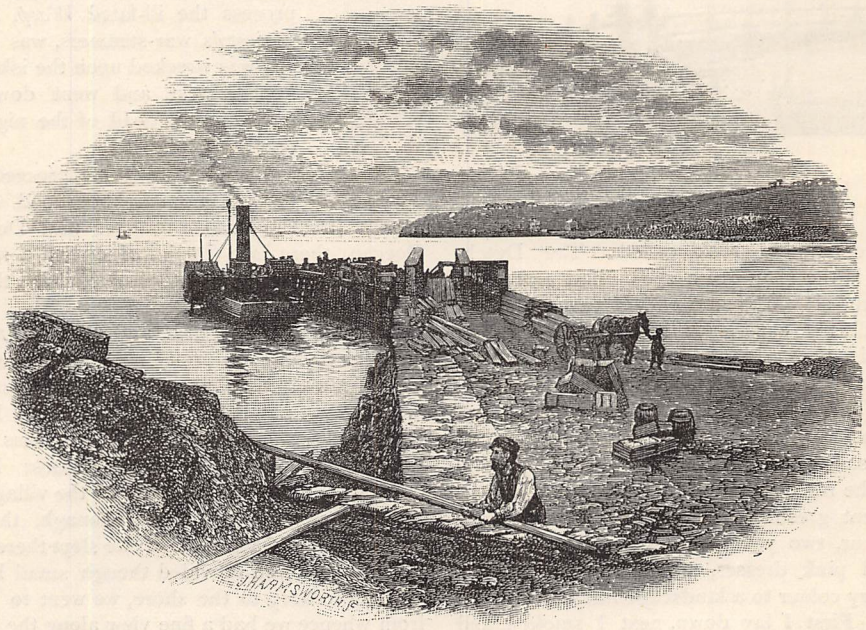
"Is Mr. —— of London on board?"

"Yes," I replied, "but who on earth are you?"

"A friend of Mr. —— of Victoria Street, Westminster, who wired me to take charge of you, and show you round Innishowen."

Another minute and we were sailing in a lively breeze along a lovely shore, high hills rising from the water's edge, on to Greencastle, where my new-found friend put me up. Moville and Greencastle, within three miles of each other, sparkle in the landscape, upon the eastern shore of what I may call the promontory of Innishowen, which on this side is bounded by Lough Foyle; they are the summer resorts of the people of the city of Londonderry, which lies about eighteen miles further up the lough. Opposite Greencastle and rising from golden sandhills are the frowning escarpments of the Trappean hills of County Derry; below us was Lough Foyle, with the steamer standing out to sea after having taken the American mails on board. Luncheon over, I felt a new man; already an air I had never breathed before was beginning to make me feel better than a day earlier I could think possible. How to squeeze into a reasonable space my experiences of the next few days is my present difficulty, and I must leave out much I fain would write.

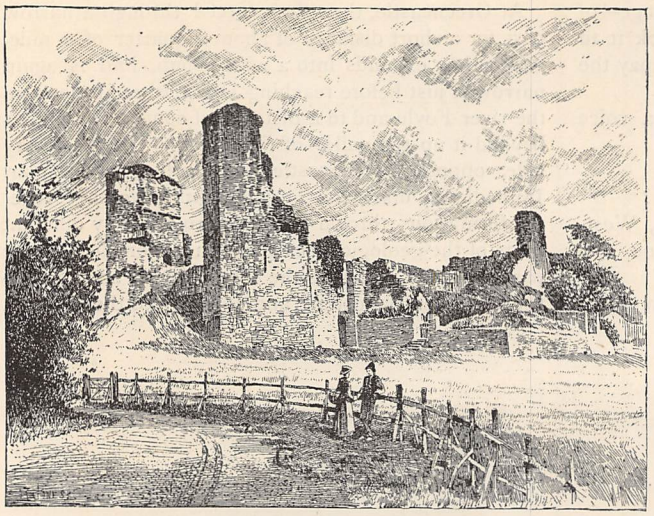
At Greencastle, the tide is forced through a narrow pass for a short distance of about a quarter of a mile, and it then expands into a wide lough, and is again narrowed just before reaching Derry, where it flows up the river Foyle and to a distance of some twenty miles beyond it up the valley of the Finn. On the Derry side, opposite Greencastle, the geology is peculiar. Immediately under the Trappean hills, we have several formations thrown together from widely different parts of the geological scale, and in a short distance we pass from the Chalk to the Green Sand, and then to the New Red Sandstone, and at a step to the Old Red Sandstone. Towards evening I saw a stirring scene; numerous boats—Greencastle is famous for its fishing-yawls—started out from all sides. I counted sixty within sight at one time, and they were all going out salmon-fishing upon the high sea at night. I was surprised to find that these poor toilers of the sea were obliged to pay £3 licence per annum for each boat before they were, as they expressed it, allowed to wet a net. I think that is hard. The toil is severe enough, and many of these poor men lose their lives, so dangerous is the coast.



THE LANDING-PLACE, MOVILLE, LOUGH FOYLE.

(*From a Photograph by Lawrence, Dublin.*)

Next morning, we went round the north coast as far as Culdaff. The coast is simply splendid; grotesque pointed rocks standing up everywhere, with a highly-coloured sea crashing amongst them; verdure of the most delicate tints, covering even the very face of many of the cliffs down to the water's edge, all combined to give an intensity of delicious colouring to the landscape. We went ashore at a little bay, called Glennagivenny, surrounded by steep and high in-



GREENCASTLE.

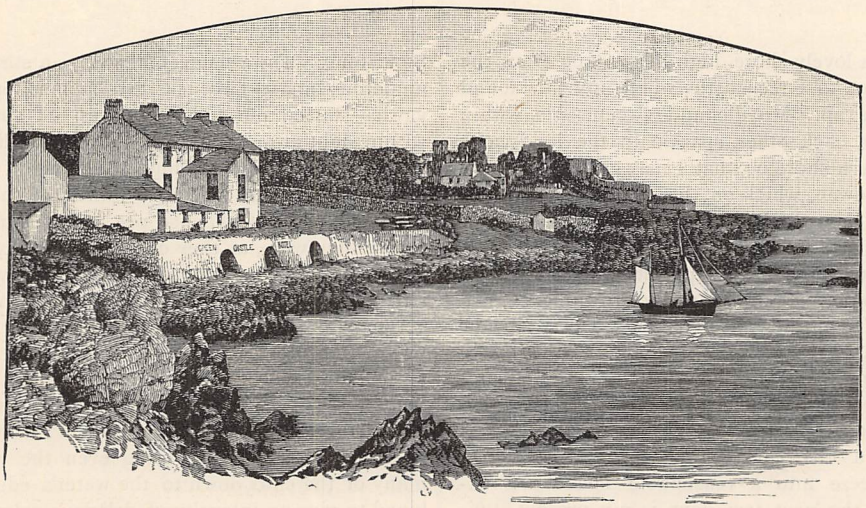
(*From a Photograph by Lawrence, Dublin.*)

clines. A remarkable rock called "The Dutchman," which is the shape of a spear-head and some sixty feet high, stands at one end of this little bay. I never in all my experience saw such a blaze of colour as this spot gave. The almost black rock pointed up into a brilliantly blue sky; a perfectly emerald sea broke in gigantic waves around it, and dashed themselves into the whitest of foam upon pure golden sands, while from the edge of the little strand rose the high cliffs, tinted with the most delicate opalescent green hues; and, to crown the harmony of colour, two young ladies with brilliant red parasols, and pink dresses, supplied the necessary complementary colour to a landscape instinct with life and motion. First I lay down, next I smoked, and then I sipped nectar, that is, I drank half a can of delicious buttermilk which my friend had scrambled up the face of the hill, in a broiling sun, and got at a cabin.

We slept that night at Tremone—a little farther on—at a half farmer's house, half lodging-house; the Atlantic rollers pounding themselves to diamond dust at our feet. Lying outside a bold headland, was to be seen the island of Innistrahull. It is inhabited by a primitive and most orderly people, who scarcely ever come to the mainland. They were not long ago under the ban of evictions, to aid in which process the ill-fated *Wasp*, one of Her Majesty's war-steamers, was going when she was wrecked upon the island of Tory, further west, and went down with all hands in the dead of the night, with no one left to tell why.

Next morning we proceeded to Culdaff. The neighbourhood abounds in rude stone crosses and Dolmens. At Boccan there is a Druidical circle, a small Stonehenge, but most of the stones have been thrown down or removed.

Here we left our boat and took to *terra firma*, on a car to Malin, a pretty village, and from this went on to Malin Head, a rock-bound coast with fine cliff scenery; it is the extreme north of Ireland, and is the estate of a Mr. Hart, who thus enjoys the position of being the northernmost landlord in Ireland! Three miles south of the village of Malin, lies the small town of Carndonagh, the principal market-place of the country; we slept there in the comfortable and well-provided though small hotel. Still wishing to keep to the shore, we went to Doagh Isle, from whence we had a fine view along the north coast.



AT GREENCASTLE.

(*From a Photograph by Lawrence, Dublin.*)

AT BUNCRANA.

(*From a Photograph by Lawrence, Dublin.*)

Tory Island, the spot where the *Wasp* was suddenly ground to pieces under the perpendicular cliffs, was a mere speck upon the horizon. This view was one of the prettiest I have ever seen. The various valleys and mountain ridges are separated from each other by considerable intervals, while the mists from the ocean, passing up the glens, brought out so many distances and headlands, that the whole seemed like a set of dissolving views and all alive.

In the distance were to be seen Errigal, the highest mountain in the county, a sharp pyramid of quartzite, with its neighbouring granite mountains.

From the old castle where we stood, there runs a range of sandhills to the westward ; this fine sand is always moving under the influence of the prevailing west winds, and is ever encroaching upon the arable land, the inhabitants of which have had in recent times to fly before it, and to abandon two town-lands to its resistless devastations. Fine specimens of Eolian rocks are now being uncovered here, giving evidence that at one time, within the Recent period, the prevailing winds blew in a contrary direction to what they do now.

Fine examples of the different operations of the Glacial period are to be met with along this shore, and in all directions, and they have given rise to some scientific literature on the subject ; the phenomena being often identical with those of the Isle of Bute in Scotland.

We went into several caves and got some beautiful large specimens of the *Asplenium marinum*, pendent from the joints in the roofs.

From hence we struck across the country to the south, over moor and rock. When coming to the beautiful " Meentiaghs " lake, we obtained a fine view of the high mountain ot Slieve Snaghta (the White Mountain) ; brilliantly lighted up and rising beyond the south side of the gloomy lake, it was a most interesting object. It receives its name from the fact of the whole mountain being covered with snow, as seen from this spot, and which it retains on its summit even sometimes into the summer months. When I saw it, and sketched it, it was coloured with the beautiful bronze tints of the heather. One word on the scenery of this country : its great charm is what one misses so often in the finest Swiss scenery—namely, —its ever-varying far-away distances, the intense blue of the mountain, in shadow, contrasting with the vivid neutral orange of the illuminated portions.

From this we went to Clonmany, and then through a wild and rugged pass, the Gap of Mamore. The road passes over a high ridge of mountains, and looking back, one sees the headland of Dunaff, like a huge opal, jutting into the ocean, while he stands in the gloom of the Gap. It was a charming sight I shall never forget.

Passing through the Gap, we reached Buncrana, the terminus of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway. Three-quarters of an hour brings us to Derry. Four miles from Derry there is a wonderful place—Greenan of Aileach, the ancient palace of the kings of Ulster. It is a hill of only about 800 feet high, but so advantageously situated as to command an extraordinary expanse of view. Under your feet,

Lough Swilly, or the "Lake of Shadows," runs from its mouth past you up to Letterkenny, a really beautiful lough. On your right hand, Lough Foyle is visible; on the left can be traced the valley of Mulroy Lough, though its waters cannot be seen; and beyond this the view is open right up to Errigal Mountain, near Gweedore in the north-west.

Innishowen lies under and before you. Until lately, the waters of Lough Swilly came up to within a few miles of those of the Foyle; and there is geological evidence to show that during the Glacial period the conditions were accurately described by its name—viz., "Innis Eogan," or the Island of Eogan; then it became corrupted into "Innis-Owen," and lastly "Innishowen."

To describe Derry would be beyond the limits of my space. It is a beautifully situated city, with a glorious old cathedral, a fine river, and charming scenery all round. The city itself, with its cathedral on the summit, forms a striking view as one goes down the river to Moville, and before entering the narrows, which stretch from about a mile below the city to Culmore. Looking back at the city we see the river running through a narrow glen, at the upper end of which was placed the boom, to stop the vessels trying to relieve the city when besieged by King James. This siege fills a brilliant page in history, and I can only say to those who want more of it, *vide* Macaulay.

From Culmore the lough widens out to a great width. At the lower end lies our old friend, the Transatlantic steamer. In half an hour I am on board; and next day I am back in my chambers, thoroughly re-invigorated and fit for anything.

THE FRENCH CHARACTER, SEEN THROUGH ENGLISH SPECTACLES

COUNTRIES, like individuals, have their inner as well as their outer life. We may take in at a glance a stranger's peculiarities of features, dress, manners, and speech; but we must be for some time in his company, and observe him closely, under varying circumstances, if we would understand his character. It is the same with large communities or races of men. John Bull has always been disposed to look with suspicion upon men of other nationalities, and to measure them by a standard as narrow as his own island home. There are too many Mrs. Browns still, who "cannot abide furriners." Even travelled Englishmen—and who does not travel nowadays?—are apt to take their prejudices with them, closing their eyes to the excellencies of their neighbours, and exaggerating their faults. So it is with regard to the French. We must live among them, and mingle with them in the converse of every-day life, if we would grasp the many details which go to make up national character, and form a fair judgment upon it.

A residence of some years in Paris, and more recently in a large provincial town of France, has given the writer opportunities of doing this in a measure. He, therefore, proposes to note down a few of the impressions he has received.

The first feature in the character of the French that he would mention is not one which all are, at first, prepared to attribute to them. It is their love of reasoning—their sternly logical mind. By this it is, of course, not meant that they always reason correctly, or that they invariably come to sound conclusions; but simply that they do reason about all matters, great or small. They are, indeed, as every one knows, a singularly impulsive and excitable people. A madman has been defined by Locke as one who reasons correctly from wrong premisses. In paroxysms of great national excitement a whole nation may go mad; but when they do so they may still reason after a fashion, though most erroneously. So it has often been with the French. In their calmer moments, however, they are extremely precise in their modes of thinking and acting. Their very language is a proof of this, and is a mirror of their minds. Those who know it best will admit that it is far more difficult than they at first supposed. The superficial smattering of it which is often acquired at school or college is easily gained, and as easily lost. But a thorough mastery of its principles and idioms, not to speak of its pronunciation, and ability to write as well as speak it correctly, are the results of long and careful study, besides constant practice. This arises chiefly from the many niceties of expression and delicate distinctions, all intended to insure accuracy. The French language is like a pure limpid stream, through which every pebble at the bottom is distinctly visible. A good French writer or speaker spares no pains to make his words the transparent, exact medium of his thoughts. Nothing loose or slipshod in composition can be tolerated. The sentences are, for the most part, short, terse, and neatly chiselled, following each other like the steps of a mathematical demonstration. There is, therefore, much less room for individual

taste and originality of style than in English; but the intelligent reader is seldom at a loss to understand the meaning. It might be interesting to illustrate this by examples; but we simply refer to this fact as characteristic of the French themselves. It is not, then, surprising that a people, whose language is so precise, should be equally exact and methodical in all their social regulations. To our view, this love of order is often carried to an extreme, which is practically vexatious and unnecessary.

An unwary traveller, for instance, who reaches the railway station in time to take his ticket, finds it rather hard to be told that he is too late to register his luggage. He is pointed to the inexorable notice that the office is closed a quarter of an hour before the departure of the train. Probably the train has not yet arrived, and there is really ample time; but this law of the Medes and Persians altereth not, and he has to choose between leaving his portmanteau behind, or waiting for a later, perhaps a slower, train. Such has been the writer's experience, and it is certainly not pleasant.

Another similar delay always occurs at one's journey's end. However late may be the hour, and however severe the weather, the travellers have to cool their heels in a dreary, fireless ante-room, waiting till the doors are opened and they can rush in to claim and carry off their rightful belongings. A Frenchman, indeed, sees no hardship in this, for he is inured to it from his youth, and he will inveigh loudly against the laxity of some English companies, which allow their passengers to pounce upon their luggage, as an eagle on its prey, without any proof of ownership.

So it is again with the Paris omnibuses. It must be admitted that they are far better regulated than our own. All confusion and disputes are prevented by the distribution of numbers at the bureaux where the omnibuses stop. These are given to each person in the order of his application, and called out by the conductor, so that the passengers enter in turn. There is no struggling for seats, nor has the weakest to give place to the strongest. Sometimes we have seen a vigorous, self-asserting Englishman push past the rest, and clamber in triumph to the top; but he has been invariably ordered down again, and, like a rebellious schoolboy, been compelled to yield precedence to those who had obtained a higher figure. It was a salutary lesson, and who will deny that he was served rightly? This rule is never relaxed. It may be a little trying to the patience; still it is just and fair, and is acquiesced in by the Parisians without a murmur. In a similar manner the jostling and crushing, too frequent among ourselves at the doors of exhibitions and places of amusement, and even of churches, are rendered impossible by the "queue," into which all are compelled by the police to form themselves. The docility with which an eager crowd will submit to such discipline is well worthy of imitation. All see it to be reasonable, and seldom resent it. The same methodical spirit may be traced throughout the institutions of France. We see it in higher matters, such as the legalisation of marriages, which cannot take place without the fully-attested consent of the parents, or of the nearest of kin, on both sides, besides many other formalities. In the administration of public funds for the relief of the poor, the direction of prisons, lunatic asylums, postal and telegraphic affairs—in short, everywhere, all is conducted most systematically and as by clockwork. There is, indeed, not unfrequently a needless amount of fuss and punctiliousness in these arrangements. Precious time is lost in tying and untying red tape. Sufficient margin is not always allowed for the exceptions continually occurring to the best rules. Still, on the whole, there is no doubt that the wheels of society move in consequence more smoothly. Much friction is saved. The liberty which is one of the watchwords of the French Republic, and is equally prized by ourselves, is not allowed to degenerate into that spurious licence of every one being left to do what is right in his own eyes.

So far we have been speaking of some of the written laws which regulate daily life in France. But we must remember that these are supplemented by an even more rigorous unwritten code of custom. This is so, of course, in every country. There are always a number of indifferent matters, neither right nor wrong in themselves, as dress, food precedence in society, &c., which must be decided by the will of the majority. And nowhere does fashion rule so imperiously, or is custom so stern and exacting, as amongst our opposite neighbours. Their very language implies the importance attached to the outward proprieties of life, in such phrases in constant use as "Cela ne se fait pas," "Comme il faut." When a mother would reprove her child for some petty delinquency, she will say, "Ce n'est pas beau," rather than "Ce n'est pas bien." So far is this carried that, in the minds of many, punctilious attention to trifling matters of etiquette has evidently much more weight than the requirements of moral duty. They seem more anxious to do what is thought proper than what is right. It is, therefore, far harder for a Frenchman to have the "courage of his convictions." To stand out alone against public opinion and practice involves a veritable martyrdom, such as few are prepared to undergo. The result is a dead level of easy indifference in all serious matters.

On the other hand, it would be a great mistake to suppose that their politeness is a mere French polish, or studied hypocrisy. Closer observation will lead to a truer and more charitable conclusion. A French lady, no mean authority on the subject, writing for girls on the manners of good society, has summed up the matter in this terse and admirable sentence—"In order to be polite, be good." ("Pour être poli, soyez bon.") "The education of the heart," she adds, "is in fact the principal basis; indeed, the only one on which should rest that combination of delicate attentions and benevolent thoughtfulness, called by the general name of politeness. If the language and manners are opposed to the sentiments we do not attain at being polite, but we play a comedy of politeness." Viewed in this light, good manners are, as she well points out, a carrying into detail of our Lord's golden rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do

unto you." Very happily has this distinguished authoress expressed the real feelings of many of her fellow-countrymen. Their charming behaviour in society is, we are convinced, in a large number of instances, much more than a thin veneer, covering a hollow, selfish nature. When we see, as we often may, the poorest men and women respectful and considerate to each other in the casual intercourse of life, as well as towards their superiors, and when we find them ready to put themselves to considerable inconvenience to serve or direct a foreigner, without any hope of reward, we cannot doubt that such acts are dictated by genuine kindness of disposition.

At the same time there is sometimes a comic side to the picture. For those who are fond of statistics it might be an interesting question to compare the profits derived from the hat trade in France and in England. Considering the amount of wear and tear to which the requirements of etiquette must expose them, we should suppose their manufacture to be a most lucrative business. It would not be easy to enumerate all the occasions where the hat plays a part in the owner's daily life. Does a Frenchman meet a lady of his acquaintance, not content with raising his hat at the beginning and end of the conversation, he will patiently stand in all weathers with uncovered head until the fair one is pleased to bring the interview to a close. Do men, not on intimate terms, wish to exchange civilities, off go both hats again. Whenever, too, they enter a house, or a shop, or an office, or a public conveyance, there is the same inevitable ceremony, or offence may be given. Even if a strange lady passes a gentleman on the staircase of an hotel or private house, a slight elevation of the hat must mark the deference due to her sex. Much of this may appear to us matter-of-fact folks almost puerile and superfluous. Most, however, will admire, and be inclined to imitate, the reverence for sorrow and death expressed by uncovering the head at the sight of a passing funeral. There is a delicate touch of nature in this simple act which needs no comment.

Moreover, in the Frenchman's exuberant politeness to ladies, we can hardly fail to recognise another elevating principle—a chivalrous respect for woman. It may seem odd to us that a French lady will never be the first to salute a gentleman, but always waits to be saluted. We allow our ladies this privilege as a protection against the intrusions of strangers; but the French, with a somewhat happier idea, consider the man's respectful greeting as an act of knightly homage. A similar sentiment suggests the jealous care exercised over young unmarried ladies, forbidding them to visit or go out alone. For the same reason, a lady will never offer her hand to a gentleman in the street or at home except he be a very intimate friend, or a relative. She receives him with a graceful bow, and at his departure may deign, as a mark of favour, to shake hands. This studious regard to the dignity of woman is also seen in correspondence. A letter from a gentleman to a lady, unless he can claim the privileges of relationship or age, would be inadmissible which did not conclude with some assurance of homage or respect. So ingrained is this feeling into the Gallic mind that a Frenchman, writing in English to an English lady and thinking to combine the etiquettes of both nations, has been known to subscribe himself as "Yours very affectionately and respectfully."

But here we must pause on the threshold of a wide and interesting subject. Enough, perhaps, has been said to show that Frenchmen are not the mere creatures of impulse which some have represented them to be, but are a remarkably logical and methodical race. Their politeness, too, is not such an empty, vapid form as it is sometimes supposed to be. Rather, in very many instances, is it the natural outcome of a kind and generous heart. Indeed, in these and other national characteristics we may find not a little worthy of imitation.

WILLIAM BURNET.

VOLATILE EFFIE.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

BUT now for the real object of this letter. (Does it take your breath away to get four sheets?) We want you to help us about Effie. John and I are at our wits' end, and should most thankfully take your wise head and kind heart into counsel. I fear we have been laying up trouble for ourselves and our little girl. The ways of nature are, there's no denying, very attractive in all young creatures; and it is so delightful to see a child do as "'tis its nature to," that you forget that nature, left to herself, produces a waste, be it ever so pretty. Our little Effie's might so easily become a wasted life!

But, not to prose any more, let me tell you the history of Effie's yesterday—one of her days is like the rest, and you will be able to see where we want your help.

Figure to yourself the three little heads bent over "copy-books" in our cheery school-room. Before a line is done, up starts Effie—

"Oh, mother, may I write the next copy, SHELL? 'Shell' is so much nicer than KNOW, and I'm so tired of it!"

"How much have you done?"

"I have written it three whole times, mother, and I really *can't* do it any more! I think I could do SHELL; 'shell' is so pretty!"

By-and-by we read; but Effie cannot read: can't even spell the words—don't scold us; we know it is quite wrong to spell in a reading lesson—because all the time her eyes are on a smutty sparrow on the topmost twig of the poplar; so she reads, "WIHT, birdie!" We do sums; a short line of addition is, to poor Effie, a hopeless and an endless task. "Five and three make——nineteen!" is her last effort, though she knows quite well how to add up figures. Half a scale on the piano, and then, eyes and ears for everybody's business but her own. Three stitches of hemming, and idle fingers plait up the hems or fold the duster in a dozen shapes. I am in the midst of a thrilling history talk, "so the Black Prince——" "Oh, mother, do you think we shall go to the sea this year? my pail is quite ready, all but the handle, but I can't find my spade *anywhere!*"

And thus we go on, pulling Effie through her lessons somehow; but it is a weariness to herself and all of us, and I doubt if the child learns anything except by bright flashes. But you have no notion how quick the little monkey is. After idling through a lesson, she will overtake us at a bound at the last moment, and thus escape the wholesome shame of being shown up as the dunce of our little party.

Effie's dawdling ways, her restless desire for change of occupation, her always wandering thoughts, lead to a good deal of friction, and spoil our schoolroom party: which is a pity, for I want the children to enjoy their lessons from the very first. What do you think the child said to me yesterday, in the most coaxing, pretty way? "There are so *many* things nicer than lessons! Don't you think so, mother?" Yes, dear aunt, I see you put your finger on those unlucky words, "coaxing, pretty ways," and you look, if you do not say, that awful sentence of yours about sin being bred of allowance. Isn't that it? It is quite true; we are in fault. Those butterfly ways of Effie's were delicious to behold, until we thought it time to set her to work, and then we found that we should have been training her from her babyhood. Well,

"EYES AND EARS FOR EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS BUT HER OWN."

> "If you break your plaything yourself, dear,
> Don't you cry for it all the same?
> I don't think it is such a comfort
> To have only oneself to blame!"

So, like a dear, kind aunt, don't scold us, but help us to do better. Is Effie constant to anything? you ask. Does she stick to any of the "*many* things so much nicer than lessons?" I am afraid that here, too, our little girl "is unstable as water." And the worst of it is, she is all agog to be at a thing, and then, when you think her settled to half an hour's pleasant play, off she is, like any butterfly. She says her "How

doth the little busy bee" dutifully; but when I tell her she is not a bit like a busy bee, but is rather like a foolish, flitting butterfly, I'm afraid she rather likes it, and makes up to the butterflies as if they were akin to her, and were having just the good time she would prefer. But you must come and see the child to understand how volatile she is.

"Oh, mother, *please* let me have a good doll's wash this afternoon. I'm quite unhappy about poor Peggy! I really think she *likes* to be dirty!"

Great preparations follow, in the way of little tub, and soap, and big apron; the little laundress sits down, greatly pleased with herself, to undress her dirty Peggy; but hardly is the second arm out of its sleeve, than, *presto!* a new idea: off goes Effie to clean out her doll's house, deaf to all nurse's remonstrances about "nice hot water," and "poor dirty Peggy!"

I'm afraid the child is no more constant to her loves than to her play; she's a loving little soul, as you know, and is always adoring somebody. Now it's her father, now Juno, now me, now Hugh; and the rain of warm kisses, the soft clasping arms, the nestling head, are delicious, whether to dog or man. But, alas! Effie's blandishments are a whistle you must pay for; to-morrow it is somebody else's turn, and the bad part is that she has only room for one at a time. If we could but get a little visit from you, now, Effie would be in your pocket all day long; and we, even Peggy, would be left in the cold. But do not flatter yourself it would last; I think none of Effie's attachments has been known to last longer than two days.

If the chief business of parents is to produce *character* in their children, we have done nothing for Effie; at six years old the child has no more power of application, no more habit of attention, is no more able to make herself do the thing she ought to do, indeed has no more desire to do the right thing, than she had at six months old. We are getting very unhappy about it: John feels strongly that parents should labour at character, as the Indian gold-beater labours at his vase; that *character* is the one thing we are called upon to produce. And what have we done for Effie? We have turned out a "fine animal," and are glad and thankful for that; but that is all; the child is as wayward, as unsteady, as a young colt. Do help us, dear aunt. Think our little girl's case over, and, if you can, get at the source of the mischief, and send us a few hints for our guidance, and we shall be yours gratefully evermore.

* * * * *

And now for my poor little niece! Her mother piles up charges against her, but how interesting and amusing and like the free-world of fairy-land it would all be were it not for the *tendencies* which, in these days, we talk much about and watch little against. We bring up our children in the easiest, most happy-go-lucky way, and all the time talk solemnly in big words about the momentous nature of every influence brought to bear upon them. But it is true; these naughty, winsome ways of Effie's will end in her growing up like half the "girls"—that is, young women—one meets. They talk glibly on many subjects; but test them, and they know nothing of any; they are ready to undertake anything, but they carry nothing through; this week so-and-so is their most particular friend, next week such another; even their amusements—their one real interest—fail and flag; but then, there is some useful thing to be learnt: how to set tiles or play the banjo! And all the time, there is no denying, as you say, that this very fickleness has a charm so long as the glamour of youth lasts, and the wayward girl has bright smiles and winning, graceful ways to disarm you with. But youth does not last; and the poor lassie, who began as a butterfly, ends as a grub, tied to the earth by the duties she never learnt how to fulfil—that is, supposing she is a girl with a conscience; wanting that, she dances through life whatever befalls; children, husband, home, must take their chance. "What a giddy old grandmother the Peterfields have!" remarked a pert young man of my acquaintance. But, indeed, the "giddy old grandmother" is not an unknown quantity!

Are you saying to yourself, a prosy old "great-aunt" is as bad as a "giddy old grandmother"? I really have prosed unconscionably, but Effie has been on my mind all the time, and it's quite true you must take her in hand.

First, as to her lessons: you *must* help her to gain the power of attention; that should have been done long ago, but better late than never, and an aunt who has given her mind to these matters takes blame to herself for not having seen the want sooner. "But," I fancy you are saying, "if the child has no faculty of attention, how can we give it to her? It's just a natural defect." Not a bit of it! Attention isn't a faculty at all, though I do believe it is worth more than all the rest put together; this, at any rate, is true, that no talent, no genius, is worth much without the power of attention; and this is the power which makes man or woman successful in life.

Attention is no more than this—the power of giving your mind to what you are about; the bigger the better, so far as the mind goes, and great minds do great things; but have you never known a person with a great mind—"real genius," his friends say—who goes through life without accomplishing anything? It is just because he wanted the power to "turn on," so to speak, the whole of his great mind, he could not bring it all to bear on the subject in hand.

"But Effie?" Yes; Effie must get this power of "turning on." She must be taught to give her mind to sums and reading, and even *dusters*. Go slowly—a little to-day and a little more to-morrow. In the first place, her lessons must be *interesting*. Do not let her scramble through a page of "reading," for instance, spelling every third word, and then waiting to be told what it spells, but see that every day she learns a certain number of new words—six, twelve, twenty, as she is able to bear them; not "spellings"—terrible invention!—but words that occur in a few lines of some book of stories or rhymes; and these she should know, not by spelling, but by *sight*. It

does not matter whether the new words be long or short, in one syllable or in four, but let them be *interesting* words. For instance, suppose her task for to-day were "Little Jack Horner," she should learn to know *by sight* thumb, plum, Christmas, corner, &c., before she begins to read the rhyme—make "plum" with her loose letters, print it on her slate, let her find it elsewhere—in her book—any device you can think of, so that "plum" is brought before her eyes half a dozen times, and each time recognised and named. Then, when it comes in the reading lesson, it is an old friend, read off with delight. Let every day bring the complete mastery of a few new words, as well as the keeping up of the old ones. At the rate of only six a day, she will learn, say, fifteen hundred in a year—in other words, she will have learned to read! And if it does not prove to be reading without tears, and reading with *attention*, I shall not presume to make another suggestion about the dear little girl's education.

But do not let the lesson last more than ten minutes, and insist, by brisk, bright determination, on the child's full concentrated attention of eye and mind for the whole ten minutes. Do not allow a moment's dawdling at lessons.

Having got through ten minutes' real *work*, send her off for ten minutes' play, something really "nice" to do, for herself and the rest.

I would not give her rows of figures to add yet; use dominoes, or the domino cards prepared for the purpose—the point being to add or subtract the dots on the two halves in a twinkling, or at a glance; you will find that the three can work together at this as at the reading, and the children will find it as exciting and delightful as "Old Soldiers." Effie will be all alive here, and will take her share of work merrily; and this is a point gained. Do not, if you can help it, single the little maid out from the rest and throw her on her own responsibility. 'Tis a "heavy and a weary weight" for the bravest of us, and the little back will get a trick of bending under "life" if you do not train her to carry it lightly, as any Eastern woman her water-jar.

Then vary the lessons: now head, and now hands; now tripping feet and tuneful tongue; but in every lesson let Effie and the other two carry away the joyous sense of—

"Something attempted, something done."

No droning wearily over the old stale work, which must be kept up all the time, it is true, but rather by way of an exciting memory game than as the lesson of the day, which should be always a distinct *step* that the children can recognise.

You have no notion, until you try, how the "now-or-never" feeling about a lesson quickens the attention of the most volatile child; what you can drone through all day, you will; what *must* be done, is done. Then there is a by-the-way gain besides that of quickened attention. I once heard a wise man say that, if he must choose between the two, he would rather his child should learn the meaning of "must" than inherit a fortune. And here you will be able to bring moral force to bear on wayward Effie. Every lesson must have its own time, and no other time in this world is there for it. The sense of the preciousness of time, of the irreparable loss when a ten minutes' lesson is thrown away, must be brought home.

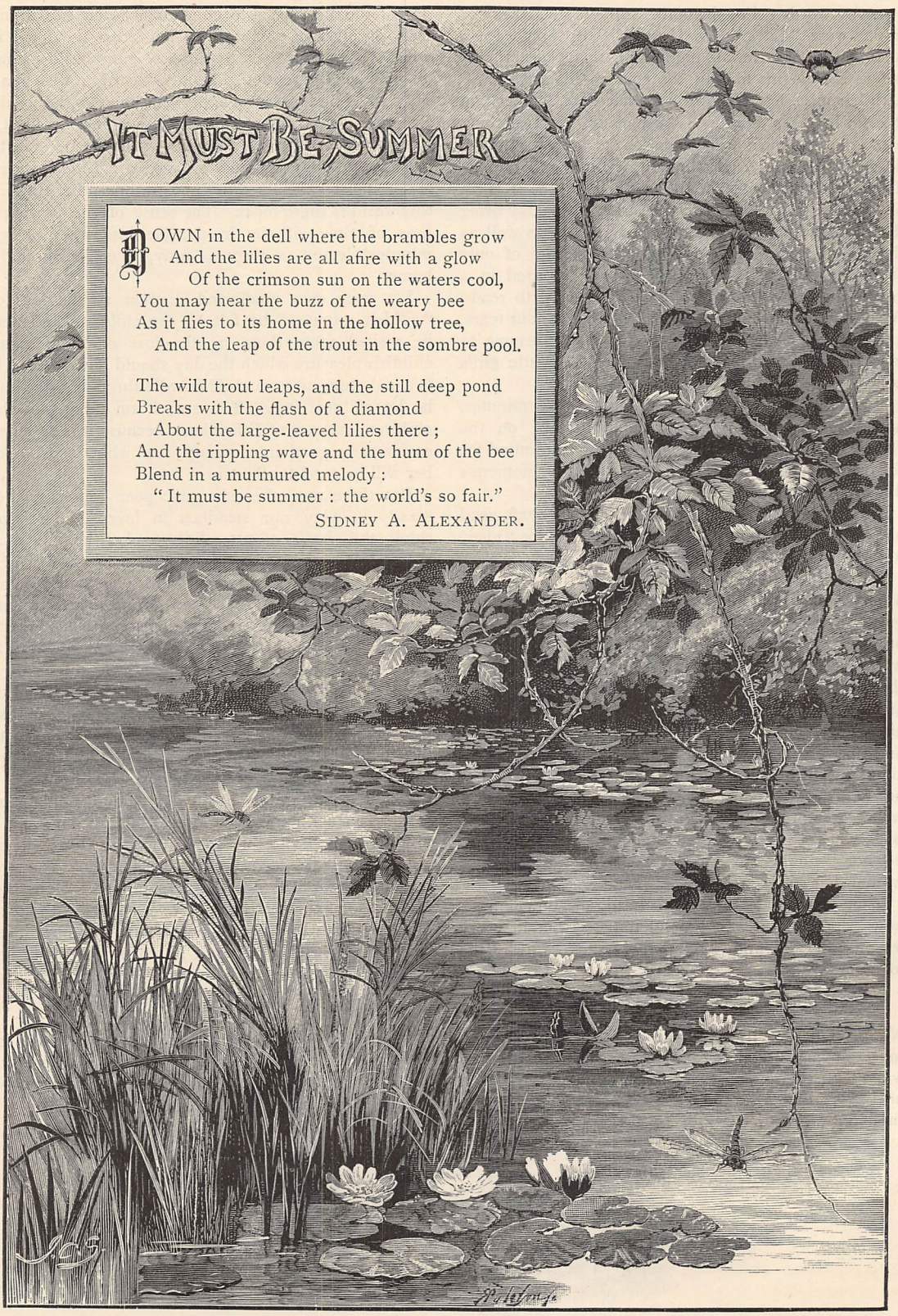
Let your own unaffected distress at the loss of "golden minutes" be felt by the children, and also be visited upon them by the loss of some small childish pleasure which the day should have held. It is a sad thing to let a child dawdle through a day and be let off scot-free. You see, I am talking of the children, and not of Effie alone, because it is so much easier to be good in company; and what is good for her will be good for the trio.

But there are other charges: poor Effie is neither steady in play nor steadfast in love! Don't you think the *habit* of attending to her lessons may help her to stick to her play? Then encourage her. "What! The doll's tea-party over! That's not the way grown-up ladies have tea; they sit and talk for a long time! See if you can make your tea-party last twenty minutes by my watch!" Now, this failing of Effie's is just a case where a little gentle ridicule might do a great deal of good. It is a weapon to be handled warily, for one child may resent, and another take pleasure in being laughed at; but, managed with tact, I do believe it's good for children and grown-ups to see the comic side of their doings.

But I do think we err in not enough holding up certain virtues for our children's admiration; put a premium of praise on every finished thing—if 'tis only a house of cards. Steadiness in work is a step on the way towards steadfastness in love. Here, too, the praise of constancy might very well go with good-humoured family "chaff," not about the new loves which are lawful, whether of kitten or playmate, but about the discarded old loves. Let Effie and all of them grow up to glory in their constancy to every friend.

There, I'm sending you a notable preachment instead of the few delicate hints I meant to offer; but never mount a woman on her hobby—who knows when she will get off again?

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.



DOWN in the dell where the brambles grow
And the lilies are all afire with a glow
Of the crimson sun on the waters cool,
You may hear the buzz of the weary bee
As it flies to its home in the hollow tree,
And the leap of the trout in the sombre pool.

The wild trout leaps, and the still deep pond
Breaks with the flash of a diamond
About the large-leaved lilies there ;
And the rippling wave and the hum of the bee
Blend in a murmured melody :
"It must be summer : the world's so fair."

SIDNEY A. ALEXANDER.

MR. SIMPERSON'S STORY.

"WELL, Mr. Malpas, I can't refuse. I have no reasons against it, that's true; it's only selfish of me to object. It's nigh to breaking my heart, though, to part with her."

Mr. Simperson did not look at all like a man who would suffer from broken heart. His hard, square face, with its frame of white hair and whiskers, was a very mask of practical English common sense. A village grocer and general dealer has seldom any inclination to be romantic, and Mr. Simperson's prosperity in that calling cleared him of any such suspicion. The affection between such a crusty old bachelor and his fair young ward and adopted daughter, Eunice Gray, was a standing wonder to the whole village.

A still greater wonder was his unwillingness to consent to her marriage with Robert Hartop. "Old standards" the Hartops were, and Rob as promising a young farmer as there was for miles round. "A suld think a's waätin' for t' young squire to come hoam," was the comment of Betty Sheard, whose judgment of men and things was not mellowed by age. "Or, mebbe, a'll put up wi' t' parson's lad; a's a vast o' brass, and t' parson 'uld think twice about sain' no to it."

However, I had no such views on the savings of the flourishing little shop, and I worked with a will in favour of young Hartop.

Eunice was a pretty little child when I first came to the parish. She had a great-aunt living in the village at that time, who took, however, little interest in the child, and dying soon afterwards left her without a friend in the world, save her adoptive father. He was a much crustier old bachelor in those days than he has since shown himself. The child, as she grew, infused a sweetness and grace into his life to which he had been wholly a stranger. His exterior was, perhaps, as crabbed as ever; but I, who knew him intimately, and soon learnt to respect him thoroughly, could trace the working of her gentle love upon the cross-grained and stubborn, but honest, heart that beat within.

Who was she? and whence did she come? Village gossip brought to my ears its usual tangle of inconsistent statements. Betty Sheard, of course, knew all about it; but her accounts varied so much from year to year, that only one connecting thread could be traced through them — a suggestion of some old slight on the part of Mr. Simperson.

I confess to a certain fondness for gossip. I like to know all about my people; and as I can trust myself to hear without repeating, and to listen without commenting, I think no harm is done, if I take in all as it comes, and winnow out the grain at my leisure.

Thus I learnt a good deal about Mr. Simperson and his young charge. I could guess that a strong passion had once burned within him, and that cruel blows had fallen on his sturdy nature, and that so had been forged the link that bound the two together. But he was always most reticent on the matter himself, and it was with great surprise that I found him waiting for me in my study one day, and ready—nay, eager to tell me all the story.

It was soon after his reluctant surrender, the withdrawal of his unreasonable opposition to Hartop's suit. I had spoken rather sharply about it, and it moved me deeply to see how the proud old man was anxious to excuse his obstinacy. He would not avow such a desire, perhaps, even to himself. His ostensible reason for seeing me was to ask my advice about telling Hartop the history. Robert said he did not care to know anything — he was more than content with Eunice as she was; but the old man was conscious of the gossip floating in the village air, and he thought mistakes, at least, ought to be set right. He could not bring himself to tell the young man—there was some latent jealousy in his heart, no doubt—but would I hear the story, and tell Robert as much as I thought fit?

I shall not tell the story as he told it; it would hardly be intelligible if I did. Only my previous fragmentary knowledge enabled me to follow his bald outline, awkwardly told, with reluctant stammerings and self-respecting omissions. I will tell it as I wove the whole together.

* * * * *

Richard Simperson, a dour and silent man of forty-five, or thereabouts, was surely ill-advised when he thought that he could attract a young girl's fancy. And yet it was in a hopeful mood that he sallied forth one morning from his dark and crowded little shop to try his powers of wooing. Perhaps he was conscious of a certain worth and integrity, to which he attributed more weight than a less lonely man would have dreamed of. Perhaps he hoped something — for he was of no romantic turn—from the existence of a certain deposit in the Felton Bank, and from the more patent advantages of a well-stocked shop and a steady custom. Harriet Rushton was certainly not in a position to despise such things.

He might have relied still more on another advantage, which he was, perhaps, too slow-witted to comprehend. An orphan from a very early age, with no near friend but an aunt, widowed and poor, at whose cottage she was now staying until she could find fresh employment, Harriet Rushton would not lightly despise the offer of a home, an independence, an assured position, such as Simperson could offer her.

It was a bright autumn day as he went down through the village by the brook which borders the road and

across which are some half a dozen little bridges leading to the various cottages. The mothers, busy about their houses, and the old folk sunning themselves before the doors, noted the unusual sight of the shopkeeper in his Sunday clothes—his rough beaver, his black broad-skirted coat — sauntering as if keeping holiday. "Young Richard Simperson" (such he was to these contemporaries of his father) "been to Widda Rushton's, surely!" quavers an ancient hind; and Betty Sheard conjectures, "Courtin', belike, that lass o' James's; mebbe there'll be some'un 'at 'll say noa to t' banns." And the old crone's face, I should think, was even less amiable than usual, and doubtless the gossips inquired eagerly into the meaning of this dark hint, and were put off with sundry nods and grimaces that might mean much or nothing.

Richard Simperson, entering the house-place, found Harriet alone. She was skilful with her needle, and was busy with some work from our predecessors at the parsonage. She looked up with surprise at her visitor. She had known him almost from childhood; of late he had taken not a little notice of her, whenever they had met — in his own shop, on the village street, in the Sunday school, in church, where his hard, square features added to the awe of the churchwarden's office and to the terror of evil-doing farm-boys. But she had never before seen him within her aunt's door. Perhaps she had been conscious of something particular in his attentions. There must have been something of the sort, else why should dim-eyed Betty Sheard be so ready with her guesses? And if she saw something, I warrant Harriet was not altogether in the dark. Anyhow, she received him with some nervousness, and a puzzled, half-defiant look spread over her face.

He seated himself squarely on a chair, as squarely placed by the little table; and then he began to feel that his task was a great deal harder than he had expected.

It is not to be supposed that I can retail the words he said. He could not tell me them himself, and certainly no one else could. He felt a great lump in his throat, and doubtless he stammered out words of the most ordinary import for some time, fidgeting with his hat-brim, and looking for the most part into its crown. And I am sure—I, who watched him closely as he told his story long afterwards—that the hard lines about his face were softened, and dissolved in quivering doubt and hope and fear. He felt his heart grow hot within him, and then was terrified at the fire that burned there, and then the heat seemed to fill his whole frame and fired his tongue.

Harriet had tried at first to go on with her work, but she was made far too nervous for that by his clumsy plunges into conversation. She was a quick-witted girl, and, of course, the ridiculous features of the scene forced themselves on her notice. Her sewing fell to her lap. With one hand she tried to hide a smile that had something of triumph in it, more perhaps of anxiety behind it, with the other hand she nervously snapped her scissors. It was, he thought, a glance in which he had caught sight of her impatience and derision that fired his sudden speech. He was a proud man always, and I can well believe it. He was stung, as it were, into passion, and his feelings broke down their barriers.

She grew serious as he went on; turned pale, looked anxious, and perhaps a little suspicious. This was not what she had expected. When he suddenly paused, as all the wavering of his face was gathered into a new strength, she rose hurriedly, stammered out some incoherent words, and rushed to the adjoining room.

Richard Simperson rose too, and stood for a moment irresolute; then he pursed his lips, stooped down and kissed the work she had dropped, and went on tiptoe to the house door, which he closed behind him, and passed up the village, tingling with hope and joy.

A few days afterwards it was known in the village that Harriet Rushton was to be married to the shopkeeper. She had told him simply and humbly that she would try to make him a good wife. She admitted that she had been vexed at first. She even told him, shyly, that she had thought him so old and hard, and—and—well, she supposed she meant not nice. She begged his pardon for laughing so rudely; she was so sorry when she found he was gone, and was afraid he was regularly offended. She had thought it all over, and she was sure she should be very happy if she married him.

Then Richard Simperson, like a true Englishman, began to grumble to himself. He did not somehow like her way of giving herself to him. She seemed rather light about it. He began to wonder perversely if the Felton Bank and the shop-stock had anything to do with it; indeed, he set about making himself as miserable as any young lover could do.

I dare say Harriet was rather frivolous, and at times she would get into an excited state which her staid lover by no means approved of. He was painfully aware that most of the old people scorned him, and many of the young people pitied her. Our village opinion is much against all ill-assorted matches, whether in respect of age or of position. Mr. Simperson ought to have married Miss Morris, who was thirty-five years old, and whose brother farmed over a hundred acres at Stubley Bottom. Harriet Rushton, for all the fine airs she had picked up in service, and her school-English, and all that, was only a hind's daughter, and her aunt had half-a-crown from the parish, as every one knew. Mr. Simperson relieved the rates of this latter sum, and continued to do so as long as the widow lived. He took very few people into his confidence on this matter. Betty Sheard openly expressed her wonder (she was buying a pennyworth of snuff at the time, and Mr. Simperson was looking hard into his ledger) as to how Widda Rushton had come by her bit o' money, which made her give up her allowance. Some folk had all the luck. But Betty, perhaps, had no real doubt on the subject, and the village at large certainly thought that the well-to-do grocer had done no more than he ought. Afterwards, the more generous were surprised

at his being so free with his money, such a close man, too, as he was.

All this tittle-tattle was exceedingly painful to the object of it. He thought a good deal of the opinion of his little world. A very respectable man, who seems to be standing fixed in his own strength of character and reputation, is often morbidly sensitive to what is said, or even thought, about him. But Richard Simperson at this time was developing a great power of unselfishness. He cared wonderfully little for the reflections that were cast upon himself. His great love carried him on regardless of them. He felt much more keenly the remarks that were made about Harriet. He heard some; he divined many; perhaps he imagined more.

He cared little, indeed, for certain ill-natured stories and hints about her flightiness when she was at service; he put them aside with lofty scorn. But he shrunk from a suggestion that she was mercenary in marrying him. Perhaps there was a little wound to his self-love in this after all. Perhaps he felt there was only too much reason for the suggestion.

It came out one day. His voice lowered and thrilled as he told me how—all unconsciously—he dropped a hint of it as they were together one night, returning from an expedition to Leeds, where his purse had been freely open to her; how she turned on him in the moonlight; how she dashed down the purchases she was carrying; how he read truth in every word and accent; how she wept on his bosom; "and from that day to this," he told me, glowing with the remembrance, "I have never had a moment's doubt of it."

So the time sped by and the banns were called, and no one objected, which refutation of her prophecy was doubtless disturbing to Betty Sheard. Each Sunday she nodded her head knowingly, and bade her gossips only wait till next time. What did Harriet look so sharp after the postman for? Richard Simperson didn't send her post-letters, surely? And she had never a body in the world akin to her, without it was Widda Rushton. Who should be sending her letters? They'd see, that was all.

And apparently it was all; for the third time of asking came and brought no catastrophe. They were to be married on Tuesday. Harriet was dreadfully excited, but that was no wonder. The postman certainly did deliver her a letter on Saturday, and he made no scruple about informing the village at large that the postmark was Manchester; but nothing seemed to come of it. Harriet's tears surely required no post-letter to draw them just now. They were quite the regular thing.

She was very affectionate with Richard on Sunday evening, but a little shy and fearful, as was natural. On the Monday she was going into Leeds to make some last purchases. She would be back at five o'clock.

Oh! faithful and tender heart of forty-five, waiting at the little station for the five o'clock train from Leeds!

Of what then happened I got only a broken recital, not unmixed with sobs, from the stern old white-haired man. There was no Harriet, but the guard had a letter to hand to him. He took that letter, tenderly and reverently, from an old pocket-book, and laid it in my hand. It was hurriedly written, and blotted with tears—tears that had fallen twenty years ago. As I looked at it I felt my own eyes growing dim.

She told him how untrue she had been to him, and yet how true. She had not deceived him; she had really thought to give him her heart; she did not know that she had none to give—that it was given away long since. At first she had laughed at him—she begged his pardon humbly for that. Then she had thought of the happy home he could make for her—and that other one did not seem able or willing to do so for her; so she had promised to marry him, and she begged his pardon still more for that. She hadn't thought of his money—she really hadn't—but she had so longed for a home of her own, and this had tempted her. Then she had found him so good, and tender, and true (here the tears had fallen fast), and had learnt to respect him so, that she was ashamed of not loving him better; but she had hoped that would come. And then, oh! then she had seen Mr. ——, that other one's name, in a paper, and all of a sudden she had remembered that she had given away her heart before; and he had come back to England now. But she thought, perhaps, he wouldn't remember her, and so she had said nothing. Then a letter had come from him saying he was going to be at Leeds that very day, and she couldn't help it—oh! she couldn't help it. He said she must marry him, as she had promised ever so long ago; and she could never come home again. And so the long, straggling letter ended with a piteous appeal for forgiveness.

"I went back to my house," continued the old man, after carefully folding up the letter, "feeling as hard as a bit of millstone. I didn't feel the least bit kind to her. I thought everybody knew, and that all the village was laughing at me. I dare say they weren't. I dare say they were sorry for me, and abused her. I wish some one had done so before me. It would have done me a vast deal of good, because I'm pretty sure I should have stood up for her then, and that would have taken some of the bitterness out of my heart. But I just shut myself up, and no one came near me. They all seemed afraid of me. They hardly gave me 'Good day' when they came into the shop. I couldn't bear to go near the church, and so I gave up the wardenship next Easter. Mr. Stockton, as was rector here then, was very kind, to be sure, and wanted me to keep it on, and take time, but I wouldn't listen to him. I got right mean like; I'm sure I used to give short weight sometimes ——"

"You went on," I interrupted, "providing for Widow Rushton?"

He reddened. "Why, yes, you see, sir," he said simply and apologetically, "I didn't like to go back on my word because *she* had gone back on hers." And I may notice that he never once uttered Harriet's name in the whole interview.

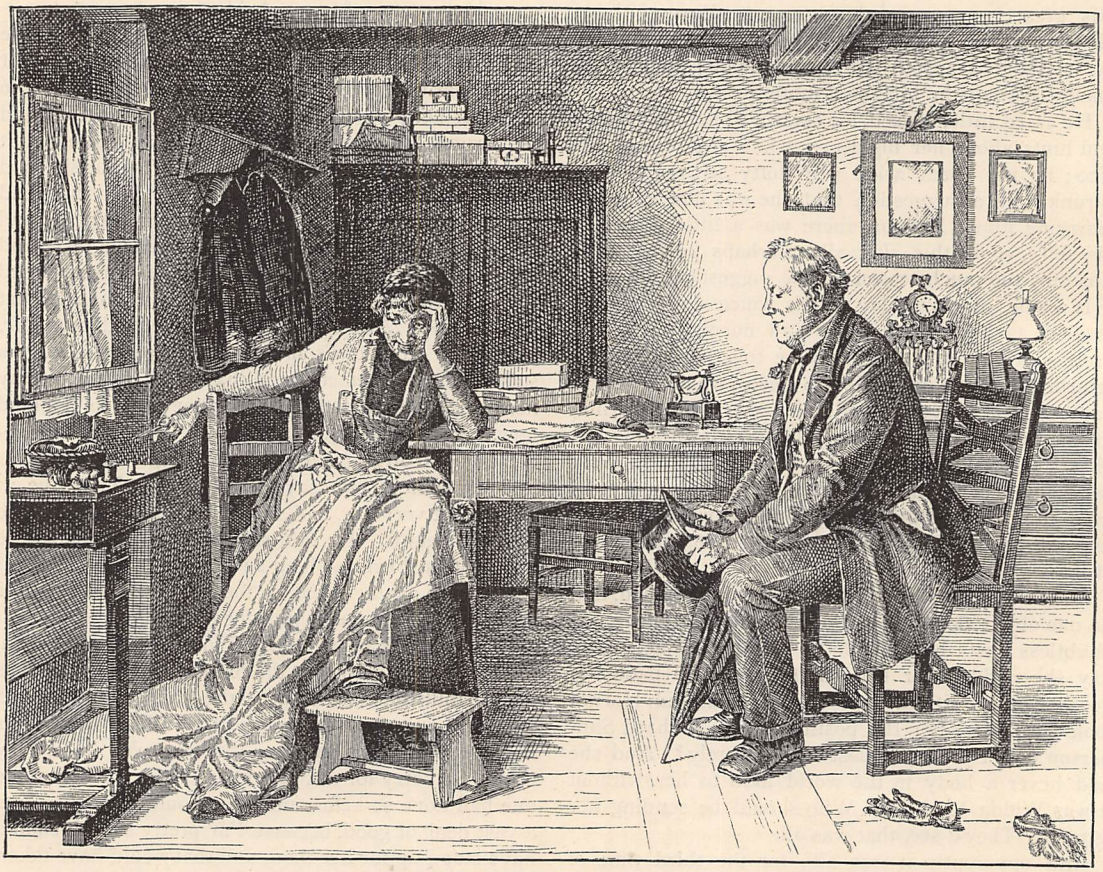
Four years, it appears, passed by in this way, the

disappointed man cowering under his shame, and hardening his heart as the only means, he fancied, of enduring it.

Then there came another letter. He did not show it me. He seemed loth to let it go out of his hand. It was very short ; just a call from utter wretchedness to his generosity, to come and help her. Now he learnt for the first time the name of the man who had robbed him of her.

"That man, Gray, was the biggest villain, sir," he said, clenching his teeth. "He was a betting-man, sir, pretty well to do when he married her. He dragged her about from one race-meeting to another. She didn't like his associates—no wonder ; and he insulted her. He did worse, sir. I can't bring myself to tell you all she told me, and I don't suppose she told me a quarter. I found her at Nottingham, in a miserable lodging, dying, sir—dying of want and ill-usage. It was the spring meeting, and she had followed him there against his will, but she couldn't find him, and she was quite destitute. She was dying; I'm sure she would not have sent for me else. She told me," and here his face grew very tender, "she told me why she sent for me. I couldn't tell you what she said, sir, and I'm sure I never deserved it ; but you saw what she said in that other letter, and it was just that over again. I routed about and found the man ; he was in the hospital with a broken leg, and the doctors said he was so full of drink he would never get over it. I waited there, sir, and saw them both buried, and then I brought home this poor little lamb, and—you know all the rest, Mr. Malpas."

I thought I did know all the rest—the love, and grace, and beauty that she had brought into his life and the tenderness that he had lavished on her out of his great heart. It did, indeed, seem cruel to take her from him, to send him back to his loneliness. But I thought of all the hearts that have to be so torn asunder ; I thought of the light of our own home, not long since carried away to far India, and I knew that he must pay the penalty of the fatherhood which he had taken upon him.



"A GLANCE FIRED HIS SUDDEN SPEECH" (*p.* 534).

I was approaching the subject, when he started as if he had not been thinking of this. He had, in truth, forgotten the immediate purpose of his coming to me. The unwonted flow of sympathy had driven it out of his mind.

He drew himself up, and said harshly, "This man

Gray was near akin to Rob Hartop; and I'm afraid he takes after him."

This was startling. I pressed for an explanation, and it seemed that Rob was supposed to be rather given to betting.

We had a long consultation, and I agreed to speak to Rob. He and Eunice, like every one else, had no notion of their kinship. Gray had clean disappeared from our little world, even before his cousin Mrs. Hartop's death, and he was long since forgotten. We were bound to tell him about this, I thought, and I would tackle him on the betting question.

His evil-doing did not amount to much. He took a Yorkshireman's interest in all sports; that was about all, and he was rather fond of talking about it. The sad story of his sweetheart's mother made him very grave, and drew from him a promise which — for he was a young fellow whose word was his bond — set Richard Simperson's mind at rest on one score at least. For the rest he faced the suffering like a man.

* * * * *

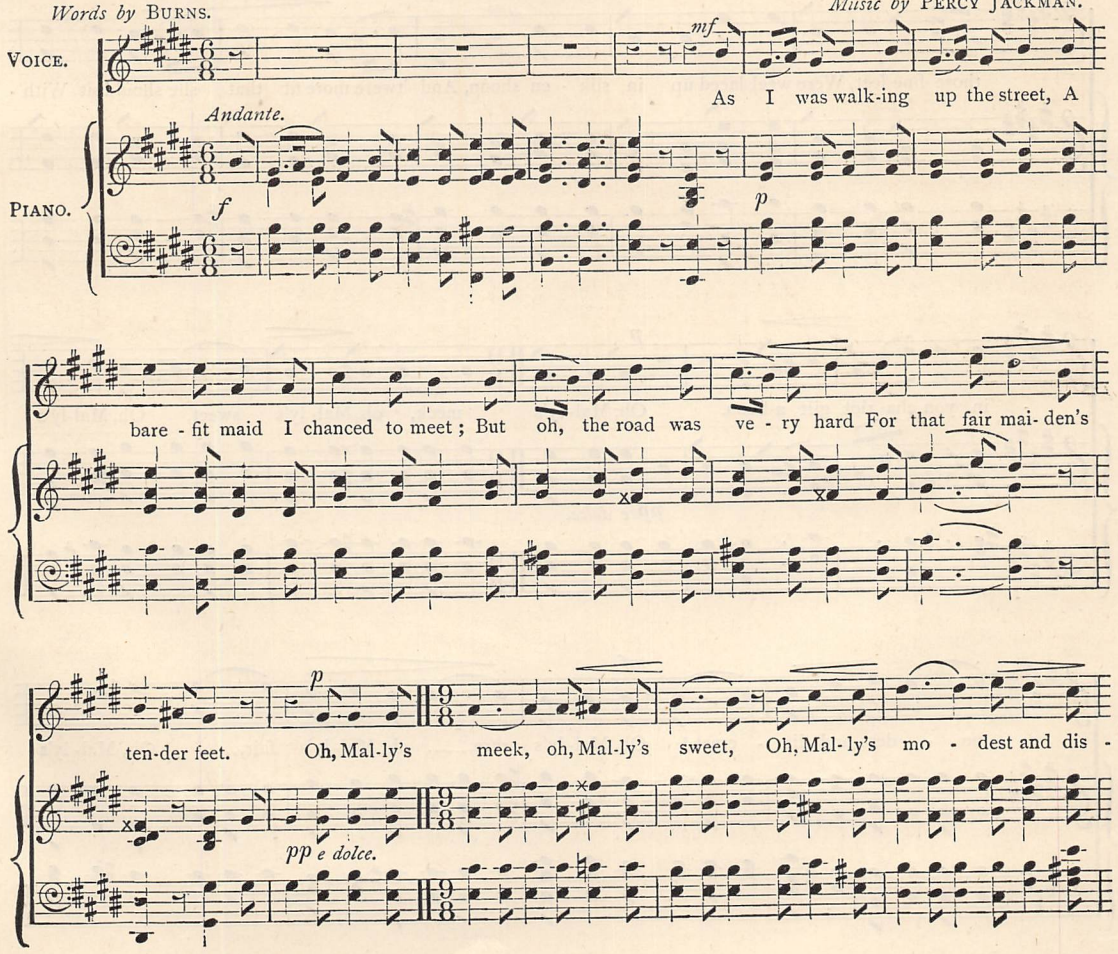
"Mout a' been gentlefolks," grumbled Betty Sheard, not in the least mollified by the half-crown which she, in common with other old bodies, had received. "Been to Filey for t' honeymoon? shoo'd a' better a' gone down to t' shippen to luik after t' coos."

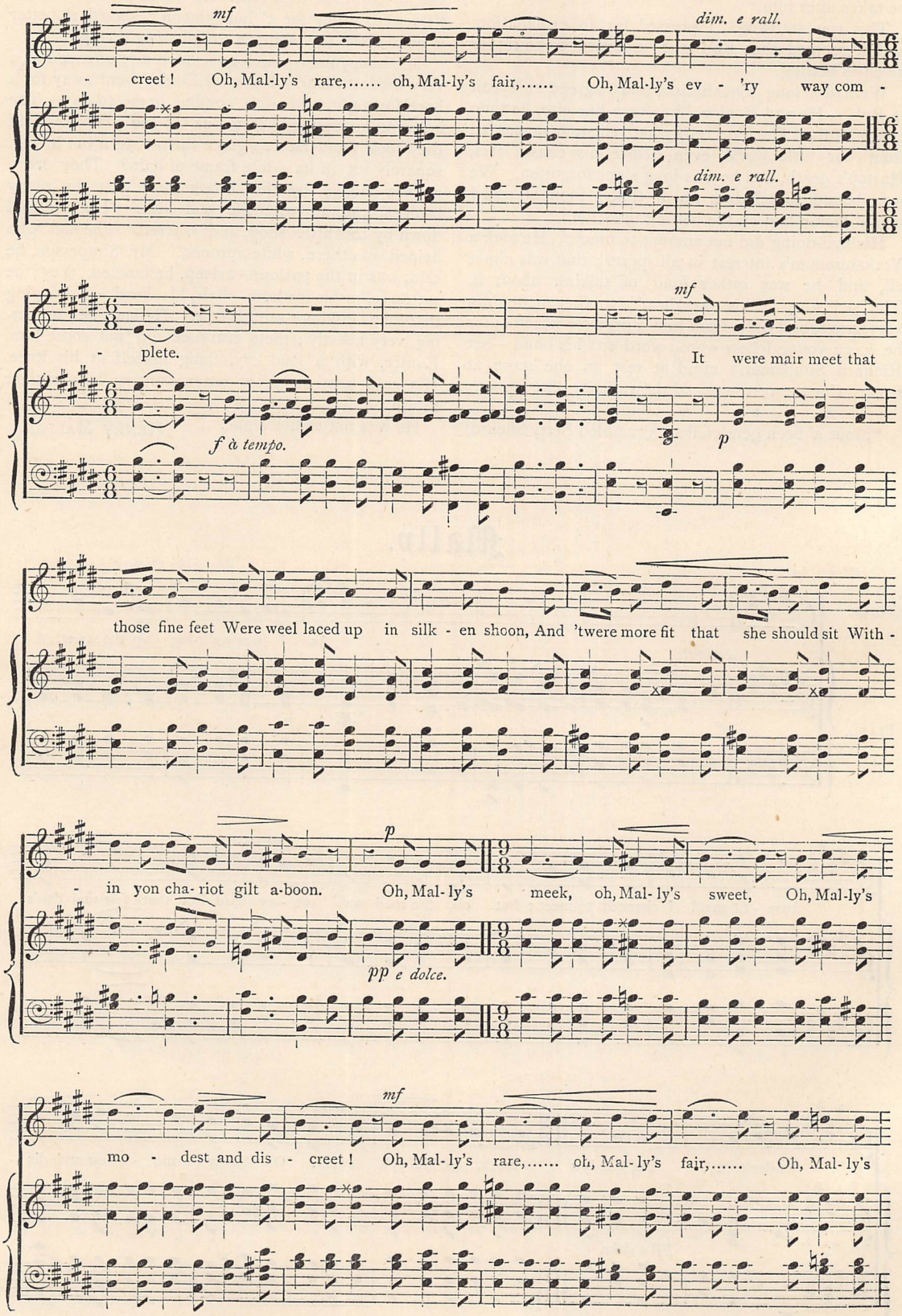
The honeymoon which gave such dire offence was a very modest affair. Rob and Eunice went away for a bare fortnight, and were coming home to-day. The knowing-looking dog-cart was at the station. Did they look for a face to greet them—stern but loving, squarely set in its white frame of hair? They drove up the village, by the brook and past the many bridges, radiant with life and love. They leaped down by the little shop, and entered. The lad who helped was there, white-aproned. Mr. Simperson, he said, was in the parlour—asleep, he fancied. Yes; he sat there, in his leathern chair, his head so drooping that they could not see his face. He must be slumbering very heavily; their entrance did not rouse him. Eunice, with a loud cry, flung herself at his knee. His cold hand held her letter, warning him of their return.

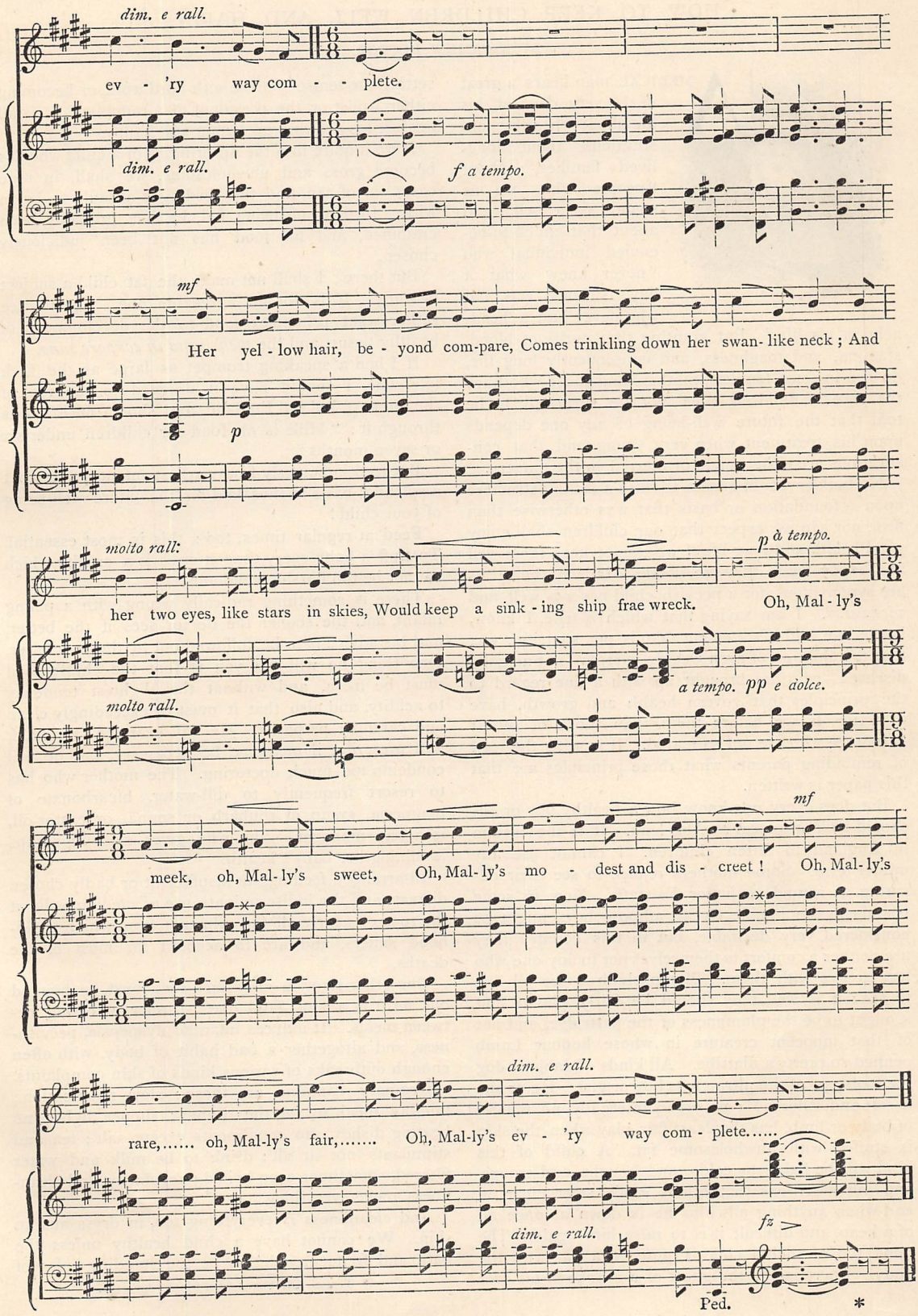
He was not to live alone. HENRY MALPAS.

Mally.

Words by BURNS. *Music by* PERCY JACKMAN.




mf
dim. e rall.
- creet ! Oh, Mal-ly's rare,..... oh, Mal-ly's fair,..... Oh, Mal-ly's ev - 'ry way com -
dim. e rall.
mf
- plete. It were mair meet that
f à tempo.
p
those fine feet Were weel laced up in silk - en shoon, And 'twere more fit that she should sit With -
p
- in yon cha- riot gilt a-boon. Oh, Mal- ly's meek, oh, Mal- ly's sweet, Oh, Mal-ly's
pp e dolce.
mf
mo - dest and dis - creet ! Oh, Mal- ly's rare,..... oh, Mal- ly's fair,..... Oh, Mal- ly's


dim. e rall.
ev - 'ry way com - - plete.
dim. e rall.
f a tempo.
mf
Her yel - low hair, be - yond com-pare, Comes trinkling down her swan- like neck ; And
p
molto rall:
p à tempo.
her two eyes, like stars in skies, Would keep a sink - ing ship frae wreck. Oh, Mal - ly's
molto rall.
a tempo. pp e dolce.
mf
meek, oh, Mal- ly's sweet, Oh, Mal- ly's mo - dest and dis - creet ! Oh, Mal- ly's
dim. e rall.
rare,..... oh, Mal-ly's fair,..... Oh, Mal-ly's ev - 'ry way com - plete.....
dim. e rall.
fz
Ped.
*

HOW TO KEEP CHILDREN WELL AND HAPPY.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

A MEDICAL man hears a great deal every day of his life about "healthy constitutions," about "long-lived families," about "people who are as sound as a bell," and about that much-to-be-envied individual who "never knew what a day's sickness was, and who never had a headache in his life." But granting that purity of blood, stamina, and toughness, and consequently long life, do run in some families, mothers and those who have the care of children must not be surprised to be told that the future well-being of any one depends upon his treatment when very young, and that constitutions are either made or marred in the nursery.

No builder would expect to raise a lasting structure upon a foundation or basis that was otherwise than firm, nor can we expect that our children shall enjoy good health and long life if we cannot keep them well and happy while they are young. Indeed, the terms are synonymous, for a peevish child never is well, and *vice versâ*. I am saying that which is trite, I know, but let me add a statement that is not so trite : viz., that the children of even weakly parents—not actually diseased—who are brought up with a due regard to the principles that govern health and growth, have a better future before them than those of robust parentage who are not so reared. It is with the view of reminding parents what those principles are that this paper is written.

But does every one know how a healthy boy or girl should look or appear? Alas ! no. It is the custom in England to fatten children. I cannot use any milder term. Some mothers rejoice to see their offspring as rotund as junior Falstaffs. Now, in some islands in the Pacific Ocean adipose boys might be considered very desirable, but in this country they are neither a comfort to themselves nor to any one who has to live with them. Plump children we all like to see ; it is well they should be fairly plump, but it ought to be the plumpness of the partridge, and not of that innocent creature in whose honour Lamb penned so pretty a diatribe. All kinds of dangers dog the footsteps of the ultra-gross boy or girl. He or she is soft and "flozen" ; no organ internally, no muscle of body or limb, has the least fair play when the skin is stuffed with unwholesome fat. A child of this kind will be liable to colds, and coughs, and croups, and inflammations that others easily steer clear of, and when anything ails him he is down at once all of a heap, and difficult it is to raise him again. The mind, too, of such a child is quite on a par with the body. There is not the ghost of a chance of his ever setting the temse* on fire with hard work, or becoming either a poet or the president of a republic. It is all against his growing up strong and happy.

If we inquire into the up-bringing of a child who has become gross and unwholesome, we shall, in nine cases out of ten, find that feeding is at fault, to begin with. Instead of being fed, he has probably been crammed, and his food has not been judiciously chosen.

But there ; I shall not make the fat child a subject of study. It is not an agreeable one. Let us see rather what principles tend to the development of healthy tissue, and the *mens sana in corpore sano*.

If I had a speaking trumpet as large as the Lick telescope, I should have it dragged to the top of the highest hill in England, and shout these words through it : "Milk is *the* food for children under six or seven months."

But feed judiciously from earliest infancy, and what a splendid basis is thus laid for the future well-being of your child !

Feed at regular times, too : this is most essential. To stuff a baby every time it cries is a cruelty which cannot be too harshly condemned.

There is something radically wrong with a puling infant, and the sooner the doctor sees it the better, and his advice is to be followed out to the very letter. One thing he will tell you is that the child's food must be fresh, and without the slightest tendency to acidity, and also that it must be exceedingly clean and carefully prepared. He will examine the child, and prescribe if medicine be necessary, but he will condemn too much doctoring. The mother who has to resort frequently to dill-water, bicarbonate of magnesia, syrup of rhubarb or senna, or castor-oil, is a bad manager. She who gives sleeping-syrups is ruining her baby's health.

Ill-arranged feeding, an insufficient or badly chosen dietary, and the indiscriminate use of medicines lie at the root of nearly all the ailments from which childhood suffers, and are to account for most of the deaths.

One other error in children's diet must be pointed out, for it is a most fatal one. I refer to eating between meals. It induces infantile dyspepsia, peevishness, and altogether a bad habit of body, with often enough outbreaks of various kinds of skin complaints.

Ordinary cautions are these : slow mastication ; midday meal to be the dinner ; supper light ; no heating dishes ; no condiments except salt ; tea and stimulants not at all ; drink to be milk and water filtered, sometimes even boiled ; regularity and cleanliness above everything.

And cleanliness *is* everything too, in dress and in skin. We cannot have a child healthy unless the bath and frequent ablution be the standing rules of

* Temse—Old Saxon for a winnowing sieve.

the nursery. The skin is of the very highest importance in the animal economy. Unless it is healthy, the child must languish and grow up—if he lives to grow up—puny and weak in nerve and will.

While young, the bath should be a warm one. After fourteen it should be gradually reduced, and at about fifteen every boy or girl should take the cold morning tub, unless the family physician positively forbids its use.

There is no necessity for remaining above a minute in the bath, just long enough to sponge well all over. It is a good plan to wash the whole body first with warm water and a *mild* soap. The body is to be dried with roughish towels.

I have frequently used the word "nursery." It is, however, a word I have no great partiality for. It is suggestive of fragile flowers and hot-house plants generally. For a truly healthy, manly boy, or one who desires to become so, the proper nursery is to be found out of doors, romping, and running, and shouting *ad libitum*, so long as the shouting does not annoy the neighbours. And it is in the open air that exercise should be taken.

A boy or girl cannot have too much exercise nor too much fresh air, not if he or she were out in it all day and all night as well.

I am certainly not advising outdoor exercise after sunset, however, albeit there is not that danger to health from night air that our forefathers used to attribute to it. Night air used to be a terrible bogle, but the bogle is dead and gone, and need not trouble us any more.

In a climate like ours, however, children must be a good deal indoors in summer as well as in winter. It is our bounden duty, therefore, to see that the rooms they occupy by day and by night are kept thoroughly clean, and supplied with an abundance of pure air. Emanations from the skin, emanations from the curtains or carpets, and from the furniture itself, meet together and breed sickness—sow the seeds of disease, in fact—and if children constantly pent up in badly ventilated rooms actually escape severe illnesses, they nevertheless are certain to suffer from blood deterioration.

Even ventilation is not everything. A nursery should have nothing in it that will harbour impurities. In this respect it really should resemble a sick-room. The lighter the furniture the better; cushions, curtains, and carpets should be banished, and the floor frequently scoured with a good disinfecting soap. A regular plan of ventilation should be adopted. Opening the window a little way when the children are out is of no practical use, but only a miserable makeshift.

I do not hold with the plan of making children hardy by exposing their limbs and shoulders to every wind that may blow, but they are too often most unwholesomely clad out of doors by being too heavily and cumbersomely dressed. Let the clothing be warm and light, so that every limb may have fair play and free play.

Here are three things that go hand-in-hand in keeping children well and happy: exercise, gymnastics, and amusement. Amusement, I mean, must be combined with both or either, and all three must be taken or had in abundance day after day, and all the year round. Whenever exercise ceases to interest it becomes that very instant a penance, and will do more harm than good.

Much may be said for or against the hand-feeding or rearing of children. If a child is to be fed by hand from its birth, the utmost care is needed with regard to obeying the rules of hygiene. It is a well-known fact that the feeding-bottle may become a source of illness, or even disease, if not kept most perfectly clean and free from all acidity. It is the india-rubber nipples and tubes that are most to blame. Whenever the child has been fed, these should be taken out and cleaned with the brush for this purpose, using some disinfectant solution, care being taken that it is harmless. They should be kept in a solution of the same sort until wanted, but before being used they must be rinsed again with clean cold water.

The bottle itself will be more easily kept clean, but a little sand will sometimes be useful in rinsing this. Nurses should remember that it is acidity that does the most harm.

Let the child sit half up when being fed. The milk given should be pure and fresh. Never keep food any time before it is presented to the child, nor let baby have that to the next meal which has been left from the previous.

See that the cow or cows from which the milk is procured are healthy. Sometimes it is better to boil the milk and then place it in a refrigerator. The jug or basin in which the milk is brought from the dairy must likewise be perfectly clean.

I am too near the end of my space to say anything about the school life of children. I am not sorry for this; I fear I should have a difficulty in writing calmly on the subject. Some of our boarding-schools for the middle classes have a good deal to account for; many of our day schools and board schools far more. We have made a dash and a dive at raising the standard of national education, and pretty specimens of elevated manhood we are turning out: part ape, part parrot, short-sighted, and with a tendency to lateral curvature. This is true, and there must arise amongst us some scholastic John Knox before we can even hope for reformation.

Meanwhile, we can do our best for our children when at home, and remembering that their bones are but "green," take care they do not suffer from errors in dress or clothing, or from badly assumed postures while at work or lessons.

SOME MORE HINTS ON ARRANGING FLOWERS.

WHITE AND SCARLET PHLOXES AND QUAKE-GRASS.

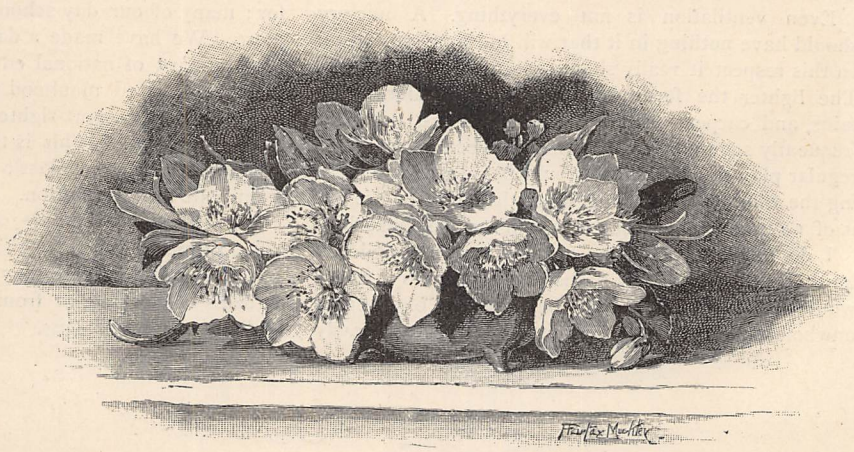
THOSE who study the art of home decoration with flowers and plants should gather in late summer and autumn time such materials as will keep for winter use, for when the many flowers have disappeared we are all obliged to make the very most of what little colour remains. Any one who is not familiar with the numerous wild grasses will find immense stores awaiting their notice. I cannot, in a limited paper, discuss the merits of our British grasses, but readers of intelligence will quickly glean ideas as to the varieties most useful for decoration by turning to the pages of some illustrated book on botany. I think it is best to gather grasses about July or August; earlier kinds, such as the common holcus, which is very pretty and most useful, must be sought for in mowing-time. I have, in a previous paper, alluded to the value of the tufted aira. Gather plenty of it. There is another graceful delicate little grass, the common mellick (*Mellica nutans*), which is my favourite of all grasses. It mixes admirably with garden bouquets. The common quake-grass is useful, and so are wild oats, which give grace and elegance to any large collection or arrangement. They should be gathered before they are quite ripe, as if laid to dry, the glumes will open of themselves, and reveal and retain their rich brown colour.

Our many beautiful sedges—more akin to flowers than grasses—will keep as well as everlastings, and they should be sought after, and kept in readiness. Bulrushes, teasel-heads, the capsules of the thorn-apple (*Thorn-apple datura*), the downy seed-pods of the wild clematis, and the lovely cotton-grass with its heads of silky-white durable down, are to be recommended.

Added to these, get moss and lichens, and hunt the fern world through for the most brilliant and gorgeously painted autumn fronds, which will retain their colour through the winter. I must also mention autumn leaves of other kinds too numerous to particularise. It is said that their bright colours may be preserved by dipping their stems in melted yellow bees'-wax. When required for use, a little ingenuity may accomplish much; artificial stems may be added to the preserved leaves to mix with winter flowers and greenery.

Just here I must also remark that if you possess short-stalked flowers they may be lengthened by a little management, the addition of a sort of "wooden leg," an artificial stalk attached with a bit of wire; but the living stem must be allowed to touch the water in the vase it is to occupy.

Before stern winter comes to take away our treasures there are many late summer and autumn flowers for our enjoyment, and some of my happiest recollections are of these. What can be more beautiful for filling large vases—capacious enough for straggling entire plants—than the bright scarlet poppy (*Papaver rhœas*)? Cut it off close to the ground, and use the plant entire, massing together a profusion of the flowers, buds, and leaves. It will of its own accord fall into its right and best position; it will arrange itself. Nothing better in the way of decoration for a room coloured with French grey or stone, or having light colours about, can be imagined. It is also, in my opinion, one of the best flowers for table decoration.



CHRISTMAS ROSES.

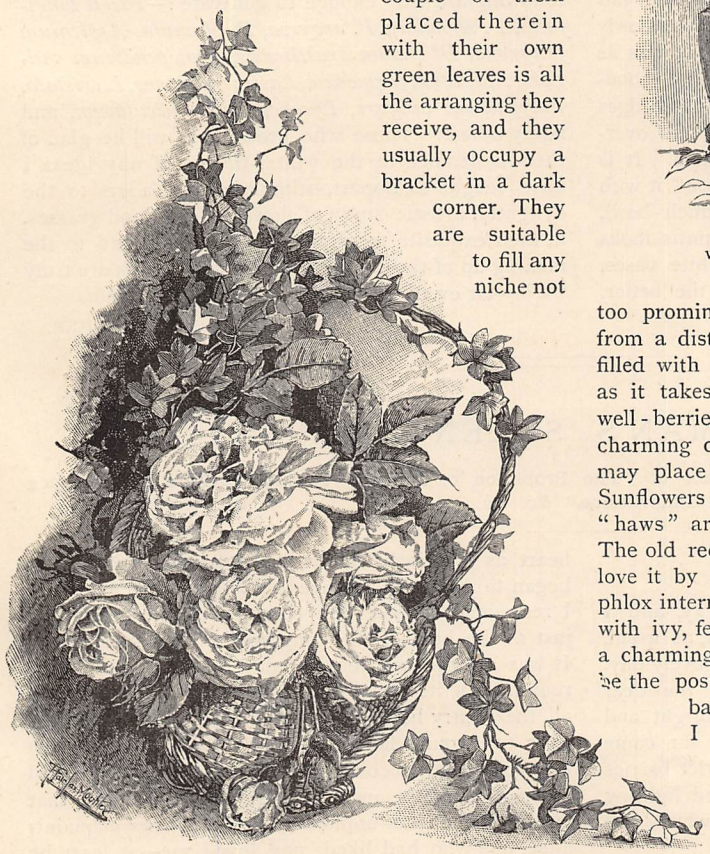
HER FAVOURITE FLOWER.

(*See p.* 542.)

By way of a change, you may get a pleasing effect by mixing some oats with your poppies, or wheat, barley, and oats. The meadow crane's-bill is a pretty flower, which, with its brightly-coloured leaves, will make a good arrangement for a tall vase, if some well-selected wreaths of the graceful black bryony (*Tamus communis*) be made to mix with it, and fall around the sides. You may choose pieces that have assumed the "black" leaves, and are berried. Instead of the bryony you might gather an equally bright piece of some bramble, which is ever valuable material for decorating. Both the last-named plants are to be highly recommended for épergnes. The following are flowers which I am best satisfied with when placed by themselves (using nothing but ferns with them, and perhaps ivy streamers falling over the sides of the vase) in *tall* pots or vases :—Gladiolus, larkspurs, delphiniums, lupins, tiger lilies; and amongst wild flowers, the foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*)—a most beautiful plant, with its own leaves, for a slender specimen vase—irises, and a few other plants possessed of similar erect characteristics. It is true we cannot often get the pink blossoms of the flowering rush without a wading, or the help of a boat.

Sunflowers are plentiful in the autumn. I have a stone-coloured jar which I use for these flowers; a couple of them placed therein with their own green leaves is all the arranging they receive, and they usually occupy a bracket in a dark corner. They are suitable to fill any niche not too prominent to the eye, and are most effective from a distance. This same crock pleases me when filled with autumn-tinted ferns—the bracken chiefly, as it takes the prettiest hues—and a good spray of well-berried mountain ash. Sunflowers are also charming objects to fill any heavy blue vase; you may place with them a few fronds of Pteris fern. Sunflowers with hawthorn branches covered with the "haws" are very pretty in any massive, deep bowl. The old red clove carnation comes in autumn, and I love it by itself, or with maidenhair fern and white phlox intermixed. White phlox and scarlet geraniums, with ivy, ferns, and heliotrope, in a high vase, make a charming arrangement. Every flower-lover should be the possessor of one or two lightly-made wicker baskets. I do not advocate the small ones; I would not care for one less than twelve inches from end to end, and it should have a very high handle. A person with an artistic eye will choose a prettily-shaped one. In such a basket I flatter myself that some of my

WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUMS AND BRACKEN.



GLOIRE DE DIJON ROSES AND IVY

happiest inspirations have been put into shape. I have filled it with mixed flowers, and twisted its handle with ivy; I have filled it with a profusion of many roses, and left the handle bare; but it has been most admired when half filled with nice, fresh, carefully-picked—but not *too* carefully and regularly arranged—moss. A receptacle for holding water must be hidden under the moss. This forms the groundwork for various arrangements. I place in this basket two or three only of the very largest flowers of scarlet cactus, and arrange round and over them fronds of delicate maidenhair fern. The fern should make a beautiful veil for the beauty beneath it, taking off the too definite brilliance.

This is the plan for numberless pretty baskets, and yet needs but *one* basket. In the place of the scarlet cactuses you may use *any* flower, provided it is *very large*. Here are a few: white water-lilies, arums, *Lilium longiflorum* and *L. auratum*, Cloth of Gold and Malmaison roses. Do not use too many flowers, but let the moss and fern fill the basket; they will heighten the effect of your few choice blossoms. Be fearless in this, as in other arrangements, in departing from the truly frightful and old-time stiffness of floral work.

In such a basket as I have been describing, the large purple clematis, the popular house-creeper, is a beautiful arrangement, and it possesses a very praiseworthy quality—it will keep its original fair state longer than most flowers. It fades so slowly that, after being in *my* basket ten days, it was as goodly in appearance as at the first. The woodbine, or honeysuckle, which clambers over our hedges in autumn, is a sweet thing to fill a basket to overflowing with. No ferns are needed with this. It is also suitable for tall vases, and I have placed it with advantage in an old-fashioned china punch-bowl, which I keep for flowers. The purple clematis looks exquisite in any large vessel, or in tall, white vases, such as white marble: the purer-looking the better.

Any kind of *deep* crimson roses intermixed with white jessamine might well be placed in a similar vase. Any roses may with perfect effect be placed in specimen glasses, no flower suiting them better. One or two buds with their own green leaves are always sufficient, and such roses as Souvenir de la Malmaison, Maréchal Niel, Celine Forestier, Cloth of Gold, &c. &c., are to be commended. The old-fashioned cabbage roses of our big gardens may be heaped into a basket or a punch-bowl of the kind indicated. Drop them in anyhow, and they will look well enough. In winter-time we may make much of our scarlet geraniums, with grasses, or cotton-grass and ivy, or with pieces of the bracken we have garnered. And chrysanthemums are the peculiar treasures of the cold season. They may be easily grown indoors. I have seen a window made most elegant with their arrangement and wealth of colour, white, yellow, pale pink, almost white, and salmon-coloured. White chrysanthemums, with autumn red-tinted bramble sprays (which may often be found in perfection in the depth of winter if people will only look on the hedges), in a tall vase, are very lovely; or, instead of bramble, the brown and gold-tinted bracken, or other fern, or some preserved mountain ash sprays with berries may be adopted.

Finally, I cannot see why more people should not grow for use many of our hardy wild ferns; the following are easy enough to cultivate:—*Pteris longifolia*, *P. serrulata*, *P. argyrea*, *P. plumula*, *Asplenium fragrans*, *Blechnum brasiliensis*, *Scolopendrium vulgare*, *Adiantum formosum*, *Lastrea felixmas*, *L. cristata*, *Polypodium vulgare*, *Lycopodium denticulatum*, and many others. Those who grow them will be glad of their assistance in the winter-time. If any ideas I have sought to impart, stimulate my readers to the delightful artistic study of flowers, ferns, and grasses, in their exquisite forms and various hues, and to the making up of those "things of beauty" which are truly "a joy for ever," I shall not have written in vain.

ELEANOR E. ARCHER.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

MORDAUNT CAREY.

THE next day was Sunday, and I had to play the organ, as usual, in church. It was a lovely day, cold and frosty, and the dear little church looked bright and Christmas-like, as the sun came pouring in on the scarlet berries of the decorations, and lighting up the old brasses and monuments, of which the Challoner Chapel was full.

It seemed to lift some of the weight that lay on my heart as I thought of my darling, and the hot tears began to gather in my eyes. With a supreme effort I restrained myself, and commenced the voluntary, just as the bulk of the congregation began to arrive. It was a large one that Sunday. January had come round, with its usual complement of festivities, and all the gentry had guests staying with them. There were two young ladies with Mrs. Talbot, and in the Bostocks' seat I could just catch sight of a pair of sloping shoulders, and a head of fair, sandy hair, that reminded me most unpleasantly of a former acquaintance, one who had liked, nay, loved me—at least he said so; and whose liking I had repaid with aversion.

"SOON MADE HETTY FORGET CAPTAIN CHALLONER AND MISS BOSTOCK" (*p.* 546).

But, after all, there were other fair-haired men with sloping shoulders besides Mordaunt Carey; and as I believed him to be abroad with his regiment, I quickly dismissed him from my thoughts. I cannot say the same for the occupants of the Challoner Chapel. They were all there to-day, down to little Arthur, and it struck me that there was a more hopeful look than usual about them, that Sir John's expression of countenance was decidedly calmer, whilst Lady Challoner's was positively bright. Still, it might be fancy, for it was but an occasional glimpse that I caught of the party, and when the service was over, I sped out of church as fast as I could, anxious to avoid all meetings when I was feeling so utterly good-for-nothing, as I had felt ever since my Friday's walk over the moor.

With her usual thoughtfulness, in order to spare me, Mrs. Talbot had arrranged that one of her guests, who was a proficient on the organ, should take my place at the afternoon service, so I was free to devote myself to Hetty for the rest of our last day together. The child was very much better; able to sit up for an hour or two at a time, and to take a languid pleasure in all the Christmas presents and cards with which she had been overwhelmed. Her room seemed a haven of security after the momentary spasm of dismay and fright that the glimpse of the guest in the Bostocks' seat had given me this morning; and I smiled sadly to myself when I heard first of all Captain Challoner's and later Miss Bostock's voices downstairs, feeling that I was well out of reach of either friends or foes.

"Ain't they going to be married?" asked Hetty, when Susie, with my tea, had brought the news that they had gone away together; "Cousin Jane told

mother she thought so. I'm so sorry. The captain is such a kind gentleman, but I can't abear Miss Bostock," energetically. "Do you think they will be married, Miss Morton?" I am thankful to say she never called me teacher.

"I know nothing about it, dear," I answered. "Now, Hetty, you and I are going to have a very cosy tea together on our last day," and with that I sent Susie downstairs to her father, whilst I prepared a tempting little meal, which very soon made Hetty forget Captain Challoner and Miss Bostock.

That night I slept in her room for the last time. To-morrow I was to return to my own house, with the understanding that all my night-work was at an end. It was with real sorrow that I kissed my little Hetty the next morning, and bade her adieu until the evening. I had a variety of household duties to attend to during my dinner-hour, and after school-time I had solemnly promised Mrs. Talbot to go and have tea with her, a treat I had not enjoyed for a long time. So, with many promises that I would look in on my way back from the Rectory, and beating a hasty retreat from all the extravagant expressions of gratitude that Mr. and Mrs. Coles persisted in showering on me, I set off to the school with aching limbs, and a feeling of weariness that had clung to me ever since Friday. For the first time since I had entered on my office of schoolmistress did my duties seem irksome to me that day; and when my little flock had dispersed, and I was at liberty to turn my steps to the Rectory, I would have given a great deal, could I have been transported thither without any trouble on my own part. The bright morning had turned to a dull, grey afternoon, when I set out on my walk; a bitter north-east wind was blowing, and there was an ominous look about the clouds that portended snow. The extreme cold did me good. It braced me for my climb up the hill, and gave me a colour wherewith to face Mrs. Talbot's keen eyes. For once she was deceived.

"Why, you look quite bonny," she cried, as she kissed and welcomed me. "Nursing seems to agree with you. Mrs. Lovegrove tells me that you have been fairly reasonable about taking your proper amount of sleep."

"Reasonable!" I answered laughing; "I have been the incarnation of reason. And now it is all over! I am so sorry. I almost cried this morning when I said good-bye to Hetty. I have grown to love her so dearly."

"She is a very sweet child, and devoted to you, as she ought to be. Dr. Charlton assured me this morning that, humanly speaking, it was your excessive care and devotion that had saved her life."

"Nonsense," I answered; "I don't believe a word of it."

"And yet how pleased you look! You do believe it, and why should not you? Why not accept the consolations God sends you in your troubles? It must be a happiness to you to know that you have been instrumental in prolonging Hetty's life, and thereby soothing poor Coles' last days; so believe what you are told, and don't be foolish. Now take off your hat, and settle down to a cosy chat."

"Indeed I will," I answered. "How is it you are alone? I was rather dreading your guests, and now, to my delight, I have got you all to myself."

"I have sent them, with Mr. Talbot, to Cappers. They are two bright, pretty, and musical girls, so I thought they would cheer Sir John, and perhaps sing to him. At any rate it makes a change for him."

"Of course it does. Do you know I thought them all looking happier, and less worried, in church yesterday morning. Was it a delusion?"

Mrs. Talbot smiled. "I wonder if you can keep a secret?" she said.

"I think so," I answered, feeling pretty certain what the secret was. But I was wrong, and oh! how delighted I was to be so!

"Well, then," she continued, "I think I must tell you this one, for it has raised all our spirits. About a week ago Sir John had a letter from his solicitor, mentioning that a client of his, an eccentric old widower, and a great bibliomaniac, has been ordered by his doctors to live in the South of England, and is looking out for a place in Fernshire. On hearing this Mr. Oakley at once mentioned Cappers to him, without, however, any hope of a result. To his surprise the old man was charmed with the description of it, and as soon as the weather is milder, is coming down to Marcombe to take a look at it. He is very rich indeed, Mr. Oakley says, and has quarrelled with a good many of his relations, and so will not make a fuss about terms."

"Oh! I am so very glad!" I exclaimed. "I thought," looking her straight in the face, "that you were going to tell me something quite different."

Mrs. Talbot shook her head.

"No," she said. "Of course I cannot pretend to misunderstand you. I wish, with all my heart, it were so; and yet sometimes I am not sure that it is desirable. But to return to this old gentleman. There is one drawback to him, and that is his name."

"His name!"

"Yes. It is certainly a strange coincidence; but he is a Mr. Danvers——"

"May I get a screen? The fire burns my face so.

"Of course, dear. Here is one. What was I saying? Oh! that his name is Danvers; a most unfortunate one for the Challoners, for Sir John was ruined by that rogue Danvers, the banker. You remember the case two or three years ago? Carey and Danvers."

"Yes."

"At first, Sir John flew into one of his rages, swore that no one of the name of Danvers should ever cross his threshold, &c. &c. My dear child, how your hand shakes! The fire is too hot for you."

"It is very hot. I will move a little further off."

"That is right. Well, at last Jack calmed him down, representing to him that probably he was no relation of *the* Danvers, and by degrees bringing him to reason. It turns out, however, on investigation, that they are related, and very nearly too—uncle and

nephew, I think; but that for years and years they had known nothing of each other, until the banker's conduct put the finishing stroke to their mutual estrangement. This has pacified Sir John, and he has consented that when Mr. Danvers comes to Marcombe, he shall go over Cappers."

With a desperate effort I managed to say something.

"Yes," I answered; but if on the spot I had been given a thousand pounds, I don't think I could have brought out another word. Dear Mrs. Talbot either did not or pretended not to notice my monosyllables, but continued to talk on the Cappers subject, dilating on the benefit the letting of the place would be to the Challoner family, and diverging from that to parochial topics—the church, the service, the various Christmas treats, past and future—while I listened, mechanically sipping my tea, and throwing in a "Yes" or a "No," from time to time, trying to rouse myself from the kind of stupor that seemed to have taken possession of me.

A little bustle in the hall, announcing the return of Mr. Talbot and his two great-nieces, did more for me than all my own efforts. I succeeded in conjuring up a smile, as the rector came forward to greet me in his own peculiarly kind manner, followed by the two pretty girls whom he introduced to me as his nieces—the Miss Russells. I could not help looking at them wistfully for a second. They were just such girls as I had once been; bright and happy, dainty in their dress, and with an indescribable air of good breeding about them, that stamped all Mr. Talbot's relations that I hitherto had seen.

"Oh, it is cold!" cried the one, as she knelt down by the fire, "and it is trying to snow—at least, about half a dozen flakes have fallen."

I had been interchanging amenities with Mr. Talbot, a little on one side, but at the word "snow," I became on the alert. "Then I must be going," I said, "before the half-dozen turn to a downpour. Don't you think so, Mrs. Talbot?"

"Yes, I do," she answered. "I have a horror of snow ever since I was snowed up when a girl in a most uncongenial house. I advise you to get home as fast as you can. Are you well wrapped up?"

A few hand-shakings, an absolute refusal to allow Mr. Talbot to accompany me, and I was running down the hill as fast as I could. But that was not very fast. Somehow, my legs seemed as though they could hardly support me, and at last I had to lean against a tree, to recover my breath, whilst all the time I kept repeating to myself, "I must go; yes, I must go." Miss Bostock would be satisfied at last. The wolf in sheep's clothing would soon leave Monk's Hollow.

"At any rate, I need not think of it to-day," I murmured dully to myself, as, having recovered my breath, I set off running again; for it was down-hill, and although the snow was nothing more than an occasional flake, I was anxious to reach the cottage.

With my head down to avoid the full blast of the biting wind, I was speeding along, when, turning a corner in the narrow lane that took me a short cut to the Coles', I almost came into collision with a man who was walking towards me. At first, seeing that he was a gentleman, and my eyes not having travelled as far as his face, I took him for Captain Challoner. The next minute I was cruelly undeceived, for there, before me, a smile of triumph lighting up his features, stood Mordaunt Carey, the *bête noir* of my girlhood, the man who had pestered me, more than once, to marry him, and who, of all others, I would least have chosen to discover my present retreat. My blood seemed to freeze in my veins, as I stood like an animal brought to bay, staring stupidly at the handsome bad face that I had not seen for more than two years. He, meanwhile, had folded his arms, and was looking down on me with a smile I cannot describe. It was a mixture of malice, triumph, and, if I may so desecrate the word, of fierce love; and as I gazed at it, I knew that a conflict was at hand, in which I should require all my courage, all my self-control.

"So I have found you at last, Miss Danvers," he said, breaking the silence, and approaching half a step nearer.

"Yes," I answered.

"Acting as National schoolmistress, I understand," he continued; "occupying a most humiliating position—you, once the darling and beauty of society."

"Yes," I repeated; "I am the schoolmistress here. I have voluntarily chosen a position that I do not regard as in the least humiliating; but I do not expect any of my former acquaintances to recognise me or to have anything to do with me. I am on my way home now. Will you please let me pass, for it is coming on to snow?"

He folded his arms a trifle tighter, barring the narrow passage more effectually than before.

"Not so fast, my dear young lady," he said in a mocking voice. "The snow is nothing—it has already left off; and I have a word or two to say to you before we part. You are well wrapped up; your friends at the Rectory take good care of you, I know; and I will not detain you long."

I put up my veil in the vain hope that a fuller view of my altered looks might move him to some kind of gentlemanly feeling.

"Let me pass, please," I said again.

He shook his head, with a smile of diabolical malice, then suddenly changing his manner—

"May," he cried, "do you know how I have looked and sought for you, how I have never forgotten you for one moment, and how I love you even more fiercely than in your palmiest days? May, you will believe me when I tell you that in spite of your degradation——"

"Degradation, Mr. Carey?"

"Yes, degradation. Is not the daughter degraded when her father is picking oakum at a convict establishment, for swindling the confiding public? Yet, in spite of your father, I still ask you to be my wife. I will overlook all—everything. I will never mention your father's name to you; I will surround you with love and tenderness, and my wife you shall and will be!"

"Never, Mr. Carey. Now let me pass."

"Take care!" he cried, his light blue eyes flashing with anger. "Don't you know that I am dangerous? You always treated me with scorn, but those days are passed away for ever. Your name is a byword in that very society where you played off on your equals airs and graces fit for a princess. Mordaunt Carey was hardly good enough to be spoken to by Miss Danvers, the banker's daughter, although he was nephew to that same Mr. Danvers' partner; but surely Mordaunt Carey is good enough—ay, too good to be rejected by the village schoolmistress, who lives under a false name, the daughter of Danvers, the s—"

"Don't say that again!" I cried, my anger overcoming all my self-control—"if you dare! I do not hold my father to be what you call him. To me he is perfectly innocent, and therefore, as far as I am concerned, all your deductions fall to the ground."

He smiled pityingly.

"Unfortunately," he sneered, "judge, jury, and public held, and do hold, a different opinion. Come, May, let us have no more of this high falutin! It sits ill upon you now. You were always, with all your tantrums and princess ways, a sensible girl; and you must see the reasonableness of what I say. I offer you love, tenderness, a home, a name, and a position—all, in fact, that you have lost. Once more you will return to the world, to which you will be a more brilliant ornament than ever—for even in this dim moonlight I can see that you are a thousand times more beautiful than you were formerly—with an untarnished name, and a husband who will have proved his devotion by asking you to be his wife, when all the rest of the world was giving you the cold shoulder."

My heart was beating to suffocation, with mingled fear and anger, but I tried to speak calmly.

"Mr. Carey," I said, my voice trembling with a satire that I could not repress, "I am much obliged to you for the honour you would do me; but I must give you the same answer as I have twice already. I can never, whatever my circumstances, be your wife—never!"

"And why not?" he almost screamed, his eyes blazing with fury. "Is it your old cursed pride?—a pride that does not mind skulking about under a false name——"

"Mr. Carey, do not go too far," I said, feeling that I, too, might become dangerous.

"So I have touched you up at last," he cried. Then coming a step nearer, his arms held out, his face white in the moonlight from passion.

"I will have you yet. May, you *shall* be my wife," he said, in a cold concentrated voice that made me shiver as I stood there in the cold. Again he came nearer, and again I retreated.

"Let me pass," I said. "I cannot and will not be kept here any longer."

But he paid no attention; he was past listening to either threats or entreaties.

"The old story," he continued in his mocking voice, which was worse to me than his anger. "Miss Danvers in her deepest degradation cannot resist flying her kite high. No one is good enough for her but the eldest son of one of the oldest and most aristocratic families in the county. No matter that that family has sunk to the lowest ebb through vice and extravagance; no matter that her own father put the finishing stroke to their ruin, by swindling them out of their last farthing, Miss Danvers carries on the old game, and seeks to catch a wretched cripple, because she fancies his blue blood."

Here I turned to retrace my steps; I could stand this no longer, but I felt so giddy, I could move but slowly; and in a moment he had wheeled past me, and stood confronting me once more. "Now," he said, "listen to my last word. Unless you consent to be my wife, every soul in this village shall know that you are Hugh Danvers the forger's daughter, before the morning."

Again I turned, and again he out-manœuvred me. Trembling with rage that had got the better of my weakness, I faced him without flinching. "Now, Mr. Carey," I responded, too angry to weigh my words, "listen to *my* last word. To-day you have proved yourself what I always knew you to be—no gentleman. You have gone further; you, a soldier, have shown yourself a coward. Alone with a defenceless woman you have insulted her. That was a cowardly threat you uttered just now, and worthy of you, as were all the miserable insinuations you made against me, too contemptible for me to notice. I have had quite enough misery already, without courting a lifetime of it, by becoming the wife of a man whom I justly regard with the utmost aversion and contempt. Now you have heard my answer, let me pass."

"Never!" he cried, his eyes blazing with fury. A horrible sickening dread took possession of me. I tried to move, and my feet felt spellbound. I could see his evil face getting closer and closer to mine, when all at once a voice, *the* voice of all others to me, cried out—

"Stand back, sir, this moment, and let this lady pass!"

Captain Challoner stood between us, not much of the cripple about him as he forced back Mordaunt Carey; and scanning him with scathing scorn from head to foot, "I believe you are Mr. Bostock's guest," he added, "or I would have had you up for daring to molest this lady." Mordaunt Carey was an arrant coward, but his passion had got the better even of his cowardice.

"Lady!" he yelled, so that he might have been heard all over the village. "Do you know who it is you call by that much-abused name?"

"Silence, sir!" thundered Captain Challoner.

"I will not be silent. This *lady* is Miss Danvers, the daughter of Hugh Danvers, the notorious——"

But, at this juncture, I heard no more. Suddenly my head began to swim; everything seemed to give way, and I fell senseless on the ground.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

MRS. TALBOT'S NARRATIVE.

IT must, I think, by this time, be clear to the reader that Miss Morton had been for some days on the verge

of a dangerous illness, and that when she sank down unconscious in Love Lane, as the narrow track that led to the Coles' cottage was designated, the malady that had been brewing had at last overtaken her.

This was indeed the case. For weeks she lay ill, ignorant of all the events that were taking place around her, the relation of which is so necessary to the completeness of this story, that I most unwillingly have consented to take her place, and fill up the gap that must otherwise have been made, if she alone had been the narrator.

It is a very difficult task that I have thus rashly undertaken to perform; but as my dear husband insists that I, as the most interested looker-on and enthusiastic friend of all parties, am the right person to step into the breach, I have no choice but to obey him. On his head be it then, if this narrative of the events which succeeded the painful scene in Love Lane be prosy and diffuse, or curt and abrupt. I do not pretend to the pen of a ready writer; the utmost I aspire to is that of an intelligible one.

Having thus made my excuses for any shortcomings that may appear in the course of these pages, let me return without further delay to Miss Morton. All that Monday evening after she had left me I could not help feeling uneasy about her, and more than once I reproached myself inwardly that I had allowed her to go home alone. I could not rid myself of the recollection of the strange hunted look that had come into her eyes, as she sat with me by the fire, and the nervous trembling of her hand as she held up the screen to shield her face from the blaze. My uneasiness was, however, of that vague nature that I did not even communicate it to Mr. Talbot, trusting that to-morrow morning would bring me news of her well-being, and put an end to my fears. Nevertheless, as I crossed the hall to go upstairs and rest before dinner, I could not help taking advantage of the servants' carelessness in leaving the front door unshuttered, to peer through its panes, and see whether it was snowing, my thoughts still occupied with May. What was my alarm, however, to find my vision suddenly obscured, and that by a man's figure. I started back in a fright, but the next moment, recovering my presence of mind, I had recognised Jack. He was carrying something in his arms, which it required no second glance to tell me was May's unconscious form. I was not in the least surprised. It seemed to me as though I had expected this to happen, as I noiselessly unfastened the door, and bade him come in.

"I found her insensible in Love Lane," he said in an odd, abrupt manner, as he stepped into the hall. "I could not think of any place to take her to but here, where she would be properly looked after. I hope I have not done wrong."

"No, indeed, perfectly right," I answered, as I quickly reviewed the bedrooms in the house. There was only one suitable for her, and that one had not been used for five years, not since my child died in it. It was just as she had left it. There were her pictures, her books, her nicknacks all about, as they had been in her lifetime. It had never been disturbed, our darling's dainty little nest. Yes, she should go to my Blanche's room. It was only right that it should again be occupied, and what better use could I make of it than to give it up to this poor child, so like her that from the first moment I had seen her, I had loved her with all my heart?

"Come upstairs at once," I said, "I have arranged everything in my own mind;" and he followed me, his face hardly less pallid than hers. My heart was bleeding for him, as I led the way. In these few seconds I had learnt his secret as well as if he had said to me in so many words, "I love her." Was it not written in his eyes? in the looks he cast upon the white, inanimate face that recalled to me the bitterest hour of my life?

"Why, it is Blanche's room!" he exclaimed, as he entered, and, looking around him, recognised the tokens of her former presence.

"Yes, I have no other disengaged that would do."

He laid her gently on the bed, and standing by her side, devoured her with his eyes.

"Is she very ill?" he asked, looking at me as though I held life and death in my hand.

"I don't know," I answered. "We must send for Dr. Charlton at once. Go to the stables, and ask Lovegrove to take the cob and go for him, and then send Mrs. Bolton in here."

"Why not Mrs. Lovegrove? She is a professional nurse."

"She is with Hetty Coles to-night; besides, Sarah is an excellent nurse. Go."

He obeyed me at once, whilst I went to the top of the stairs to summon Jane the housemaid, and Muriel Russell, to my assistance.

"My poor boy! my dear Jack!" I murmured to myself, as I awaited them. Could he have found any one more disastrous to fall in love with? At any rate I had given him something to do for the present, and I must not, on any account, let him guess that I had discovered his secret.

In less time almost than it takes me to write it, Mr. Talbot had been told of the catastrophe, Mrs. Bolton, who had been my Blanche's nurse in her childhood, had come to my assistance, and May, still unconscious, was put to bed ready for Dr. Charlton's visit. He arrived shortly afterwards, and I was grieved to see that he looked very grave over the case. He would not, however, say much, but promised to come early the following morning; and meanwhile our patient lay still insensible, and it seemed as though nothing could shake her deathlike swoon. It was a trying evening to us all. Mr. Talbot, I could see, took a serious view of the matter, and I could not but feel uneasy, reflecting that if May's illness were to take a fatal turn, I was ignorant of any one to write to on her behalf. Never, in all our talks together, had I ever heard her mention a relative; and as I stood by her bedside, some of Lizzie Bostock's many insinuations would intrude themselves on my memory, to be repulsed with indignation, but still leaving a sediment behind. It was a relief, therefore, when, about half-

past eight, Jack reappeared, to hear Dr. Charlton's opinion.

"Well, how is she?" he asked, in a manner intended to be perfectly natural, and which might have deceived the uninitiated, although not me.

"Still unconscious, there is no change," I answered; and with that the two Russell girls chimed in, and May became the subject of conversation in a manner which I soon perceived was torture to Jack. They had been as much struck by her looks as was every one else, and their jokes as to who she could be—ranging over every absurdity, from a Nihilist to a duke's daughter—at last fairly drove him out of the house.

"I shall look in early to-morrow, to hear what kind of a night you have had," he said; and I could not smile at the obviously wrong pronoun, for I knew how much was involved in this unlucky attachment, to which his eyes had evidently only been opened this evening.

From Miss Morton's narrative, the reader will already have gathered something of the desperate condition in which stood Sir John's affairs at this moment. In point of fact ruin was staring him in the face. There was but one remedy, and that was to sell Cappers. For the last two years Lady Challoner had applied herself to convert her husband to this idea, with such undaunted perseverance, that she had at last won his consent to a step which, at the outset, he had vowed nothing should induce him to take. With characteristic impatience, having once been convinced, he was now in feverish haste to carry out her views, as soon as his eldest son should arrive in England.

But here an obstacle arose. Jack refused to cut off the entail, and that for more reasons than one. Apart from the fact that Cappers was dearer to him, and even to Gerrard, than their lives, he knew perfectly well that, with such a disposition as his father's, the remedy would be but short-lived. In a very few years the purchase-money would have melted away, and there would be no Cappers to fall back upon. In vain Sir John raged and stormed, and Lady Challoner vented her anger in impotent scorn and satire, Jack bore it all with extraordinary patience, but also with immovable firmness. He refused absolutely to give in; in fact he grew stronger in his determination, supported by the enthusiastic sympathy of Gwen and Gerrard, who by some occult means, as usual, knew all that was going on.

At the same time he was not insensible to the sore straits to which his family was reduced: no education for the children, no advice for poor Sir John's sad condition, combined with a pride that would infinitely prefer to let its owners starve than be beholden to their nearest or dearest for an ounce of charity.

Under these circumstances, it was not to be wondered at that Sir John called upon his son to supply a remedy for the existing state of things, since he refused him the only one he knew of.

"You must marry money, Jack," he said, without circumlocution; "nor must you think of some nice ladylike girl like Miss Dawtrey, with her £20,000. No, you must sell yourself dear, very dear. Go up to Manchester, or across to America, or Australia, and bring me a millionaire daughter-in-law, who will be enough to make all the Challoners turn in their graves, but will keep Cappers in the family. What will it matter that she will make you shiver twenty times a day? Men do it every hour in these days. Why be better than your compeers? You refuse to sell Cappers, you must sell yourself; that is the only alternative left to you."

Jack was perfectly aware of this. He had turned the matter over and over in his mind, and this was the only outlet that he could see—himself or Cappers. He preferred himself. His love had been buried in Blanche's grave—at least so he fancied—and he was prepared to settle down now to a marriage based on respect and esteem, which should save the family estate. That such a proceeding was very repugnant to him I knew, and, further, I was convinced that he would never marry any woman, be she ever so rich, whom he could not esteem. Sir John had spoken bitterly but truly, as testified by the marriage column in the daily papers, but there was another side to the truth, which he had omitted. That was that, amongst these millionaires, there were women good and refined, who would neither make the former Challoners turn in their graves, nor their husbands shiver twenty times a day. But why send Jack to America or Manchester for a wife when there was one awaiting him at his very doors—one whom he might woo on the spot, and who, even before he had appeared on the scene, had made up her mind one day to be Lady Challoner? Because Sir John detested the Bostocks for a variety of perhaps senseless reasons, which do, however, obtain with poor erring human nature, and will obtain as long as human nature lasts. First and foremost, Mr. Bostock was the chief mortgagee of Cappers; secondly, he never missed an opportunity of trying to supplant Sir John in all those offices in both county and parish that country squires are usually called upon to fulfil; and last, but by no means least, it was rumoured that he committed *the* unpardonable crime in the eyes of a sportsman, namely, that of killing foxes. These were his principal offences, added to which were various petty sins against good taste, &c., which acted as a perpetual blister to poor Sir John, rendered terribly irritable by his sad infirmity.

But Lady Challoner was very different from her husband. She had none of the pride, proper or improper, of the Challoners. After treating the Bostocks with a coolness which at times amounted to impertinence, she suddenly, with the prospect of Jack's arrival, awoke to the consciousness that it might be as well to conciliate them, seeing the position in which Mr. Bostock stood to Cappers, seeing also that Lizzie was a very great heiress. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, she hoisted the flag of truce, figuratively took Miss Bostock to her bosom, and presto! The whole aspect of affairs was changed. Miss Bostock became "dear Lizzie," and was given the run of the house; Mr. Bostock's talent and capacity, hitherto ignored, were extolled to the skies; and by the time

Jack returned in the character of a hero from the Soudan, the heiress wife — who had so amiably acquiesced in the *volte face* that I could not but suspect that she understood and connived at its motive— was there, all ready to his hand.

That Sir John could not, and would not, so quickly change his colours is easily to be understood. In vain Lady Challoner argued with him, trying to convince him how impolitic it was not to be on terms of friendship with the Manor. He agreed to all that she said, only asked to be excused from following suit.

"You may do as you like, my dear," he said. "Have that girl for ever here; kiss her and call her 'dear Lizzie' to your heart's content, only don't ask me to do the same."

"No, that I certainly won't," responded Lady Challoner. "All I beg of you is to be commonly civil to her, for she may be the means of saving Cappers."

Sir John made a grimace, but he submitted. "Let the women manage it their own way," he remarked, retiring to his own den whenever Miss Bostock put in an appearance, which soon grew to be about twice a day. Nevertheless, he held to his opinion, and therefore it was that he suggested to his son to search for a wife in the Antipodes, whereas Lady Challoner had one all ready for him.

Her opportunity came a day or two after Jack's arrival, when he casually asked something about this Miss Bostock, who was a new apparition since he had been last at Cappers, and who seemed so thoroughly intimate with his step-mother and all the rest of the family. Lady Challoner answered his careless question with a most impressive solemnity.

"Lizzie Bostock is the only child of our excellent neighbour at the Manor, the richest man in Fernshire, and she is one of the nicest girls I have ever met with."

"Indeed!" he answered, still carelessly. "I suppose he is Bostock the lace-maker. He wasn't here in my day, you know, though I remember now he had just begun building that barrack that he lives in when I went away. Yes, she seems a girl with her wits about her, and rather good-looking."

"She is all that, and a great deal more," responded Lady Challoner, still solemn; "and any man would indeed be lucky who could win her for a wife."

This was plain speaking, and Jack laid it to heart. He began to study Miss Bostock with the coldness and dispassionateness that he might have brought to the observation of a beetle through a microscope. I watched the process narrowly, and I could see that she failed to kindle one spark of emotion in his heart. Slowly, however, as the months went on, a feeling did develop itself, so imperceptibly that I think he was hardly aware of it himself. Alas! it was one of dislike. In proportion as Miss Bostock became more deeply in love with him—and there was no doubt as to her sentiments—so did he grow colder to her, for he had learnt to know May, and it is my conviction that he fell in love with her at first sight. Be that as it may, the whole fabric had now fallen to the ground, and he stood revealed to himself, in love with a village schoolmistress, a lady certainly, but an uncomfortably mysterious one, and apparently without a sixpence. Poor Jack! poor Cappers! and oh, poor Sir John!

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

CAPTAIN CAREY KEEPS HIS WORD.

THAT Monday night was a long one to me, for I could not sleep. I lay awake, thinking of May, of Jack, of Cappers, of all the worry in store for the Challoners, until my brain was fairly in a whirl. When at last the church clock chimed out six, I could bear it no longer. I crept out of bed and stole noiselessly along the passage to my darling's room. As I gently opened the door and entered, Mrs. Bolton looked at me with reproachful eyes.

"You, ma'am?" she said.

"Yes; it is I, Sarah. I cannot sleep. I shall rest better in here; and if you will go and lie down, I will take charge of Miss Morton."

She looked at me doubtfully. "It is not good for you, ma'am; indeed it isn't," she reiterated, glancing at May's marble face. "It is just as though it were herself over again."

I knew well what she meant.

"Leave me with her," I faltered; "I like it."

Without another word of remonstrance she obeyed me, and, quitting the room noiselessly, left me alone with May. As soon as she was gone, I took the candle, and standing by the bedside, looked long and earnestly at her as Jack had looked at her yesterday. In her death-like swoon, she was more like my Blanche than ever, only more beautiful than she had ever been. And as I gazed on that fine creamy skin, on the long black lashes, on the pencilled eyebrows, the shapely head, the tiny ears, and little white hands, I could not help wondering who she could be, this beautiful girl, apparently alone in the world, who had crept into our little village, like some wounded bird of rare plumage, and set all our hearts beating. But it was no good conjecturing. There was no answer to my unspoken question. The stillness of death lay on the room, so I blew out the candle, and stretching myself by her side, was soon fast asleep. It was past eleven when I came downstairs later in the day. I had been detained first of all by Dr. Charlton's arrival, and secondly by a faint symptom of returning consciousness in our invalid. At last I had been literally driven out of the room by Sarah, and was making my way to the sofa in the drawing-room when, to my amazement, as I crossed the hall, I saw Sir John's chair, drawn by Jack, standing at the front door. I opened it at once.

"Why, John——?"

"How is she?" cried Jack. "What kind of a night?"

I tried not to smile. "Come in, both of you," I said, "and I will tell you."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir John, "you have not as much to tell us as we to tell you. The murder is out at last."

"Father," said Jack, "do, pray, be cautious. Wait, at any rate, until you are in the drawing-room."

Sir John smiled. "Are you alone?" he asked me.

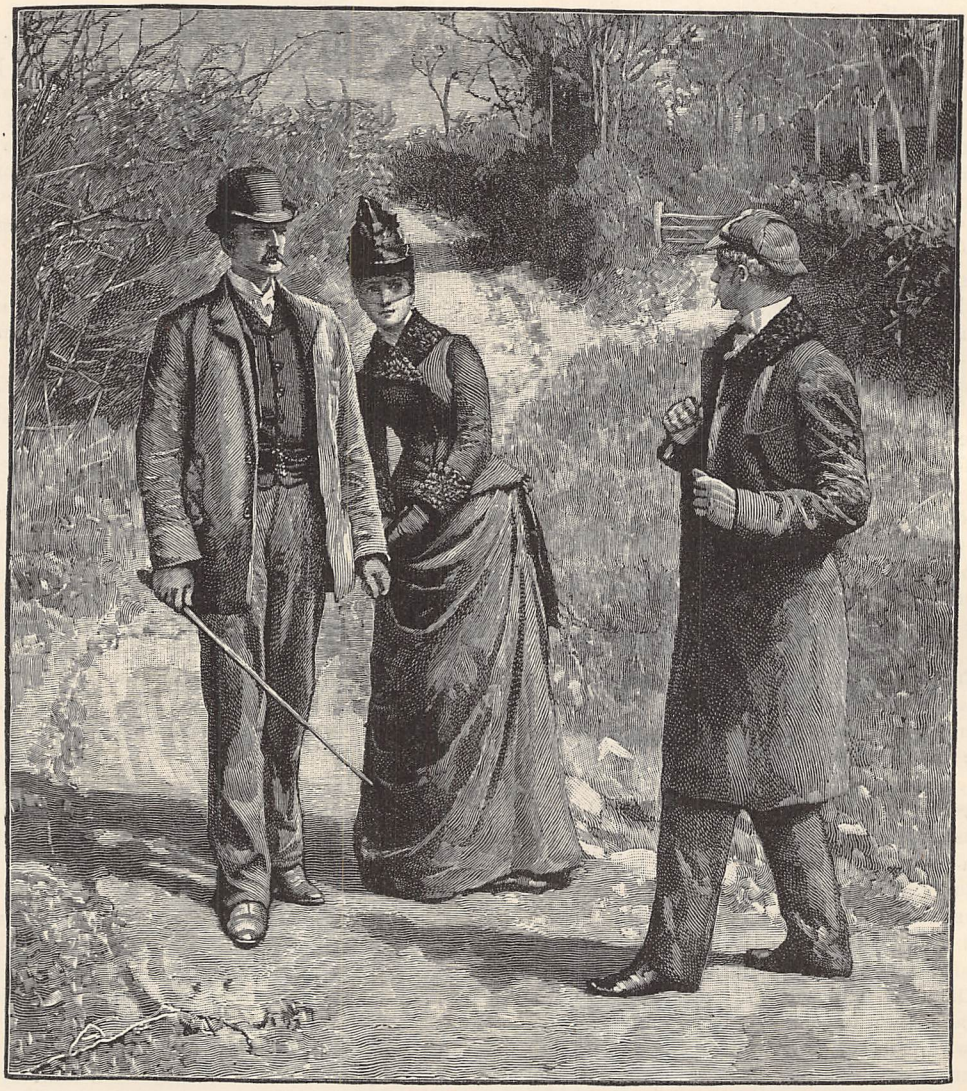
"Yes. Ancaster is gone to the Coles'; Muriel Russell is sitting with Miss Morton, and Helen is gone on an errand in the village for me. You will have me all to yourselves for some time, so come in and tell me all about it."

I am afraid it is quite unnecessary for me to mention that I am rather fond of an occasional bit of gossip. Unbecoming as it is in a rector's wife, I must plead in excuse that it is a sin to which invalids who are kept much indoors are prone, and at this moment I was simply on tenterhooks of curiosity. I could tell from Jack's face and manner that Sir John's words referred to May, and if so, to the mystery that surrounded her.

"She is doing pretty well at present," I said, taking pity on Jack's anxious looks; "and Sarah thinks she can detect signs of returning consciousness. Dr. Charlton has come and gone. The great thing he insists on is extreme quiet, as he says she has had a shock to her nervous system. He fears she is in for a bad illness, of what nature he cannot as yet say."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Sir John, "very sorry;" then, as I took up my position on the sofa, "Yes, that is right; lie down, for my story will take some time to relate."

"Can't he tell at all what she is suffering from?" broke in Jack.



"SCANNING HIM WITH SCATHING SCORN FROM HEAD TO FOOT" (*p.* 548).

"He comes again this afternoon, when he will be able to form a more decided opinion. Sit down, Jack," I continued, as I thought I perceived an inclination in him to stride about the room. "Now, then, John, I am quite ready for your story; so pray begin."

"I think I will go home, father, and fetch you in an hour's time," said his son, to whom, at this moment, sitting down appeared to be an impossibility.

"No, you won't," returned Sir John. "You will stay where you are, and help me to tell this wonderful history; for I never was a good hand at narrative. A nice thing to leave two helpless creatures like myself and Blanche——"

"Thank you, John."

"Well, you are not up to much, and I—why, I am a log. You might faint or go into hysterics, or——"

"Oh! for goodness' sake," I burst out, "begin! I have never been in hysterics in my life."

"The fact is, I hardly know where to begin," he answered. "However, I suppose my best plan will be just to go straight through the events of this morning."

I looked at Jack in despair; but he did not see me. In an attitude of profoundest gloom, he was staring at the carpet as though he were counting its threads. Evidently the secret, whatever it might be, boded him no good.

"With all my heart," I responded. "All I beg is that you will begin somewhere."

"Well, I suppose it was about half-past nine this morning; no, a quarter to ten, eh, Jack?"—Jack nodded his head—"that we were all sitting at breakfast, when, just as I was beginning to recover a little from the fatigue of getting up, there comes a tap at the door, and in walks the Bostock girl, or, as I should say, Miss Bostock. I confess I felt very angry. I have put up with a great deal since Gladys discovered her charms and virtues; I may say we have not known privacy from that hour. She has been in and out of Cappers, like a rabbit at its burrow; she has brought us game, fruit, flowers; she has loaded Gladys and the children with presents, even down to giving them frocks, and I have borne it all patiently—but breakfast! I draw the line there. I am pretty well done up at breakfast-time, after the exertion of dressing, and to have a girl marching in, with her head full of plans and suggestions, is more than I can stand. She came in smiling of course—she always does smile, if you observe—and, also of course, began kissing Gladys and the children. I dislike all that kissing at any time, but at breakfast it is positively nasty."

"Oh! John, you are too delightful," I cried.

"Am I? I don't think 'dear Lizzie' found me so. 'Shouldn't advise you to kiss the children, Miss Bostock,' I said, when I saw that they were not to be let off; 'they are all bread and jam.'

"'Oh! I don't mind, Sir John,' she cried. 'I must give them a kiss. No, thank you, dear,' as Gladys offered her a cup of tea; 'I am only come in for one minute. I breakfasted hours ago. We always breakfast at eight sharp, you know.'

"'And we always at ten,' I returned; 'so we didn't expect to see you quite so early. Which way did you come in? I never heard the door-bell.'

"'Oh! I never think of ringing now; do I, Lady Challoner? Much too great a friend for those formalities. As I said, I only ran in for a minute to tell you something which has grieved and shocked me more than I can say. I have not slept all night for thinking of it.'

"'Dear me! I am sorry,' said Gladys. 'It cannot be Miss Morton's illness that you mean? She is at the Rectory, you know.'

"'Yes, I know all that. It is not her illness, that I am not in the least surprised at, as she did her best to bring it on; it is her conduct I allude to. Sir John, Lady Challoner—Miss Morton is, as I from the first suspected, a rank impostor!' Almost before the words were out of her mouth, or any of us could speak, Gerrard was up in arms. 'No, she isn't,' he cried. 'How dare you speak of Mortie like that, Lizzie?' Of course I had to interfere. Do you think I am never coming to the point, Blanche?"

I nodded. "You are very long about it," I answered candidly.

"Well, you shan't be kept waiting much longer. 'Hold your tongue, Gerrard,' I cried. 'Now, Miss Bostock, what is this wonderful history? Is Miss Morton a *pétroleuse*, a socialist, a nihilist, or any other "ist," or a princess in disguise?' Then to tease her, for she hates Miss Morton, 'I incline to the latter belief,' I added.

"'No, Sir John,' she answered dramatically, and looking at Jack all the time. 'She is nothing of that kind. Her name is not Morton. She is'——Who do you think now, Blanche?"

Here poor Jack lifted his head from the contemplation of the carpet. "She is Miss Danvers, the daughter of the banker," he said quietly.

"Miss Danvers! the—daughter—of the—banker!" I repeated slowly, as my knitting fell from my amazed hands. "Oh, my poor Jack!" I thought at first, then "Oh! poor, poor girl!" I cried. "What a terrible thing for her! Oh, my poor, brave May!"

Jack looked at me with a luminous smile.

"Ah! I knew *you* would not cast her off," he said, and relapsed into silence.

"Cast her off!" I cried, "in such a trouble as hers! What do you think I am made of?"

"Real, good stuff, there is no doubt about that," said Sir John, as he beat his one hand up and down on the arm of the chair.

"But how was it found out?" I cried. "Who told Miss Bostock? and is it certain?"

"Oh, yes; it is certain enough. I will tell you all about it in Miss Bostock's own language, which is very forcible. Naturally, when we first heard the news we were all struck dumb with amazement, and I was the first to recover my speech. 'Daughter of that scoundrel!' I cried, 'and she had the effrontery to come and establish herself at the very door of the people he had ruined. That beats everything. She must leave—leave immediately. What on earth made

your father engage such a woman?' You see I was excited."

I nodded my head. I could quite imagine the whole scene.

"'Oh, Sir John!' she answered, 'that is what I have often asked him. I shall never forgive myself that I allowed him to take such an important step without being present myself. He says he thought it such a good thing for the village to have a real lady for the schoolmistress; but the fact is, my father is but a man after all'—you should have heard the tone of commiseration for our inferior sex—'and, like all men, he was taken with her good looks. Besides, she was determined to come here for reasons best known to herself.' Here she looked venomously at Jack, as though he had had a hand in bringing her here. 'She is a most designing girl. But what can you expect from the daughter of such a father? I believe her not to be a bit better than he is.'

"This time Jack, who had been standing like a stick all through the business, was about to take up his parable, when again Gerrard forestalled him. He darted round from his chair, and seized Miss Bostock by the arm. 'Lizzie,' he said, and you should have seen his face, 'I shall quarrel with you if you say such things about Miss Morton—Danvers, I mean. She is not bad or designing. She is as good as gold. Because her father is bad, it does not make her so. Our great-grandfather, Sir Oliver, was awfully wicked, but that is no reason why we should be. I know why you don't like——'

"But here I interfered again. I did not know what the young villain might be going to repeat, and I feared it might be something he has no doubt heard me say, that 'no woman likes another pretty one.' So, although Miss Bostock well deserved the reproof, I interposed, and quickly despatched Master Gerrard and the other children out of the room."

"You ought to have done so, long before," I murmured.

"Of course I ought, but I did not think about it, besides which they were in the middle of their breakfast. As it was, Gerrard had a parting shot at Miss Bostock: 'Mortie is ill,' he said, when I told him to go at once, and take his sticky stuff with him, 'and cannot contradict Lizzie, and then she comes and says these things about her. It is a beastly shame. Stick up for Mortie, Jack,' and with that he finally marched out of the room."

"Good Gerrard!" I cried, "dear boy! He gave a lesson to you all."

"That's a pretty thing to say," exclaimed Sir John. "A lesson of insubordination, I suppose you mean?"

"No, a lesson of loyalty, generosity, and proper feeling," I answered. "Go on, John; I am on thorns to hear the rest."

"Whatever the lesson might be, I was very angry with him until Gladys intervened. She, like you, was dying to hear the *dénouement* of the story, although she tried to put on her most indifferent manner. 'Go on, Lizzie,' she said. You know Gladys' drawl when she pretends to bored. 'Never mind Gerrard; he is a very rude boy. Let us hear the end of your story. How clever of you to find her out! How did you do it?'

"Whereupon Miss Bostock, forgetting that she had only a few minutes to spare, with great deliberation settled herself in a chair, and began again.

"'You must know,' she said, 'we had a friend staying with us for the Marcombe gaieties. I dare say you saw him in church on Sunday.' I nodded my head, for I had had that pleasure. You must have seen him, too, Blanche? He stared about him, as though the whole place belonged to him."

"Yes; I saw him."

"Didn't think much of his looks, eh? No more did I. You can spell him in four letters."

"'That friend,' continued Miss Bostock dramatically, 'knew Miss Danvers formerly.'

"'Oh, ah!' I said. 'His name is Carey, isn't it? Gerrard told me so. Any relation of Danvers' partner?'

"'I was just coming to that,' she answered. 'He is nephew to Mr. Carey, the banker, and used often to meet May Danvers, as he calls her, at his uncle's house.'

"'Oh, indeed!' I remarked. 'And what, now, was his opinion of his uncle?'"

At this point I could not help smiling. Well I knew Sir John's opinion of Mr. Danvers' partner, and could fancy the grim manner in which he would fasten on him. But I said nothing. I would not for the world interrupt the flow of the narrative.

"'His opinion of his uncle!' she cried. 'He is very sorry for him, of course, for the failure, and all that; but Mrs. Carey had a large fortune, which was all strictly settled upon her, and could not be touched, so they live pretty comfortably. He was only unfortunate, not a criminal like Danvers.'

"'Humph!' I muttered. 'As long as I live I shall suspect Carey knew something about it. He always was a plausible old hypocrite.'"

"'Oh, Sir John!' she cried, 'what a dreadful thing to say; particularly of a good man like Mr. Carey. Why, it all came out at the trial'—as though I did not know that; but it was not worth while to go into the matter with her

"'And so this Captain Carey found Miss Danvers out?' I asked. 'Was that it?'

"'Strange to say,' she answered, 'I had been talking about Miss Morton at breakfast, saying she was bent on knocking herself up, and somehow from that we came to speak of her looks, and the mystery that surrounded her. Captain Carey seemed interested, asked a good many questions about her, her appearance, &c. &c., and I described her to the best of my powers. It seems that his suspicions were aroused from the first by her name—for her mother was a Miss Morton—and he was determined to have a look at her when she was playing the organ. This he managed to do, satisfying himself that it was indeed Miss Danvers who was thus masquerading in our primitive little village.'"

Here I could no longer contain myself. "Masque-

rading!" I exclaimed very indignantly. Sir John laughed.

That word aroused Jack, too, and he then told us what we did not know before, that no doubt her reason for coming here is that her father is in Fastmoor.

"I had no idea of that, Jack," I said, turning to him.

"Captain Johnson told me so the other day," he answered.

"No wonder, then, she was determined to come here," I cried. "Dear, brave, plucky girl! Go on, John."

"Yes, she is plucky, and in spite of her scoundrel of a father, I could not but feel indignant for her. I am afraid I showed it."

"I have not the slightest doubt you did. What did he say, Jack?"

Jack got up, and went and stood in front of the fire. There was a smile on his face; evidently he approved of what his father had said.

"Say? Why, just what I longed to," he answered —'And so, Miss Bostock, the gallant captain came home, and told you instanter of his wonderful discovery. Nice, very nice of him!' Miss Bostock was very much puzzled. She could not make out if he were chaffing her or not.

"'He did not tell us at once,' she said. 'He was kind enough to think it would spoil our Sunday, but he did not think it right to keep us in ignorance too long. He told us just before we went to bed on Monday (yesterday).'

"'To give you a good night's rest, eh?' said my father. "He appears to be a most thoughtful friend. What do you suppose now was his motive for hunting down Miss Morton?' You should have seen Miss Bostock's look of amazement at this view of the case.

"'Motive! Hunting down! Sir John, what do you mean? The motive is plain enough. How could any man with a conscience allow such an impostor to continue in our midst without exposing her?'

"'Those are strong words, Miss Bostock,' I said, 'more strong than charitable. We shall have to send for Gerrard to take up the cudgels for a young lady who is lying unconscious, and cannot defend herself. Miss Danvers has, I suppose, as much to do with her father's sins as you or I have.'"

"Ah! ah!" laughed Sir John, "our 'dear Lizzie' did not like that. She gave Jack a very ugly look, and no wonder. He ought to have kept out of it altogether."

"Just now you reproached me with having stood like a stick at the beginning of the conversation."

"Quite true, I did. But you were right, and I was wrong. You should have continued the part of the stick."

Jack shrugged his shoulders. Sir John was certainly somewhat impossible.

"Shall I finish the story?" he asked me.

"Certainly. I am most anxious to hear the end of it all. What did Miss Bostock say?"

"'But she has sins of her own to answer for, Captain Challoner,' she responded, 'and one unpardonable sin, that of presenting herself here as schoolmistress, under a false name.'

"'Her mother's maiden name,' I returned. 'No doubt it was wrong; but she has injured no one but herself by so doing. Whether her name be Morton or Danvers, what do the inhabitants of Monk's Hollow care, so long as their children are properly taught?'

"'My father and I, as two of the inhabitants, care very much,' she answered. 'We cannot take such a low view of wrong-doing as to judge it only by its effects.' She was going to say more to the same purpose, when Lady Challoner fortunately interposed, and saved us all a protracted lecture."

"Yes," said Sir John, with a meaning smile— "Gladys very sensibly intervened to put an end to a dialogue which was becoming a trifle too heated between two *such* friends as Jack and the fair Lizzie."

"'You have all discussed the affair quite enough,' she said, forgetting to drawl, 'and I want to go about my business. The result of the whole matter is this: Miss Morton must go.'

"'Oh, decidedly she must go!' said Miss Bostock; and on this point, at last, we were unanimous, for I could not breathe in the same parish as that scoundrel's daughter, sorry as I feel for her."

I looked at Jack. A flash of pain had shot across his face at his father's words, although he evidently agreed with his decision.

"Yes," he said gently, but inexorably; "it will be better for us and for herself that she should go."

"If she lives," I cried impetuously.

"You don't mean to say she is as bad as all that?" said Sir John.

"No, no," I answered, repenting my words, when I saw the misery in Jack's eyes; "only, of course, we don't know what turn this illness may take, and I can't bear to hear you talk of her going away. We are so fond of her. At any rate, nothing can be done without Ancaster's sanction," I concluded; but in my heart I knew my husband would agree with the others.

"No, of course not," said Sir John soothingly. "I am very sorry for you. I know how you and Talbot have taken to the girl, and, apart from your own special reason, I do not wonder. How could any one help taking to her? But she has no business to be a National schoolmistress, and the sooner she gives it up the better. She is a great deal too good-looking for the position. She is like her father. An uncommonly handsome man, Danvers! You remember him, Jack? I liked him a great deal better than Carey; that is to say, when I could get sight of him. He was always away; anywhere, in fact, but at his business. Spent his money like water too. No wonder that the pretty schoolmistress occasionally lets out her knowledge of the fashionable world, and makes us stare. I always heard Danvers' daughter was beautiful, although, strange to say, I never remember seeing her with him. Well, the sooner she leaves here the better."

"And what has become of this Captain Carey," I

asked, "who made all these revelations? Is he still at the Manor?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said Sir John. "He has taken precious good care to be out of the way, after setting fire to the mine. He returned to Bodmin this morning, and I hope it is for the last time we have seen his face at Monk's Hollow."

"Hadn't we better be going, father? I am sure Mrs. Talbot is tired."

Jack had risen from his chair, and was looking straight before him. I could see that he was anxious to be alone with his grief, that this morning's disclosures had only enhanced tenfold. Yesterday it was the village schoolmistress; to-day it was the daughter of the man who had ruined his father, and was expiating his offences in prison. Was he always to be unfortunate in his attachments, my poor Jack? He had loved my Blanche from the days that, as a big Eton boy, he had played with and petted her, nine years his junior, to find out, when taken away from him, that he had loved her as his future wife. And now, after the lapse of five years, his affections had fallen upon a woman as impossible for him to marry as if she had, indeed, been dead; for, apart from all other considerations, it was pretty certain that May would remain single until her father's term of imprisonment—ten years I think it was—should have expired. And, meanwhile, Jack was bound in honour either to consent to the sale of Cappers, or in some shape or form to find the necessary £ s. d. that should release his family from its dire straits.

In the present state of his affections, it was not likely that he would resort to matrimony as a solution of the problem, nor was it more probable that he would consent to the sale of Cappers. What would he do then? For one thing, he was sure to get some good appointment, as soon as he was well enough to take one, for he was very highly thought of in the service, besides having interest; but it must be a very extraordinary post that could furnish the money for all he wanted to do. He could further supplement his professional earnings by literary and artistic work, as he had often done before, but still that would be but a drop in the ocean of his engagements. He was, I knew, at work upon some new venture in literature at this moment, of what nature I was ignorant; but successful as he had hitherto been in this line, still it is only the favoured few who can really call literature a royal road to fortune.

I turned it all over and over in my mind, after Sir John and Jack had left me, until I gave myself a racking headache; and not until I had seen my husband, and poured it all out to him, could I find rest for my tired brain.

He was full of sympathy for dear May and Jack, and as grieved as I was at the unfortunate turn affairs had taken; but he looks at everything from a higher standpoint than I do.

"We must get Miss Danvers well first, dear," he said, "if she is to get well. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

END OF CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

AUGUST—WREN.

"LITTLE Wren, why do you warble?
Blackbird was singing at dawn,
Thrush will be here in the twilight,
Nightingale then, sweet and lorn."

"One hour of day would be silent
If I should pause in my song;
You may not care for my music—
One answering heart listens long."

TEA-TABLE DELICACIES FOR THE SUMMER SEASON.

BY P. H. DAVIS, AUTHOR OF "THE PRESERVING OF WHOLE FRUITS," ETC.

SOME little time ago I contributed an article to the columns of CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE, explaining how fruit could be put to its best use during the time that it was plentiful.* It is an easy step from fruit, which frequently appears upon the tea-table, to some of the many other things which might well accompany it. In summer one's appetite is likely to be jaded, and therefore something is required to coax it. This then must be my excuse for the present series of recipes.

Every one knows how fittingly blancmange and fruit combine, and as a rule it is taken for granted that cornflour is, or should be, the proper ingredient to make a blancmange. Cornflour will certainly produce a very excellent article, but I think that if a blancmange is required which will keep firm for a day or two, isinglass, or finely shredded gelatine, would be welcomed as a pleasing change. I therefore give such for my first recipe.

ISINGLASS BLANCMANGE.

Soak 2 oz. of isinglass in ½ pint of new milk, or if gelatine should be preferred, get that kind which is cut as finely as silken thread, and is nearly as colourless as water. If it should be considered desirable to add solid flavourings, such as spices or fresh lemon-peel, these must be added to the other 1½ pints of milk which will be required to complete the blancmange. Boil up the 1½ pints of milk which contain the flavouring, and whilst still scalding hot, pour it upon the first ½ pint of milk containing the gelatine. If essences are selected for flavouring they should now be added with 4 oz. of castor sugar, and the whole well stirred together; but if solid flavourings have been introduced, the whole of the mixture should now be strained through either a bag or a colander directly into a wetted mould of some pretty shape. Allow the contents of the mould to set, and if it is requisite to have the blancmange ready for the table in a very short time, stand the mould in a vessel of cold water in which a handful of rough salt has been thrown.

When the blancmange is required, dip the mould into hot water for a second or so, turn its contents out upon a glass dish, and decorate, according to taste, with fresh or preserved fruit.

Note.—Be perfectly sure that the interior of the mould is quite wet with cold water before attempting to pour the blancmange into it, but be equally careful that no quantity of water is left at the bottom of the mould, or it will form into small rivulets in the pattern and cause the resulting blancmange to have a "cockled" appearance when turned out.

* "The Preserving of Whole Fruits"—CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, August, 1887, page 538.

ALMOND SHORTBREAD

is a very nice thing indeed for the tea-table in summer, and can be made quite simply. It is only requisite to use ordinary care in the manipulation of the ingredients, and to be watchful that the resulting cakes are not burnt or, in fact, baked to too deep a colour when in the oven. Allow these delicacies to come to the table of a fine golden-yellow colour, and as a *bonne-bouche* they will stand considerable criticism. Here then are the ingredients:—

1 lb. Ground sweet almonds,
8 oz. Castor sugar,
8 ,, Sifted flour,
8 ,, Good butter,
The yolks of eight eggs,
About eight drops of essence of ratafia.†

In the first place, see that the ground almonds are nice and fresh, for if they have the slightest taint or rancidity about them they are not at all suitable for the purpose. Having procured the almonds, mix them with the sifted flour and castor sugar, and then very, *very* carefully indeed, add a few drops of the ratafia, because too much of it would be positively obnoxious. Mix everything thoroughly and perfectly, so that the flavouring may be carried through and through the other dry ingredients. Make a space in the centre, and in this drop the yolks of the eggs, which have been examined as broken, one at a time, into a vessel. Then melt the butter, add that, and mix up the whole together until it is a nice, firm, stiff paste. This should now be rolled a great many times—in fact it cannot be rolled too frequently. When sufficiently rolled to appear like a strip of cream-coloured satin about a quarter of an inch thick, cut it into small squares with a sharp knife. Pinch up all the edges of each square, and in the centre of every cake lay the split half of a blanched almond. Now butter some baking-tins, lay the cakes upon them, and bake in a moderate oven to a fine pale yellow tint.

It will be found that this almond shortbread is a most delicious thing at all times, but more particularly when eaten in conjunction with fruit, because almonds and fruit always go well together, for the reason that the kernel of a fruit-stone is in nature something like an almond itself.

A DELICATE SPONGE CAKE.

Separate the yolks from the whites of ten eggs, and whisk the former to a light froth. Then gradually add to them 1 lb. of castor sugar, taking care to beat it up well until all the added sugar has been thoroughly mixed with the other ingredients. Now whisk the egg-whites to a very light but firm snow, and stir that into the batter and mix all thoroughly. Drop in a *small* teaspoonful † of essence of lemon, stir again and then sift in 1 lb. 2 oz. of nice, sweet, dry pastry flour, and

† These are open questions which must be left to (1) the taste of the person, and (2) the strength of the essence. No *definite* rule can be given.

whisk all up until perfectly blended. Now take some tins of any shape or size desired, wipe the insides out very carefully, and then grease them lightly with butter which has been previously creamed. Freely dust fine sugar over the butter, fill the tins three-parts full of the sponge cake; dust the tops rather heavily with sugar, and bake in a warm oven until the cakes are of a delicate yellow colour.

A Word of Caution.—As a rule, the housewife is so anxious to have her cake done before it *really* is baked, that by frequent opening and closing of the oven door she lowers the temperature of the oven, and causes the cake to fall in its tin, and thus become "sad." Here then is a word of advice:—First be certain that the oven is of the desired temperature, and supplied with sufficient fuel to maintain that temperature for the time it is expected the cake will require for baking. When the time has elapsed and it is thought the cake is ready, look at it and judge somewhat by its colour, but at the same time push well into the middle of the cake through one of the cracks in the top of it a good stiff straw. Remove the straw immediately, and if anything sticks to it, the cake is not yet done, but if the straw comes away quite clean the cake is finished.

Rose Biscottines.

These are indeed a novelty, and if properly made, are far superior to the world-famous Shrewsbury cakes. For five o'clock tea they are a decided innovation, and I claim for them the credit of being unique in every way because they are entirely of my own invention; and I sincerely hope those who would make these lovely little morsels to perfection will do me the credit of keeping exclusively to the proportions of the different ingredients I have given, and likewise will be careful that the biscottines are not over-baked, nor burnt in any way. Take—

1 lb. Fine dry pastry flour,
8 oz. Castor sugar,
8 ,, Butter (fresh),
½ ,, Finely sifted biscuit powder,
A hock-glass-full of rose water,
Two eggs.

The flour and biscuit powder should be sifted together, and then the other ingredients well rubbed into them. The sugar should now be mixed thoroughly, and a space made in the centre of the lot, in which the eggs and rose water should be poured. Stir everything well together and produce a nice, firm, *stiff* paste. Roll this out into a sheet rather less than one-eighth of an inch thick, and then stamp the biscottines out of it with a small fluted-edged oval hand-cutter. Now lay these cakes on buttered baking-tins, put them in a warm oven, and keep them there till quite done.

By rolling the above dough out to only the thickness of stout note-paper, and baking the biscottines very lightly indeed—only about twenty seconds in a good hot oven—the result will be beautiful wafers to take with ices.

THE GARDEN IN AUGUST.

THE rapidly advancing summer makes us the more careful to pay attention to those flowers that will, either by the gaiety of their colour or the persistency of their bloom, help us to preserve the idea that it still is summer. Not that we are foolish enough to dispute the claim of August to be one of our most glorious summer months, but still, as August advances we find certain gay colouring in our beds which we look upon not with unmixed pleasure, simply because it is the herald of approaching autumn. Notably in this class is the dahlia, and something must be said about it; for not only is it gay in the month of August, but as late as October even, when our first frost has come, the dahlia, side by side with the chrysanthemum, not infrequently helps to keep up the idea, as we have just said, that it is summer still.

Now, to speak of the soil first, we note that the dahlia is what is called a coarse feeder, and to succeed we must have, therefore, a well-manured soil. A good trenching, then, on any bed in which we intend to grow a collection of dahlias would be advisable, so as to render the soil friable and easy of management. And next, as to the situation of our dahlia-bed: the flower-heads being of a brittle character and easily broken off, choose as far as possible some more sheltered spot for your plants. Why it was that our grandfathers despised the *single* dahlia we cannot tell. At all events, in the present day not a garden would be considered complete without plenty of specimens of the single kind, to which perhaps even more attention is now paid than to the double that fifty years ago was thought so much of. And then as to the propagation of the dahlia: this can be carried out, as in most other cases, either by seed or by cuttings. Your seed will, of course, have been taken from the pods of the best specimens of previous bloom, and for this purpose you should, when your dahlias were in flower, have marked those that you considered as the most perfect. This course is really the wisest, for much time and labour is often lost by taking seed

from pods indiscriminately, as they have chanced to ripen, without any reference to the quality and merits of the bloom that produced them. Indeed, the standard of our seedlings would be far higher if we were to take the precaution of picking off all imperfect buds immediately upon the discovery of any flaw, imperfection, or weakness, and leaving for seed only the very best specimens.

Sow early in March in any shallow box or pan placed in your greenhouse or hot-bed, and after a while, when large enough for manipulation, you can set them out in small pots. Now, the dahlia will not stand those uncertain spring frosts, the severity and uncertainty of which are always a matter of terror to English gardeners, so that not before the end of the third week in May must your young plants be brought into the open flower garden. As they come into flower you will soon see which are worthless and which are worth preserving. Those of poor shape, indefinite or bad colour, or that are generally unfavourable, you had better dig up and destroy, but to the promising ones put stakes and tie them carefully ; while, thirdly, from any which you pronounce more particularly good you should try to strike the young tops in a hot-bed.

And this leads us to notice, secondly, the method of the propagation of the dahlia by cuttings : these can really be taken at any time during some six months of the year, commencing from February. The best cuttings, perhaps, are the shoots that spring directly from the bulb, but the young tops to which we have just alluded should also certainly be struck when a promising specimen is met with ; and, lastly, we can add to our stock by the simple division of the tuberous roots made in the way that we should treat any hardy perennial. Dahlias again, we must remark, want plenty of water, and, indeed, all round your plant for some little distance the ground should be well saturated. Some cultivators mulch round the stem

with manure, but the objection to this is that manure attracts earwigs and insects in general, and the earwig in particular is what is most fatal to the petals of the dahlia. Then again, when your plant is young and tender—perhaps soon after it is planted out in May—it will, unless you take precautions, become the prey of the slug. A little circle of lime drawn round your plant will help to keep off the slug, but the earwig makes his attack on the flower itself, and as far as possible he must be trapped in the ordinary way, by reversed flower-pots or by any small piece of hollow tubing laid down in the vicinity of your plant. Lastly, it may be said that our dahlias are sometimes allowed to go on blooming too long, for reasons doubtless that we gave at the outset—namely, that they help us to prolong the summer. By October their beauty is gone, and those that were early in bloom will be still earlier faded. Now, the tuberous roots on which we rely for our next year's supply should have a fork put under them, so as to slightly disturb the whole by lifting them gently. This will facilitate the withering of the plant itself, and in a few days' time, or say a week afterwards, your plant may be taken up and cleared of the soil, and the stems cut down to some four inches in length. The tubers you should put away in some place inaccessible to frost, or damp, or heat, for otherwise they would either shrivel or rot; and it is also well to hang them upside-down for a time, so as to allow them to drain themselves of all moisture.

Thus much then for the dahlias; but what about other parts of the garden? It would require a volume every month to treat of everything as fully and elaborately as it ought to be treated of. We can here, then, but advert to a few of the most important operations. Foremost, perhaps, should be named the taking of our stock of cuttings from our bedding-out plants not later than the third week in August. It is well not to put the operation off too late, as we can never tell what sort of weather is in store for us, especially in the early wane of the year. Sometimes September is one of our loveliest months, but we never dare count upon it, and more particularly its latter half is an uncertain one. Cuttings when first taken should be stood out in the open in their boxes, pans, and pots, properly watered, and not exposed to a hot sun. Still, some warmth and genial weather is necessary for them at the outset, so as to have them well established and rooted before they are finally housed, about Michaelmas, for the winter.

A MAN IN A MILLION.

A TALE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

"I'VE SET MY HEART ON HILDA."

"HEIGHO!" said John McGregor, shutting up a great dusty old ledger, and stowing it away on a bookshelf close to the table at which he had been writing for some time. "Heigho!" he said, stretching himself and yawning, "how time does fly, to be sure! My daughter will be of age to-morrow, Clements."

"Will she now?" said Clements, a gaunt-looking, closely-shaven man of about fifty, who sat scribbling at a table, about two yards to the right of the first speaker.

It was indeed a strange room in which they were seated. Any one coming straight in out of the tropical glare of sunshine could have seen nothing at first, except the two figures of the men at work. The light that streamed in through one long open slit above each of them was caught by reflectors and cast upon their desks beneath. All the rest of the room was dark—dark. But by-and-by, as a visitor's pupils got dilated and his vision more like that of the bat, he would have been able to descry one black figure crouched in a corner, pulling away at a punkah-string, and another tall black fellow busy at a table, mixing iced fruit drinks.

With the exception of the writing-tables and a huge safe on which stood a few sample bottles of juices, gum, and spices, there was not another article of furniture in the whole room.

But had the visitor remained in this room for fifteen minutes, then all his sun-blindness would have disappeared, and everything would then have been distinct enough. The great punkah, waving from the lofty roof; the horrid spiny geckho lizards, crawling up the walls, and stalking moths; cockroaches, as big as small pin-cushions, zigzagging about the floor; huge crickets, with feelers as long as penholders giving side-long digs at the nigger-boy's naked feet; and a daft-looking kitten in a corner, smacking a tame snake's head every time he popped it out of a hole.

"Ay, Clements, she'll be of age to-morrow. She'll be fifteen, sir; and, dear girl, she is so like now what her sainted mother was when I married her. Dear girl!" repeated McGregor, looking up at the reflector, in the rays from which his splendid beard gleamed like a bank of snow. "Dear lassie! she will soon be getting married and leaving me."

"By-the-by, partner," said Clements, "*I* am thinking of getting married myself."

"Indeed! What, *you?*"

"Yes; why shouldn't *I* have a wife, eh? Tell me that." Clements was beginning to look animated now.

"No reason why you shouldn't have a wife," said his partner.

"Certainly there isn't," replied Clements; "there is no reason on earth why I shouldn't marry. I'm rich enough to support a wife, John, and there is no law against it even in this island of Zanzibar, funny and all as it is."

"No; you are right—quite right—there, Clements."

"But, McGregor, I do not want to marry anybody, you know; and, come to think of it, now, I'd just as soon marry your little girl as not."

"Ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho!" roared McGregor. He looked at Clements half a moment semi-seriously and then went off again into another fit of laughing, with a "Ho! ho! ho!" and a "Ha! ha! ha!" till the vault-like room rang again.

"Come now," he said at last, "you're not really serious, are you, Clements?"

"That I am," was the reply; "and look here, partner, you and I will fall out if you treat my proposal again with such another chime of guffaws. There, I tell you straight!"

"But you don't love my daughter, Clements."

"Love? Well, perhaps not. But I'd make her a good husband. There now, I offer myself as a suitor again. Don't grin like a baby baboon; speak out like a man, sir."

"THE PALFREY WAS LED ROUND" (*p.* 566).

John McGregor sat silently nibbling his quill for long minutes, his handsome face turned upwards against the light, his great beard still sparkling in the rays of the reflector like snow with the sun on it. Clements leant his chin on his hand and watched him eagerly. McGregor was thinking of a good many things just then. His mind went far away back into the past, to begin with, and he seemed to see himself on a bright spring morning, walking arm-in-arm from church with his bonnie young bride; walking along a lane in dear old Devonshire, the banks bedecked with sweet-scented primroses and many a wild-flower besides; the hedges all along clothed in silken leaves of tenderest green, and starred over with bloom; a lark singing high in air, a merle fluting on a spray of eglantine; neither of the birds a bit more happy than he. Thinking next of a brave ship that sailed away from Plymouth waters, bearing him and his bride to a land beyond the sea, in the far south of the Dark Continent; of all his happiness and deep joy, during that idyllic voyage; of their landing at last in Natal with hearts full of hope, and life and fortune all before them; of golden dreams that were not realised on those wooded shores; of hope still telling a flattering tale, and of their long voyage to romantic Zanzibar in a dhow, and of all their struggles in this city of the Sultan. Then of the life-picture darkening; of the firm of McGregor going down, down; of baby's birth—one bright ray of joy amid the gloom—of years going

by, and baby being able to walk and talk; then of his wife, his heart's idol, sickening and pining, and of his returning home one dreary day in monsoon season, and realising for the first time that he was alone in the world, that all he loved or cared for was asleep in that lonesome churchyard where the wind whispers through the aloe-trees, and the waves make dreary moan on the silvery sands. He remembered how he had sunk into the rocker—her chair—and wept like a child. He remembered how a tiny form came toddling to his knee and tried to pull his hands from his tear-bedewed face, and how he had taken the child on his knee and kissed her, while she held his beard and lisped these words—"I'll be zoor muzzer now."

He remembered registering a vow to work for her alone.

He thought too of a younger man landing one day when his fortune seemed at its lowest ebb, when the house of McGregor was tottering on its foundations, and of this younger man coming to his aid, and saving the firm by becoming partner. Yes, and they—he and Clements—had flourished ever after.

Oh, dear me, it seemed a long time since all this happened, and now Hilda was fifteen—that means "of age" in the tropics—and this partner had proposed for her hand!

"Well, partner, *I'm* not going to gainsay you," he said, "but there is one other view of the matter to take——" McGregor paused.

"Go on, John."

"Well, partner, there is you, and there is young Irvine, and there is my daughter Hilda——"

"Go on, John."

"Well, partner, you're a staid man of the world——"

"All the better for Hilda," said Clements.

"Perhaps; you've been so long in Zanzibar among Arabs, and Parsees, and Hindoos, and what-not, that you've come to look upon marriage as a mere legal ceremony. But, partner, it is different, I can tell you, with Irvine, and with Hilda too, and I reckon the lass likes the lad a little. Now, though I don't want to dictate to you—wouldn't the wealthy widow Webber be a more suitable match for you, Clements? and thus you could leave the young pair to jog along life's journey hand-in-hand like. We have to thank him too for one or two kind and brave actions."

"I don't forget that, John; and I'm willing to make him branch partner, if he'll live at our house in Seyschelles. No, John, I wouldn't do an unkind action to young Irvine for all the ivory and copal in the market; but, John, I've set my heart on Hilda, and if she won't, or *can't* marry me, or you refuse your consent—why, I'll just sell out here and go right away to Bombay, and settle there."

"Come, come, Clements!" cried McGregor more cheerfully, as he got up and placed a hand on his friend's shoulder. "We can't afford to lose you. After all these years that we've been one-as-one, why, I should pine and die. There's my hand, old man, you shall be my son-in-law. Between us two we'll manage Hilda, and young Irvine too. And now let us get the badane* and sail away round to our bungalow at Boo-boo-boo, and dine together. How beautiful the woods will look to-day, old friend!

"Hi! Yacoob," he continued, "come out of that dark corner, you black rascal!"

"Yes, sah! I'se standin' here, right in de front of your nose, sah!"

"Run, then, and tell your wife I wish to speak to her here at once. Tell her to look alive. If she doesn't float in here in less than five minutes, I'll kick your shins in earnest."

"You kickee *my* shins, sah? I surprise, sah! Dat am not British justice. You kickee my *wife's* shins mooch as you please, sah, but not dis nigger's. But on this 'tickler' 'casion, sah," continued Yacoob, seizing a big bamboo cane, "if my wife not run quick, I smooth her down, sir. Yah! yah!"

"Off with you, Yacoob. Run, you funny dog, you!"

In less than the stipulated five minutes there was the sound of soft fleet footsteps outside in the passage, next moment the curtain was hastily pulled aside, and, followed by Yacoob and the bamboo cane, in rushed a little, very fat, pleasant-faced, yellow lady. She wore a white gilded turban around her wealth of jetty hair; her neck, one arm, her feet, and both legs as far as the knees, or nearly, were bare; all the rest of her body was gracefully draped in a web of crimson silk. She wore bangles on her ankles and bracelets on her wrists, long jewelled earrings, and a gold snake in the left ala of her nose. The snake lay curled up flat against her cheek, and had eyes of some precious stone that sparkled blue and crimson, like sunshine on a dew-drop.

"Ah! Mrs. Yacoob," said McGregor, "I wanted to see you. I want to send you a message. To-morrow is my daughter's birthday, and——"

"And what shall I buy, sah, for your sweet leetle cherub-missie?"

"You'll go to the market, and buy the cherub a slave—a young girl-slave. You understand? As soon as she enters my house she will be a slave no longer. But you *must* buy her, all the same, because you won't get one for nothing, you know. Well, Mrs. Yacoob, she must not be more than ten—very, very pretty, but not too fat, mind. Take her home with you to-night, and give her a bath. Then go to the bazaar to-morrow, and buy her a pretty Arab dress. Are you listening, Mrs. Yacoob?"

"I'se a-listening, sah, for true."

"Well, Mrs. Yacoob, a little, tiny, straw-gilt skull-cap, green silk Arab trousers, and vest with gold braid, and a robe of crimson silk. Get bracelets for her, and bangles also; you understand?"

"Certain*lee*, sah."

"Stain her nails with henna, and put just a suspicion—and barely that—of kohl on the edge of the eyelids."

"Yes, sah; just a 'spicion, and barely dat. Stain de teeth?"

"No, no, no. Teeth like pearl."

* Badane—a one-sailed Arab boat, common on the coast.

"Anyding in de nose, sah?"

"No, Mrs. Yacoob: nothing in the nose."

"Den to-morrow, sah, what I do?"

"To-morrow, Mrs. Yacoob, you will hire a palanquin, with two of the biggest and blackest niggers you can get, and bring her out to my country house. Now you have all your orders."

And away rushed little Fatty (her real name was Fatima). Away she rushed, and away she ran, but in less than a minute the curtain was once more drawn aside, and Mrs. Yacoob reappeared in the doorway.

"I twite fordot, sah," she said.

"What did you quite forget, Mrs. Yacoob?"

"Why, de leetle niggah's name, for shuah."

"Oh, yes," said McGregor musingly. "She must have a name. What's in a name? Suggest a name, Clements; you're clever at that sort of thing. We'll call her Katinka."

Next minute the curtain was pulled aside, and Irvine groped his way into the room, laughing, for he knew that though he could see nobody, anybody inside could see him.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"MANY HAPPY 'TURNS OB DE DAY."

"Ah, Irvine, my lad! come inside," cried McGregor cheerfully. "We're both precious glad to see you."

"What a mole-hole to work in, to be sure!" said Irvine. "Now, my office at old Van der Doomp's is light and airy. I have the sunshine, the glorious sunshine, and my place is positively gay with wild-flowers, and redolent of the blossom of orange and citron. Nobody brings you flowers, I'm sure. Nobody would bring flowers to a mole-hole. Now, only yesterday, my sister and Hilda, accompanied by pleasant little Mrs. Yacoob, had been roaming in the woods, and came to call on me, laden with flowers and fruit.

"Yacoob, you're a splendid engineer. One other sherbet, please."

"Yes, sah. Sartainly, sah. With pleasure, sah."

As the conversation flagged for a moment, Irvine filled up the interval by humming an operatic air.

"You're happy to-day."

"Not more than usual, father. But, by the way, that brings me to business. Here are a couple of bills from Van Doomp. They fall due in a month. Stow them away somewhere where the white ants can't eat them."

McGregor took the bills. They were his own private business. He nodded to Clements to intimate this as he put them in his pocket.

Somehow his hand shook a little as he did so.

"And now, what do you think? Van Doomp is sending me away to Comoro and Mozambique to intercept the *Niagara*. Smart fellows, those Yanks, but Van Doomp is smarter. I shall buy up all the sugar and spices and stuff in both islands, and then if they don't purchase from me at our price—that is, at the Van Doomp price—they can take their chance of the market here, or go to Bombay in ballast. He has promised that if I manage this bit of business properly he will change the title of the firm to Irvine and Doomp. Irvine and Doomp—it sounds well, doesn't it? I've written it all over my blotting-pad to see how it would look, and also to make sure old Van shouldn't forget it. And then I'll get married."

"It'll take you some time to get back from Mozambique, won't it?" said Clements.

"Yes; six months, perhaps. You see, I'm going in a dhow, and then I'll have to do my business and wait for the *Niagara*."

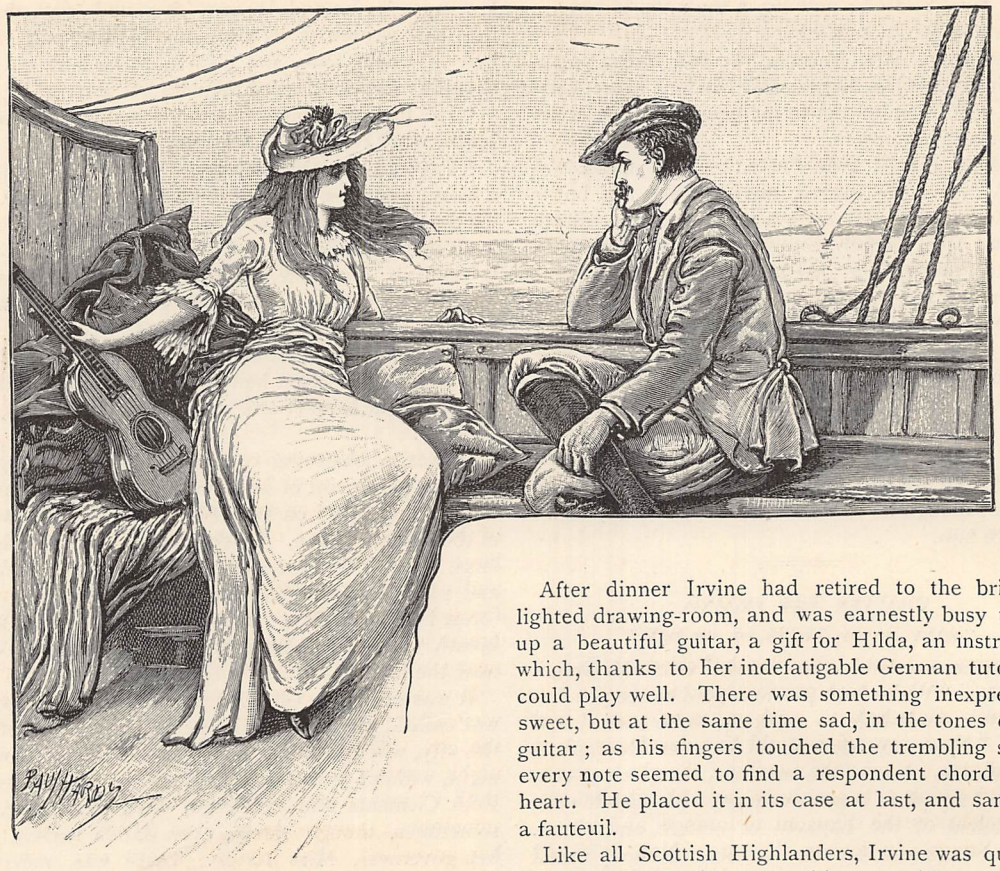
Clements felt easier in his mind now. Six months is quite a long time, he thought. Anything might happen in six months. Ships might sink, dhows might founder, people die, or—get married.

The bungalow at Boo-boo-boo really belonged now to Clements, though it had been designed and built by McGregor in happier and more prosperous days, long gone by.

It was a charming cot, in a charming situation, situated on a point of land, with gardens in front and behind, and laved on two sides by the crystal waters of the Indian Ocean. In the rear of the bungalow a large space had been cleared of trees, and trenched and planted with spices and an orange-grove. The forest had been thrust back, as it were, so that not a breath of its fearfully dangerous miasma ever came near the house.

It was said that Glengyle House, as the bungalow was called, was the only place in the island, outside the city, where a white man could sleep for a whole night, without being down with fever next morning. Both Clements and McGregor often slept here, and sometimes, though rarely, even Hilda herself, with her governess, Miss Irvine. There was, indeed, a "McGregor wing" to the bungalow. This was built on the south side, and the waves rippled close up to the doors and windows, so that one could fall asleep fanned by the ocean's breezes and soothed by its soft and dreamy lullaby.

Delightful this, surely, or would be from a poet's or romancist's point of view. But the waves did not always lisp and sing on the silver sand. No; there were nights when the wind roared through the woods, when the sky was dark and starless, and angry seas spent their fury on the beach, the salt spray scudding high over the gardens and verandah, and whitening the very chimneys of the bungalow itself. Strange to say, of late McGregor had come to like nights such as these best. Accompanied by Yacoob only, he would steal away from the city after nightfall, and walk through the forest to the house on the point; and his faithful servant, who slept, as a dog sleeps, outside on the mat, would hear him tramping steadily and incessantly up and down his room-floor till far into the small hours of morning. He would often hear his master groan, and sigh too, as if he had some sad sorrow that he could not unburden his mind of, do what he might. But next morning at breakfast, Yacoob would find no difference in him—just the same neat attire, the same glittering white beard pleasant face, and kindly smile, although perhaps the hand might shake a little as it lifted the fragrant Mocha to the lips.



"FAR TOO HAPPY TO LAST!" (*p.* 568).

There were no signs of sorrow to-night, however—on this eve of Hilda's birthday. Like every other apartment in the bungalow, the dining-room was most tastefully furnished with a lightsomeness that was in keeping with the climate. The walls were beautifully painted, the pictures that adorned it had been chosen with care, pretty bits of water-colour most of them, landscapes, seascapes, and treescapes, quaint morsels of Arab architecture, and glimpses of foreign bazaars, in which the darkest of shadowy backgrounds was relieved by picturesqueness of dress and brightness of attire. The floor was of polished teak, covered here and there with mats and skins. Tall palm-ferns and crimson-flowered cacti, huge coloured lamps on stands, low skin-clad couches, drapery, and curtains all combined to give the room more the appearance of some Oriental divan than anything else. The great waving punkah that depended from the roof, the dark-skinned servitors gliding in and out, and the ebony-faced fan-girls arrayed in crimson and white silk, certainly did not detract from the picture.

But the three gentlemen themselves were thoroughly English. And they dined like Britons, too: slowly, peacefully, with much cheerful conversation, and an interlarding of anecdote and even joke.

After dinner Irvine had retired to the brightly-lighted drawing-room, and was earnestly busy tuning up a beautiful guitar, a gift for Hilda, an instrument which, thanks to her indefatigable German tutor, she could play well. There was something inexpressibly sweet, but at the same time sad, in the tones of this guitar; as his fingers touched the trembling strings every note seemed to find a respondent chord in his heart. He placed it in its case at last, and sank into a fauteuil.

Like all Scottish Highlanders, Irvine was quite as deeply imbued with superstition as with poetry and romance.

He smiled to himself now, as he sat there, but the smile soon died away on his lips.

"Bother the guitar!" he thought; "but why is there such sorrow in its tones? My imagination, I suppose. Can there really be some grief in store for Hilda and me? Imagination again. Dear Hilda, I wonder if she does care for me? Oh, yes, she does; and there can be no imagination about that. Well, to-morrow is her birthday, and I have a good mind to tell her all I feel on her account. But—no, I will not. Poor McGregor, he's been such a true and trusty friend to me. Well, the least I could do would be to talk to father first. That is the honourable way. Decidedly old-fashioned, I fear: quite on a par with going down on one's knees to pop the question. Heigho! I wish that guitar was not so sad in tone. Happy thought: to go and smoke beside Uncle Clements."

But "uncle" was himself in a reverie. He was thinking of Hilda, and how her innocent blue eyes would sparkle with joy when she saw the lovely Arab palfrey led round to the bungalow door.

He had no doubts he should win Hilda for his bride. *He* was not troubled with imagination, nor romance either. A primrose by a river's brink was to Clements simply a primrose by a river's brink, and

nothing else; and there was no more sadness in a guitar, to Clements' ear, than there was in a banjo; of the two instruments he probably preferred the banjo. Yet to-night, as he sat here, he made a sort of vow to himself, though perhaps it was a somewhat selfish one, that when he married Hilda he would be the kindest and most indulgent of husbands, and that his wife should never want for anything that wealth could procure her.

Well, I have no doubt that Clements was sincere. He was verging on fifty-five, it is true; but is there not a proverb about an old man's darling *versus* a young man's slave?

"Hullo! dreaming, were you?" said Irvine. "Come with me; I want to show you something."

Clements followed him into the drawing-room, and the young man opened the case and showed him the guitar.

"For Hilda!" he said, with sparkling eyes.

"Indeed."

"Now, listen while I sing 'Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye.' Most appropriate song for me, by the way; but I want you to hear the tone of the instrument."

Clements listened politely.

"Somewhat melancholy!" was the verdict.

"*You*, even you think so? Then it can't be all my imagination. Heigho! Well, Clements, I don't mind telling you a secret. I know you are no end of a good fellow, and you are my friend. Of course you are far too old to know what love is; but there may have been a time——"

"Of all the conceited young pups!" thought Clements.

"Well, I'm going to marry Hilda."

"You have asked her?"

"Oh, no, not yet; but——"

"Irvine, Irvine, where are you?" It was McGregor's voice, and Irvine hurried away.

"I'll tell you more again," were his last words to Clements.

Clements smiled and nodded after him, sighed, and went away to smoke and dream again.

* * * * *

Hilda opened her eyes next morning somewhat in astonishment to hear a gentle tapping at her door. If it was Mrs. Yacoob come to call her, why did she not come in at once? But the door opened slowly at last, and, with a tiny chattee of iced water in her hand, there entered briskly enough a child that, judging by her dress and beauty, might have come straight from Elfin-land itself.

"Oh, you strange, droll, pretty thing, who and what are you? I believe I'm not awake yet. I must be dreaming."

The child's reply was evolved or unrolled all in one quick breath, and all in the same tone of voice, and had evidently been learned by rote.

"I'se Tinka, Missie; I'se you' buffday p'esent; I'se you' maid fo' true. Missie mus' get up, and many happy 'turns ob de day. You likee my 'ppearance, Missie?"

"Oh, you're charming! Miss Irvine, Flora, are you dressed? Run quick, and look at a fairy."

Flora—the governess, and sister to Irvine, who slept in a room communicating with Hilda's—now came in, arrayed in her dressing-gown, and the two girls laughed so heartily, yet so joyfully, that merry little Mrs. Yacoob, who had been listening at the door, must needs come in and join the group.

The "buffday p'esent" was a little half-caste Arab, of olive complexion and eyes like jet. She was dressed just as McGregor had commanded, and the young ladies stood her on a chair to admire her.

It was still early when Hilda and her governess got down to breakfast. Little Tinka took to waiting at table as naturally as if she had been to the manner born. They were laughing at the fairy's sedateness when Mr. McGregor himself came in, and Hilda ran to meet him, receive congratulations, and thank him for the "buffday p'esent."

"DAY WAS MERGING INTO EVENTIDE" (*p.* 566).

"But," said McGregor, "we're all going out for a sail in the yacht, and we shall call first at the bungalow, where I think Irvine and Clements have each something for you."

Arrived at Boo-boo-boo, they found the two gentlemen waiting for them at the main entrance to the bungalow gardens. And then the palfrey was led round.

Poor Hilda! How beautiful she looked as she stood there, hat in hand, the morning breeze toying with her wealth of soft brown hair that floated over her dress of white and blue, her lips apart, her eyes wide with wonder and delight.

"But—oh, Mr. Clements, that lovely little creature is surely not for me!"

The palfrey pawed the ground with his front forefoot, and hinnied low and fondly.

"Mustapha answers for me," said Clements.

For one brief moment the impulsive girl threw her arms round her father's partner's neck, and he kissed her cheek. It was a very happy moment for Clements.

Mustapha was caparisoned Arab fashion: a square cloth of scarlet and gold covered his body, over this was the daintiest of buff saddles, the stirrups only admitting the toes, and the bridle and reins were adorned with ribbons and bells.

Hilda gave one glance towards the forest, then nodded to Clements. A minute after she had disappeared among the trees. It was fully half an hour before she returned, flushed and joyful. Irvine would have assisted her off, but she beckoned again to Clements, and the pleasure was his. The guitar came in for its share of admiration next. They were alone in the drawing-room when the young man presented his gift. She thanked him, but—she did not offer him a cheek to kiss.

"Play," he said, "play and sing;" he threw the ribbon over her neck as he spoke.

She had scarcely played a minute ere she laid the guitar gently back in its case, and Irvine noticed that her eyes were brimful of tears.

"I cannot play to-day," she said; "it sounds so sad. I shall play when you are far away at sea."

The words were very simple, surely, but Irvine had reason to remember them afterwards, and they brought him comfort at a time when hope itself had almost fled.

They spent the day cruising around among the numerous lovely coral islands in this neighbourhood. Hilda, with her governess and Irvine, landed, and went away to study natural history in one of these wee green isles.

Miss Irvine looked the pink of propriety in those spectacles of hers. Indeed, she looked learned, and so she was, too; but she was neither old nor prim, and if not beautiful, at all events she was comely and pleasant.

On this coral island, somehow or other, she managed to lose Hilda and Irvine, and it was three hours before she met them again, coming hand-in-hand through the jungle. Walking hand-in-hand, be it remembered, was a necessity here, although Irvine did not grieve on that account.

Just as the sun was dipping down towards the horizon, Clements and McGregor, seated on the dhow's poop, noticed the skiff coming round the point, Flora rowing, her brother and Hilda in the stern-sheets, but all singing and all gay.

About an hour afterwards the dhow, still a long way off the land, was lying becalmed. But day was merging into eventide, while sea and sky were softly blended into one; the islands, and boats or dhows, with sleepy sails, seemed suspended in the air, and the ever-changing colours of the clouds were like the pearl tints of splendid sea-shells.

"I've been so happy to-day," Hilda told Irvine that evening, with innocent candour.

There do come such days as these in the lives of the young, but, alas! none too often. With what fond regret they are looked back to afterwards! for we never truly appreciate happiness till it is gone, perhaps never to return.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

"LIFE LIKE THIS IS TOO HAPPY TO LAST."

THE Irvines, brother and sister, were orphans; indeed, so far as they knew, they had neither kith nor kin belonging to them in Scotland or anywhere else.

Their father had been a colonel in the army, and after his death, which occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, the widow had taken an unpretentious flat in the outskirts of Glasgow, where, on her slender pension, she thought she could manage to live, and at the same time give her two children the advantages of a good education; and none know the value of this better than do the Scotch.

Flora should be a governess or teacher of some sort: so reasoned Mrs. Irvine; but Douglas Irvine should be a minister. She had set her mind upon that. It was the one dream, the solitary ambition, of her whole life. There was no profession so noble, none so mighty, and certainly none so peaceful and good. She would struggle hard to support him throughout the *curricula* of arts and divinity, and then—ah! then he would be sure to get a church. It should be in the country—this was another portion of the mother's dream—in the sweet country among the grand old hills: a village in a glen, a streamlet "jouking" through the meadows, the spire of the kirk—her son's—pointing heavenward through a cloudland of trees, God's green acre near it, and the old-fashioned manse not far away. A picture like this was pleasant to look forward to; and amidst such pleasurable surroundings she thought it would be delightful even to grow old and die.

No one but herself, however, knew how hard the struggle she had undertaken was going to be, nor how many the privations. It was these latter, perhaps, that told on the mother's constitution at last, for she sickened and died.

Douglas had just succeeded in obtaining his degree of M.A. when the sad event occurred, and he found

that he and his sister were in poverty, and alone in the world. Teaching he could not bear the thoughts of—it meant, to his way of thinking, a drudgery that was not only uncongenial, but positively mean. No, he would enter a merchant's office. There, at least, he would have scope for thinking, and even time for study, with the possibility of a future.

Events proved, and proved quickly too, that young Irvine had made a wise choice. His aptitude for business, and well-trained methods of thought, were of such service to his firm, that he was very soon not only thoroughly trusted, but often even consulted upon matters of importance. About two years after his mother's death he found himself in Rotterdam, whither he had gone on duty. It was here he met Van Doomp, a wiry, thin-lipped, calculating old Dutchman, who had a house at Zanzibar. The offer he made to Irvine was too tempting to refuse. He but asked time to consider it, and meanwhile wrote home to his employers. He was bound, he said, to study his own advancement before everything, therefore his services were in the market at the command of the highest bidder.

Van Doomp was the highest bidder, and apparently the instrument who was to shape the young man's life.

He could not leave his sister at home, however; in fact, she would not be left. They had never been parted yet, and Flora had no intention they should be. So she went with him.

Society in Zanzibar is by no means extensive, and almost the first person to call on Irvine had been McGregor. Both he and his sister must look upon McGregor's house as their home. That was a command. But Flora's abilities were soon recognised by the Scottish merchant, and as Hilda took to her from the very first, the offer to be the child's governess and companion was speedily made and gladly accepted.

I do not think any sister could have loved a brother more sincerely than Flora loved Douglas. This is, of course, not to be wondered at. He was the elder: he had nursed her, for that matter; they had grown up together, and even her mother's fondness for her boy had tended to make the sister revere him. But no one else in the world was, in Flora's eyes, half so handsome, half so clever, or half so witty as Douglas. It was natural enough, therefore, that she should often speak about him to Hilda, and too often probably sound his praises, and make much of him. But love begets love even in an indirect way like this, and Hilda had more than once—ay, more than fifty times, perhaps—told Flora that she wished she had a brother like Douglas.

"Well," Flora had replied, "he can be a brother to both of us. He is big enough."

Hilda had laughed at the proposal, but laughingly agreed to it; and when Douglas was told about it he was delighted.

This brotherly love of his had nevertheless deepened into an affection of an even more abiding nature, fully a year before the time at which our story commences.

No; Douglas had not told his love, for many reasons. He looked upon Hilda as in a great measure too young to understand feelings like his. At fifteen, what could she know of love? He forgot that in these sunny isles of the Indian Ocean flowers bud and blossom early—though, alas! they often fade early also. Besides, it was so very sweet to be a brother to her, to be able to call her Hilda short and simple, to assist her in her studies, and to be her escort through the crowded streets and bazaar.

Mr. McGregor's first inquiry of an afternoon when he returned from office, sometimes tired, often weary, was after the children, as he called the three of them.

"Where are the children, Mrs. Yacoob?"

"De chil'en, sah? Oh, dey happy 'nuff, I s'pose. Dey all go togedder to de bazaar."

"Then bring my slippers and pipe, Mrs. Yacoob, and have the dinner all ready 'gainst their return."

It certainly was not invariably to the bazaar the children went out for a ramble, though they usually passed through that way, and down some long street towards the sea-beach or towards the bush. At nearly all hours of the day the narrow blind streets were crowded to semi-suffocation with a streaming multitude of gaily-dressed Arabs, Parsees, Hindoos, and Banians, to say nothing of the stream of panting slaves, singing under their burdens of cowries or merchandise, borne on bamboo poles that passed from shoulder to shoulder of each couple. These slaves did not sing because they were happy: their song was more of a mournful chant than anything else, and kept each couple in step, thus helping to steady the swinging package. I have said "blind streets" because the walls of the houses are everywhere destitute of windows except the merest slits, like the arrow-holes of ancient castles.

Every one seemed busy; the only creature who dared to or cared to take life easy being the little brown hump-backed cows As one of these marched leisurely along, with her gilded horns and flower-garlanded neck on a level with her back, many a hand was outstretched to reverently touch her head, or make her a fruit-offering of plantains or bread-fruit with words that sounded half a blessing and half a prayer.

Douglas Irvine had to lead Hilda by the hand through this motley stream of humanity, the girl being right behind him, and Flora bringing up the rear.

"Sameela, sameela, sameela!" (Make room) was Irvine's constant shout, as with his disengaged hand he touched the natives on the shoulder, by way of a hint for them to move on or move off, as the case might be.

Sometimes, in traversing the streets, they had Yacoob as an advance-guard. He had been a slave once, but was now a free nigger, and showed his independence by an indiscriminate hustling of Arabs or Parsees alike. The former had been his masters, and so he thought himself justified in taking revenge. He was a powerful fellow, and few would have dared to tackle him. Indeed, his independence, not to say insolence, while escorting the ladies thus, at times knew neither bounds nor limits.

Once—and he had bitter cause to remember this in sorrow and silence many days afterwards—he hurled a *soi-disant* "gentleman Arab" so roughly to one side, that he fell on the top of a bag of gum copal. As he regained his feet he half drew his sword, and only the intervention of Hilda saved Yacoob from an ugly fate.

After Hilda's birthday, when going for a sail or row, Yacoob always accompanied the trio, and he invariably brought the guitar. It did not sound half so sad at sea, and the ripple on the water made the music infinitely tender and sweet.

It was one day when Hilda had just laid down the guitar on the cushions that Irvine sighed as he said—

"How beautiful that song was, Hilda; but I feel that life like this is far too happy to last!"

And that day and these very words were remembered by both in the days of grief and misery so soon to come upon them.

END OF CHAPTER THE THIRD.

WHAT TO WEAR IN AUGUST.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS: FROM OUR LONDON AND PARIS CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

LONDON is beginning to be deserted, and the dressmakers are just commencing to breathe again, after being nearly distracted—everybody wanting everything done at the same time before leaving town. In the initial letter, you see a pretty and easy design for a plain cotton, plain woollen, or any soft make of dress, so much in demand for the summer holidays. You will notice that it shows a return to the old flounces, not over-full, and simply gathered to the waist, the width of the flounces the same from hem to band. But things are not what they seem. These flounces really only cover the side breadth, just sufficiently to disappear beneath a full over-skirt which opens diagonally, bordered with embroidery. This in a wider width is carried all round the skirt, and also on the revers which, on the opposite side, turns back just below the waist, and forms a trimming that meets the gathers. The bodice is made full, but opens at the side, with a cascade of embroidery lined with the colour. This trims the dress. The fulness is drawn diagonally across the figure, and is a pretty style, as it indicates a graceful outline without denoting it too strongly. The model from which this sketch was taken is holland-colour, trimmed with mahogany—a new and charming contrast; it is used in the embroidery on the waistband, with its double loop and ends, terminating in a soft ball drop to match, and forms the revers cuff to a sleeve that I want you particularly to notice. It is cut with fulness, formed into pleats, which raises it as all fashionable sleeves are raised on the shoulders; it flattens again below the elbow, and is slightly raised above the turn-back cuff. The parasol is in the mahogany tone, and also the trimming to the hat, which well overshadows the face.

One special mode is, to my mind, newer than any other in London, viz., a jacket totally distinct from the bodice, and this is shown in the accompanying illustration. In Hyde Park, and at most of the fashionable resorts during the summer, the Señorita or Zouave shape of jacket has been seen in endless variety; it is often quite short in the back, barely hiding the shoulder-blades, and is mostly made in embroidered cloth or in fine Indian gold embroidery, leaving no groundwork visible. The shape given in the picture is more generally useful; it comes straight to the waist at the back, and falls in two graceful points in front, and in colour it matches the embroidery or brocade on the dress. The original from which our picture was taken, is one of the new nun's veilings, of a light dust-colour, with a design of chrysanthemums interwoven at the hem of the front breadth, and coming well up the skirt. Nothing could be more simple than the arrangement of the material. The skirt is made on a foundation, bordered with two plain gathered flounces of the fabric, over which the bordered stuff is arranged full, and caught up with a species of triple box-pleat on one side, where it is met with bows and ends and a waistband of peacock-green velvet, the tone of the brocade. The front of the bodice has some four or six folds, which cross beneath the jacket made of velvet of the light peacock tone, lightly embroidered in silk to match, and silver. The bodice has tight sleeves, and to the jacket are attached straight pleated sleeves edged with brocade, coming to the elbow and opening in the centre for the arms to come through. The hat is of a new form, the very pointed brim standing up sufficiently over the face to allow space for a piece of ribbon like the jacket, and matching the feather and bows outside. The parasol is made of the same material. There is quite a novel idea in parasols. Attached to each rib is

a band of ribbon of a contrasting colour, which, when the parasol opens, follows the outline of the ribs, but when closed is brought up towards the top with a bow, so that the handle of the unopened parasol is garnished with ribbons, giving it a very dainty appearance. Many of the best parasols this year are unlined, but of great size, and so arched that they resemble the roof of a kiosque, or a circular band-stand.

Children's fashions demand thought, and the child herewith portrayed wears a frock of a most useful kind for ordinary wear, and for the few full-dress occasions which occur in the country at this season. In the picture, there is a double skirt of thick muslin embroidery, but this is often replaced by simply a full skirt of plain colour contrasting with the striped upper portion, which in the model is beige and red, with beige revers opening over a full bodice run with four or five rows of tucks in the neck, let into a plain red band. Like so many garments now, it buttons at the side, but shows no apparent fastening; it is secured at the waist with a metal clasp. The upper skirt is divided into three. At the back the fulness is gathered and slightly caught up; at the sides it has the Directoire panel without fulness. The sleeve is plain and full, standing up on the shoulders and gathered into a deep cuff of work. Black stockings are generally worn to match the shoes, not the dress, an economical mode, and the hat is of the tone of the material, trimmed with red bows; the brim is wide and projecting in front, but turns up straight at the back. This would be quite an easy dress to make at home.

HER YOUNGER SISTER.

The fashionable hats and bonnets of the day which will be in demand now for garden parties are also easy to make. Young people do not wear strings, and women who have passed the first bloom of youth, get over the difficulty by having only very narrow velvet ones coming from the back. But the foundation is simply a flat circle bent to suit each individual, and covered with flowers. Occasionally, only rose-twigs border the edge, and a few flowers; leaving a vacuum in the centre. The hats have a dark, almost invisible brim, and that is the only distinction.

In our day very much is left to individual taste. Given certain broad principles, and let every detail be *well* carried out, almost any fashion finds favour. The newest point in dressmaking is the high puff on the top of the sleeves in cotton dresses, often made of white embroidery, matching a yoke introduced only on the front.

II.

FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

Paris is very busy, very gay, very bustling; and the Paris tradespeople, with a keen eye to business, have catered well for the thousands of visitors that flood their capital.

The two dresses illustrated are in the styles which the best Frenchwomen are wearing, and they are simple enough for reproduction in England. Coats are still very well worn in Paris, but they are not the coats of last year. The bodice and skirt are seldom cut in one, and the front of the skirt is of a distinctive material, and the coat does not show much in front. I have chosen a dark blue striped velvet, alternating with light blue, on which is a brocade of pink roses; this is gathered at the back of the bodice, and is made up over a light blue silk petticoat, with gathered flounces of the silk inside for balayeuses, and a vandyked ruche made very full at the hem in front. Over this is draped a full skirt of sky-blue crêpe, embroidered

at the hem with Empire wreaths of mistletoe and leaves. It is sewn on very full at the waist, and is caught up beneath a ribbon bow at the side. The coat-bodice of the striped material ends straight at the waist, with two dainty little square pockets just peeping beneath; it has a velvet band round the neck, a velvet vest, and revers of the same dark blue velvet. From beneath the left side comes a drapery of soft crape, which crosses the bust, and is held up by a velvet rosette. The sleeves are slashed at the top and wrist in such a way that they stand out well, the puff at the wrist coming on the outside of the arm above the velvet cuff. The hat is extremely picturesque, and of exactly the same period as the dress. The brim rounds up from the face, and is encircled by a feather and velvet bows.

For a dress to be a success now, it must before all things be picturesque, and few styles could more thoroughly meet this want than the gown with the puffed sleeves and corselet-bodice. It is made in soft silk, embroidered in pink and green, and might be made in rag muslin, or in many of the pretty prints. The skirt is arranged in the accordion-pleats, quite the most fashionable style of the moment, and it is very graceful, and as it yields to every movement of the wearer, it is admirably suited for tennis-playing. The over-drapery is simply a full plain skirt, caught up on one side, where a pocket is placed. The comfort of these outside pockets cannot be too highly estimated. We all know the struggle it has been for years to find a handkerchief on the spur of the moment, and the French dressmaker is mercifully coming to the rescue. She is also introducing small handkerchief pockets into the sash-ends, made of a double-tasseled piece of the dress cut on the cross. This skirt has a full-gathered puff at the waist, which is very becoming to slender figures. The corselet-bodice is straight and stiff above, very well boned, and bordered at the points with embroidery matching the band at the throat. The square at the neck is filled up with a gathering of silk, drawn at each edge. The sleeves have three puffs, the last covering the elbow, and met by a straight piece shaped to the arm. This is quite a country dress; and the hat, large and shady, with its wreath of roses above the brim in front and beneath at the back, gives a pleasing idea of rusticity.

PICTURES IN PARIS.

Frenchwomen are clever in the little niceties of dressmaking which give finish to the appearance. For example, unless a skirt sits quite evenly, it looks unsightly. They insure this by sewing a large-sized dress-hook on the stays — not a big stay-hook which might show, but just an ordinary one. Every skirt has an eye which fastens on to it and renders moving impossible. I will give you the cut for the foundation skirt of a good French dress. I think you will find it hangs well:—The front is 29 in. at the hem, and diminishes to 9 in. at the waist. There is only one side gore on each side, 24 in. at the hem, 16 in. at the top. The back is straight, and 37 in. wide.

You read in many of the English journals that in Paris no steels and no pads are worn, but this is by no means the case; the French dressmaker lays down no hard-and-fast law of the kind. About 11 in. from the top she introduces, for figures which demand it, a 12 in. steel, but there is no shelf at the back of the waist. This steel only keeps out the skirt a little; and at the waist there is a very thin crescent-shaped pad about 9 in. across and 5 in. deep, not an inch thick, and tacked at intervals, which raises the skirt ever so little. Englishwomen adopt any crude, hard mode, whether it suits them or not.

Everybody has a cloth jacket—it is quite a necessity of every wardrobe. The French ones open with revers, and have distinct long narrow waistcoats, braided. The basques are far longer than

you wear them in England, say from 7 in. to 8 in. below the waist. If you are wanting such a garment, have a black jacket with a beige cloth waistcoat, braided in black.

Cloth dresses (for even in the height of summer there are days when you need them) have bell-sleeves with side revers. The favourite and newest trimming is a finely-worked appliqué of watered silk of the same tone. This forms wide open revers on either side of the front breadth, from neck to heel. The bodice has a waistcoat; the front of the skirt has two simple pleats on either side, turning towards the middle.

The under-skirts are edged with a fine kilting, and have over that a wide gathered flounce a quarter of a yard deep, which serves to keep the over-dress out a little.

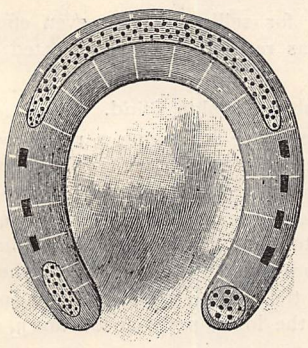
In Paris unmarried girls do not dress at all after the same style as matrons; and a pretty make of skirt for them is the accordion-pleating, arranged in honeycomb gathers to the depth of 4 in. below the waist. Long sashes are knotted at the side, generally of a contrasting colour, and the effect is graceful and pretty. The sleeves are full and so are the bodices; the shoulders can hardly be too high. Grenadines and barèges are coming to the fore again. They are useful, economical stuffs.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

An Elastic Horseshoe.



Mrs. A. M. Wood, the inventor of "Woodite," has introduced a new horseshoe, which deserves notice. It is made of "Whaleite"—an elastic composition—and besides wearing well, as far as has been tried, it has the merit of preventing the horse from slipping on slippery streets or ice. Moreover, being elastic, it does not jar the legs of the animal so much as the hard iron shoe; and it can be cut to fit the hoof, instead of the hoof being cut to fit the shoe. It also allows of the free expansion of the hoof, and is calculated to prevent the prevalent diseases of horses' hoofs. The figure illustrates one pattern of the whaleite shoe.

A Self-supporting Photograph Mount.

A photograph mount which is fitted with a support, like the back-stay of an easel, is among the latest photographic novelties. The stay folds into a sunk cavity in the back of the card when not in use, so that the photographs may be utilised either in an album, or standing loose.

The Dark Flash of Lightning.

At a recent meeting of the Physical Society of London, Mr. G. M. Whipple read a paper on one of the mysteries of lightning—namely, the "dark flash" observed in some photographs of lightning. This is a dark mark on the surface of the photograph, having all the characteristics of a lightning-flash, except that it is dark instead of light. Professor Stokes has suggested that it might be caused by one flash following another in the same path, and having the more refrangible rays of its light cut off. These are the rays which chiefly affect the photographic plate. The nitrous oxide gas formed by the decomposition of ammonia during the passage of the first flash might be the means of suppressing the rays in question. It has also been observed that several flashes do rapidly follow each other in the same path. But the matter requires further investigation, as does the whole subject of lightning, which is far from being properly understood.

The Telautograph.

Mr. Elisha Gray is a well-known American inventor and we have no reason to doubt the accounts received from America to the effect that he has devised a telautograph, or electric means of telegraphing a message in the sender's own handwriting. The apparatus consists of two writing-tables, one at each end of the line, which consists of two telegraph wires. Over these tables are two writing-pens in connection with the electric parts of the apparatus. One pen is for the person sending the message to write with, the other is for the automatic receipt or copying of the message sent. In moving his pen over the paper so as to form the letters, the sender, by means of metal brushes moving over contacts, interrupts two electric currents, one on each line. The current on one line is interrupted by the up and down strokes of the pen; the current on the other by the left and right strokes. The intermittent currents thus produced, after traversing the lines, pass through two sets of electro-magnets, whose

armatures they attract, and thus control the receiving pen. The intermittent currents follow each other so rapidly that the step-by-step motion of the receiving pen is hardly noticeable, and the copy of the writing is said to be very exact. The instruments having been supplied with paper, the operator takes the transmitting pen, and, holding it out of contact with the paper, moves it to the point over the paper at which he desires to begin writing the message. As the transmitting pen is thus moved one or both of the brushes is turned so as to interrupt one or both currents, and thus through the magnets and their armatures move the receiving pen to a corresponding position on the paper, the receiving pen being raised out of contact by a special pen-lifter. The operator then presses his pen on the paper as in ordinary writing, and the table being depressed closes a local circuit and brings the receiving pen on the paper. The operator then writes, and the receiving pen follows his movements by means of the electro-magnets, actuated by the intermittent currents. When the operator wishes to break off or go back to correct, he raises the transmitting pen from the paper. This allows the table to rise and the receiving pen to rise from the paper. By shifting to the desired point and lowering his pen, the operator causes the receiving pen to follow. When a new line requires that the paper be moved, the operator works a handle and shifts the paper. A transmitter and receiver are fixed at each station. In order to transmit diagrams, maps, or pictures, the transmitting and receiving pens are allowed a suitable range, but there is no other change required. A pencil or style may be used in place of the transmitting pen, and the letters merely formed, not marked. It is expected that the apparatus will be useful in business transactions, for any one can by its means be his own telegrapher.

An Automatic Chair.

The chair shown in our two figures is designed for public use in parks and promenades, and intended to obviate the less satisfactory plan of employing collectors to move about and take the money. The bottom of the chair, as shown in Fig. 1, is, when not in use, folded against the back of the chair, where it is automatically locked. A penny dropped in the slit of the till seen at the side, unlocks the bottom, and the user is free to draw it down. When he leaves the chair the seat rises of its own accord and locks itself; but if the user wishes to leave the chair, temporarily, he can prevent the seat from locking itself by means of a newspaper, stick, or umbrella. Fig. 2 shows the seat in its folded position. While dealing with automatic apparatus we may also mention that a machine of the sort for selling liquids, even effervescent beverages, has recently been constructed in London.

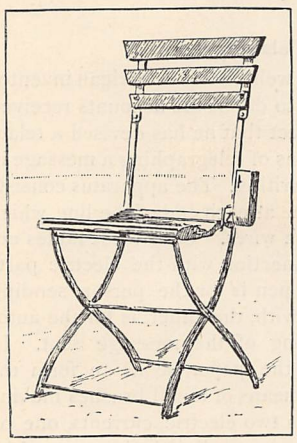


FIG. 1.

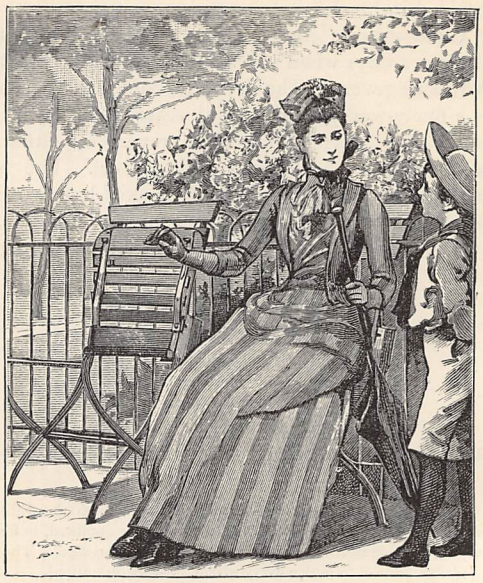


FIG. 2.

A Makeshift Outside Blind.

Outside blinds are effective in keeping a room cool, as they prevent heating of the air within the glass. Where, however, an outside blind is not supplied to a window, a simple makeshift can be provided by opening the sash at the top, and putting the inside blind outside. In order to prevent the blind rattling, if there is wind, the tassel at the bottom can be brought into the room below, and the lower sash closed down on the cord to hold it.

A Curtain-Rod Holder.

An improvement in curtain-rod holders has just been patented that deserves the attention of housewives who love to have their windows neat. The sockets on which the rods rest are fitted on to a sliding rack, like the old-fashioned blind-cord rack, so that they may be raised or lowered at top and bottom to tighten the curtain, and so obviate that looseness which is so frequent with short curtains.

Elastic Sandstone.

In the Natural History Museum at South Kensington there is a small slab of bending or elastic sandstone; but this appears to be eclipsed by a specimen now in the office of the Clerk to the United States War Department, at Washington. It weighs about a pound, and is 13 inches long, 2½ inches wide, and ⅓ inch thick. When shaken in the hand it bends to and fro with a dull muffled sound. With the ends resting on props it sags an inch in the middle. Another

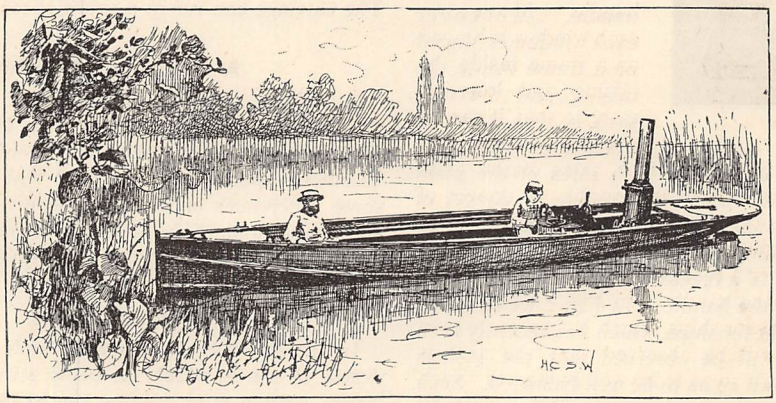
specimen of "itacolumite" or elastic sandstone is reported from California. It is 6 inches long, 1 inch wide, and ¼ inch thick, with shining specks of what seems to be mica scattered through it. Itacolumite is said to appear in diamond regions. It is stated that there is a whole mountain of it in Southern Nevada, east of Death Valley; but this requires confirmation.

Casting in Steel and Bronze.

The old Hindoo art of uniting different metals by casting has been revived in a Boston foundry. Steel and bronze are now cast together by casting the bronze parts of the object first, then cleaning them and placing them in their proper positions in a mould for the entire object. Molten steel is then poured in, and it unites with the bronze wherever it comes in contact with the latter.

A Spirit-Launch.

The illustration represents one of the "Zephyr" launches introduced by a well-known firm of launch-builders. It is 36 feet long by 6 feet in beam, and weighs, with its machinery, about a ton. In place of a steam-engine the motive-power is derived from petroleum spirit. The spirit, which has a specific gravity of about ·680, is contained in a reservoir in the bows, while the other apparatus is placed aft. This consists of a coil of copper tube, having burners beneath. A small air-pump is employed to force air through the reservoir, where it is charged with inflammable vapour which goes to the burners, and, being ignited, heats the copper coils. These contain a quantity of the petroleum spirit, which is vaporised by the heat, and actuates the motor which drives the propeller of the launch. The waste vapour then traverses a pipe outside the bottom of the launch and is condensed by the cold water, to be returned for use again. It only takes two minutes to start the launch with this arrangement, and besides being cleanly, as compared with coal and steam, the machinery weighs less. As regards economy, it was stated by Mr. A. F. Yarrow, recently, before the Society of Arts, that for an equal amount of fuel consumed, the petroleum spirit gave 4,722 foot-pounds of work done, while steam only gave 2,524 foot-pounds.



A SPIRIT-LAUNCH.

A New Tubular Lock.

An improved lock has recently been patented which presents many advantages over the ordinary form of door-lock. The whole of the lock-case is contained in a cylindrical tube, an inch in diameter and six inches in length, and to fit this lock to a door all that is necessary is to drill a circular cavity with a screw-bit. As the space hollowed to receive the lock-case is so much less than with the old form of lock, the weakening of the door is almost done away with, and a very neat and strong lock is readily fitted. An incidental advantage in the use of these new locks is that the screws holding the handle-space for the latch may be much longer than with the old form, as they have the whole width of the door in which to bite, instead of the very thin piece left above the case in the ordinary form. This, of course, makes the handles much firmer. A template is supplied with each lock, that serves as a guide to the carpenter for boring the hole for the key and the handle, so that there is really no difficulty in fixing these locks very firmly and accurately with the minimum of cutting into the wood of the door.

The Buddhist Mounds.

Mr. J. M. Campbell, of the Bombay Civil Service, who some ten years ago opened a Buddhist mound at Sopara and discovered therein a crystal casket, containing what was regarded as a piece of the begging-bowl of Buddha, has recently opened another tumulus near Junagadh, in Kattywar, and found another relic. The barrow was nearly 90 feet high and 230 yards in circumference. It is thought to date from about 150 B.C., or some 450 years after the date of Buddha. The mound enclosed a stone coffer, containing a clay-stone chest, in which was a copper box, holding a silver casket, which in turn held a small round kernel of gold, enclosing a tiny bowl and four precious stones, two bits of wood, and a fragment of bone, which Mr. Campbell considers to have been the special object of reverence.

A Convenient Window.

The form of window which we illustrate in Fig. 1 is designed to obviate some inconveniences attending the use of the ordinary window-sash which is hung by

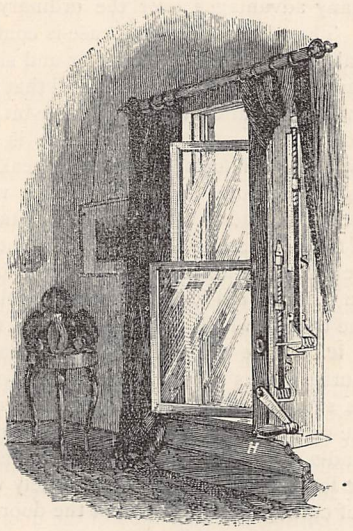


FIG. 1.

ropes and weights. The sash is raised or lowered by means of a winch-handle, H, which turns a cogged pinion, working into a long screw, S, of high pitch, concealed in the side lining, as will be gathered from our illustration. By this means the sashes are easily raised or lowered to any position, and will remain fixed there, though open. No fastening is required to keep the window shut, as it cannot be raised without turning the handle. Moreover each window is hinged on a frame inside the raising and lowering sash, so that it can be opened inwards after the manner of a door, and both sides of the glass thoroughly cleaned, without the trouble or danger of any one going outside. Such a window is also more secure than the ordinary one, for it does not rattle in the wind. There is a recess behind the shutter, by which to operate the handle. In Fig. 2 we illustrate a new porthole light for ships, which has recently been brought out. It will be observed that the sash is hinged midway down so as to be well balanced. Such a light has the advantage of closing when struck by a heavy sea.

FIG. 2.

Measuring a Wave.

The Honourable Ralph Abercromby, while on board the steamer *Tongariro*, succeeded in measuring the height of ocean-waves by floating a sensitive aneroid barometer upon the water. The width and velocity of the waves were also obtained by timing their passage with a chronograph. The biggest wave he encountered was in 55° S. latitude and 105° W. longitude. It was 46 feet high, 765 feet from crest to crest, and had a velocity of 47 miles an hour. As the weather was not exceptional for the latitude, Mr. Abercromby concludes that waves must occasionally reach a height of 60 feet, as has been stated by Admiral Fitzroy.

A Lethal Muzzle for Dogs.

Dr. Benjamin W. Richardson, F.R.S., the eminent physician, has invented a lethal muzzle for destroying diseased or mortally injured dogs in a painless manner. It is made on the principle of the well-known lethal chamber, and when put on, the dog in breathing dies painlessly.

Electric Tanning.

A process of tanning by electricity has been successfully working in France for the last six months, and special harness made from the leather is exhibited in the Paris Exhibition. The process consists in subjecting the hides to the action of a current of electricity while in contact with the ordinary tanning materials. A great saving of time is said to be effected, and the cost is reduced one-half. A company has been formed in this country to introduce the method.

A Benzine Carriage.

Carriages propelled by benzine motors are now made in Germany. The liquid fuel is placed in a closed copper vessel under the seat of the carriage, and passes drop by drop to a gas-generator which works a gas-motor and drives the carriage. The mixture of gas and air is exploded by means of an electric spark in the gas-motor. A quart of benzine is sufficient for an hour's trip ; but a supply for a seventy-five-mile journey can be readily carried in the vessel. The carriage can run at a speed of ten miles an hour.

A Celluloid Slide-Rule.

A slide-rule, having the divisions on a veneer of dead-white celluloid, has recently been introduced. Mahogany takes the place of the ordinary boxwood. In other respects the rule is like that of Gravet, with some differences of detail. The divisions are clear, and the motions of the sliding part very smooth, while the price is less than that of the Gravet rule.

Singing Sands.

In one of the South Pacific Islands there is a small desert of sands, which, on being stirred by the trade breeze, emit a faint tinkling music, that has a soothing effect on the ear.

Clearing Rivers.

A plan now used in clearing rivers of weeds in France is deserving of report. It consists in fixing a series of V-shaped scythes at intervals along a chain,

so that the blades form an angle with the chain, which is drawn through the water by a windlass on a barge or boat towed from the banks.

The Blue of the Sky.

Some years ago Professor Tyndall made some beautiful experiments to show that the cerulean blue of the sky is caused by dust or impurities in the atmosphere. These particles are so small as to reflect only the luminous rays of short wave-length, that is to say, the blue rays. Professor Hartley has reinvestigated the subject, and found that ozone may have a good deal to do with the colour, since a small quantity of ozone in a glass tube two feet long produced a full sky-blue colour.

A Pocket Lamp.

The lamp we illustrate is designed for carriage in the pocket as a reading-lamp in travelling, or for use with microscopes and telescopes; and when fitted with ruby glass it is serviceable in photography. It is electric, the bulb having a silvered reflector behind, and giving a light of 1 candle-power. The accumulator which supplies the current is contained in the box, and consists of two cells, each composed of five plates. It is charged from an external source, such as a primary battery or dynamo, by inserting wires in holes at the side. The charging current is half an ampère for eight hours, and the lamp takes 0·35 ampère, and gives a light for six hours. A switch, having a resistance of 1 ohm, is worked by turning a milled-headed screw, thus regulating the

intensity of the light, and putting it out or in by degrees. The lamp was recently exhibited at the conversazione of the Royal Society. Its weight is 1 lb. 13 oz., complete.

A Fire-Damp Meter.

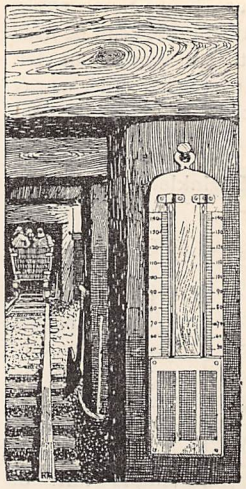


FIG. 1.

It is well known that spongy platinum becomes incandescent when played upon by "fire-damp" and air. This property has been taken advantage of by Mr. Niblett in designing a meter for telling the percentage of fire-damp in the air of a mine. The apparatus, which is shown here in two forms by Figs. 1 and 2, consists essentially of two thermometers; round the bulb of one of these is a quantity of spongy platinum exposed to the air, but screened by a wire gauze or perforated plate, after the manner of the Davy lamp. The fire-damp heats the platinum and sends up the mercury in that thermometer, and the instrument is graduated to show by the rise of the mercury the percentage of fire-damp present in the air. Of course, the wire gauze is to prevent the heated platinum from igniting the inflammable atmosphere around the apparatus. Fig. 1 shows a form adopted for hanging on the wall; and Fig. 2 one made like a watch. It is proposed to employ a form of differential thermometer for the purpose of these meters. In this there would be a tube with two bulbs containing air, and the bend of the tube would be filled with a column of mercury. One of the bulbs would be surrounded with spongy platinum, which, heated by the fire-damp, would expand the air in the bulb and shift the mercury column in the bend, thus indicating the percentage of inflammable gas. Mr. Niblett thinks that instruments showing a percentage of 5 to 15 will be the most useful in collieries.

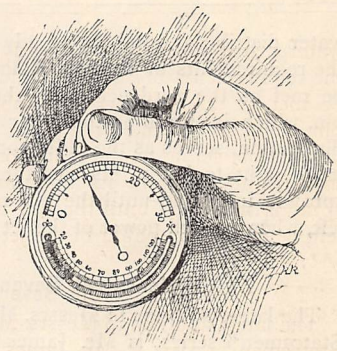


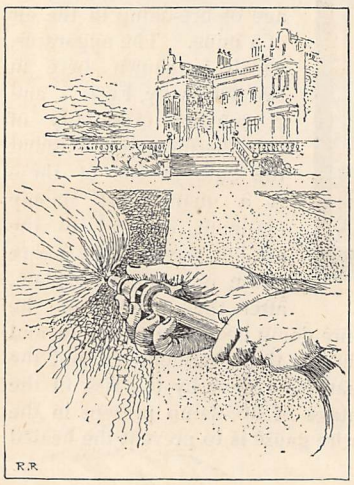
FIG. 2.

Gas as a Cautery.

Dr. B. W. Richardson, F.R.S., has recently suggested the use of compressed gas as a cautery in surgical operations. It is known that a jet of compressed gas impinging on the flesh produces an injury like a burn; and accidents of this kind happen to workmen from time to time. Dr. Richardson proposes to remove warts and pendulous growths by this means. It would be less alarming than the knife or hot wire, and is for the moment painless, the intense cold acting as an

anæsthetic. Chlorine, or better still, carbonic anhydride are the gases he would use, being manageable, cheap, inodorous, and uninflammable. It can be used in an artificial light. It is to be hoped that Dr. Richardson, who, we believe, introduced ether spray as a local anæsthetic, will succeed in giving the suggestion practical effect.

A New Garden Sprinkler.



A new head for garden hose is shown in our illustration. Without the necessity of making any change in the fittings it is possible to produce at will, by a simple turn of the collar, a light or coarse spray or a heavy jet, the advantage of which will be readily apparent to gardeners. This form of water distributor admits of ready graduation, so that the requirements of individual flowers or plants may be met as the gardener goes about his work. The pin, which is shown on the collar of the fitting in our illustration, serves as the indicator, and as it is moved from right to left in its aperture, the force of the spray is increased until the pin reaches the extreme left, when the full power of the jet is called into play.

Henry the Seventh.

The latest addition to Messrs. Macmillan's "English Statesmen" series, is Mr. James Gairdner's "Henry the Seventh." Perhaps the work is to a greater extent a history of the period covered by the life than some of its predecessors have been, but of its interest there can be no question. That it is, at the same time, scholarly and thorough, no one who knows Mr. Gairdner's work—and especially his work on this particular life and period in the "Rolls" series—can doubt. The fact that the lives of these "Statesmen" are not published in strictly chronological order makes it easier for the reader to grasp the importance of the characters, as they are dealt with, and helps to clothe the dry bones of valuable historical teaching with the human interest of biography. We may mention here that Messrs. Macmillan have just issued an admirable little French reading-book for young scholars, entitled "French Life in Letters," written by Mrs. Molesworth, and accompanied by excellent notes on the idiomatic and difficult words and phrases.

For Readers, Young and Old.

Of European Powers, perhaps there are no two whose movements and developments are more keenly watched than Germany and Russia, nowadays. It is important, therefore, for every one to know something of the people who go to make up the power of these two States, and if this can be learned in youth, much after misconception may be avoided. Messrs. Cassell have just issued a new edition of two works intended to give this information: "Chats about Germany," by Maggie Browne, and "All the Russias," by E. C. Phillips. These handy little books belong to the same series as the "Ramble Round France," to which we alluded last month, and are equally well adapted to fulfil their purpose of at once instructing and interesting young readers. Older readers will, no doubt, be interested in a new work, just issued by the same publishers, on the much-debated question of "Cremation and Urn-burial," in which the question is looked at more from an æsthetic point of view than a sanitary one, by Mr. W. Robinson. On the merits of the question itself, we express no opinion here; but there can be no doubt of the antiquity of the plan which the author advocates, and our readers who desire fuller information on the subject, should certainly study his fully illustrated little book.

East London at a Glance.

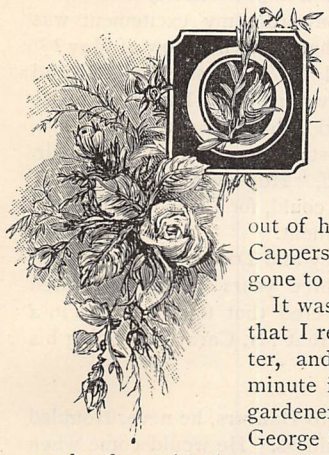
Without attempting to deal as a whole with Mr. Charles Booth's stupendous work on East London—the first, we believe, of a series on "The Labour and Life of the People," to be published by Messrs. Williams and Norgate—we should like to draw the attention of all our readers to the map which forms so valuable a part of the work. It is worthy the most careful study, and will go far to remove many preconceptions as to the people of the East End. The carefully gathered data as to the occupations and life of the inhabitants of every street, which have been so admirably used in the body of the work, are, as it were, epitomised on this map. Dotted over its surface will be found streets and parts of streets — often only a single block of tenements—coloured black, and these are the quarters occupied by the "very poor, lowest class—vicious, semi-criminal." And we believe many of our readers will be surprised to see how small a proportion these plague-spots bear to the mass of more brightly coloured streets, the actual numerical proportion being indeed only 1·3 per cent. of the population. Of the eight classes into which Mr. Booth divides East-Londoners, the largest, by far, is that comprising working men earning wages sufficient to secure ordinary comforts for themselves and their families, and this class contains 44·3 per cent. of the whole population of the district. Highly-paid labour numbers 12·5 per cent., the lower middle class 3·3 per cent., and the upper middle class 1·6 per cent. of the whole. Taking four of Mr. Booth's eight classes, as including those whose lives are passed in poverty, and the other four as including those whose lives are passed in comfort, we find that the first group comprises 38·3, and the second 61·7 per cent. of the population. Mr. Booth's work will do much to enable philanthropists and legislators to understand the actual facts of the situation they must cope with.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

SUMMONED TO THE COTTAGE.



"OH! please, ma'am, is the rector at home? Father wants to see him badly. He is terribly ill, and he do say such queer things, all along of Miss Morton. It frightens mother; she thinks he is going out of his mind. I have been to Cappers for the cap'en, but he's gone to Lunnon."

It was a week after the events that I recorded in the last chapter, and I was standing for a minute in the hall, watching the gardener at work, when little George Coles arrived breathless at the door with the foregoing message. I was alone in the house. The two Russells had left the previous day, and this morning Jack had come to ask us if we could lend him the cob to go to the station. He had had a good appointment in India offered him, and he wanted to run up to the Horse Guards to see about it. Of course we were only too pleased to accommodate him, and Mr. Talbot had gone with him to Marcombe, to transact some business, and bring the carriage back. He would not return for some time, and so I told George. The poor little fellow looked dreadfully cast down.

"I don't know whatever we shall do with him," he said mournfully; "he do go on so."

"Do you think I should be of any good, George?" I asked; "because if so, I would come at once."

"Oh, yes, ma'am!" he answered eagerly. "He sets great store by you."

"Then I will be ready directly. Aaron," to the gardener, "I shall want you to draw me to Mrs. Coles' in the chair in five minutes, please."

Sending George on in front to announce my approaching arrival at the cottage, I went upstairs to dress, and to take the last look at May before leaving the house.

She was conscious now, and had been so for the last week: that is to say, she no longer lay like one dead, without feeling or movement, but from morning to night she babbled, in delirium, of her father, of their old life together, of their love for one another, until she brought the tears to my eyes. I was always thankful, however, if in her ramblings she kept clear of the events of the trial and conviction, for then her anguish was simply heartbreaking to witness. Occasionally, mingled with her father's name, would come another "he," that set me wondering, until, alas! I made the discovery that it matched Jack's "she"—that it was Jack himself.

But what possible connection could he have with her old life? for that there was such a connection was clear, even amidst her incoherent ramblings. Surely, if they had ever met before, one or the other of them would have mentioned it to me—particularly Jack, who, from his boyhood, had made me his confidante. It was certainly strange, and I resolved to question him at the first opportunity, not of set purpose, but, as it were, casually; for I must be very cautious not to betray May, or my own knowledge of his secret.

This morning, however, I had no time to linger in the sick-room. There was another invalid awaiting me, so telling Mrs. Lovegrove that I should be absent some time—she and Mrs. Bolton divided the nursing between them now, whilst a sick-nurse from Marcombe had been engaged for the cottage—I gave May a farewell kiss, and started, without delay, on my errand.

It was a beautiful day, bright and frosty, but piercingly cold. The hoar-frost was glistening on tree and bush and hedge, converting the most commonplace objects into jewels fit for the fairies, as Aaron drew me down Love Lane. But it was not a morning to do poor Coles any good in his present state of health. Ever since Christmas he had been steadily growing worse, but during the past week his disease had gained ground so rapidly, that now it had come to be a mere question of time. Like all consumptive people, he persuaded himself that he should get better; but both Mr. Talbot and I were convinced that he would never see even his beloved primroses bloom again. And, meanwhile, there was something unsatisfactory—a mystery, a suspicion—about him, which troubled my husband, although he said but little about it, and which lent a faint colour to the insinuations that Miss Bostock was always uttering against him. I think that was one of her most provoking traits: that she was usually right in her conclusions.

When I reached the cottage, George was on the look-out for me, to conduct me at once to his father's room.

"I'm glad you are come, ma'am," he said, in his rather old-mannish way, "for he's that 'cited, we don't know whatever to do with him. Maybe you will be able to pacify him, for even Mrs. Polwarth can do nothing; it's one o' the gentry he must have, he says."

In truth, I found the poor man in a deplorable condition, and evidently labouring under the strongest excitement. His breath was coming and going, his eyes nearly starting out of his head, his poor bony fingers working nervously and ceaselessly upon the

coverlet, as he vented the irritability he could not control, now on his wife, and now on Mrs. Polwarth, the nurse. On seeing me, his excitement grew almost uncontrollable, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could calm him sufficiently to understand from him that he wished every one but myself to leave the room.

"And now, what is it, Coles?" I asked, when, after some trouble—for she was hurt and sore at the proceeding—the door finally closed upon Mrs. Coles—"What is it, my poor friend? Try and tell me calmly all about it."

He put his thin, clammy hand on my arm, and drew me close to him.

"Is it true she is dying?" he asked in a hollow whisper that made my flesh creep. I knew who he meant, not only from what George had told me, but because he, like the rest of the villagers, had been unremitting in his inquiries for the girl who had won love, respect, and confidence on all sides in so short a time.

"No," I answered confidently; "she is not dying. She is very ill indeed; but Dr. Charlton hopes and thinks that she will pull through."

"Then is it true what—they—say—what these folks are all saying, that——" he put his face close to mine, and his eyes seemed turned to glass, so steadfastly did they stare at me, as his words came out in fitful gasps, too painful to reproduce in writing—"that—that—she is the daughter of—Danvers—the banker?"

His voice rose to a kind of feeble shriek, and I started in my chair. How could he, or the gossips who had told him, have learnt the secret? Then I remembered Lizzie Bostock. No doubt she had been at work publishing the news of her rival's identity all over the village.

"That concerns neither you nor me, Coles," I said gently.

"But it does concern me," the poor weak voice cried almost fiercely. "It concerns me more than any one else. Mrs. Talbot, ma'am, you must and you shall tell me."

In his excitement he had raised himself in bed, and his bony fingers involuntarily clutched my arm with a strength that I could not have believed to be in them. His voice had fallen to a hoarse whisper.

"Tell me," he murmured faintly, great drops of perspiration standing on his forehead. I moistened his lips with a cordial, but he refused to drink any. "Tell me," he repeated again.

"If you will assure me that you have a good reason for asking the question," I answered, impressed by the man's intense earnestness, "and that you will reveal to no one anything I may tell you about Miss Morton, I will answer you. You are grateful to her, I know; you cannot wish her any harm!"

"Grateful to her? Did she not save our Hetty's life? Indeed, ma'am, I wish her nothing but good, and that is the reason I ask you: is she Miss Danvers?"

His sincerity was so undoubted that I scattered my scruples to the wind.

"Yes," I answered. He covered his face with his hands, and for a few minutes there was nothing to be heard but his fitful breathing, as he struggled to repress the emotion which was shaking him from head to foot. Again I gave him some restorative, and this time he drained it off to the last drop.

"Don't touch me!" he said, as I took the glass from him. "I am not fit for you to touch. They tell me she'll be made to leave for this. Is it true?"

"Yes." I tried to speak impassionately in order to steady his nerves, but inwardly my excitement was almost equal to his. What could he know of May?

"Then," he said, and his voice sounded full and solemn, "they will do wrong. Mr. Danvers was as innocent of the crime laid to his charge as you are."

"What?" I cried, starting up from my chair. Then, controlling myself, "How do you know this?" I asked, as quietly as I could, for I was quivering all over with nervous excitement.

"I was a clerk in Carey and Danvers' bank for ten years. For the last three years I held a trusted position, where I discovered that the bank was in a tottering condition, and that Mr. Carey was doing his best to bolster it up."

"Mr. Carey?"

"Yes, Mr. Carey. As to Danvers, he never troubled his head about the business. He would come when it suited him; but he had no heart in it, and he simply did what Carey told him to. He was fond of pleasure, only thinking of his horses or his shooting, living amongst a lot of swells, who all did the same, and caring no more for the business than my Hetty. We all liked him, for he was kind and easy-going, and full of life and jokes; but we all knew that Mr. Carey was the real pillar of the house."

"Did you never see Miss Danvers?" I asked, as he stopped to struggle for breath.

"No," he answered, after a long pause; "she never came into the office. Mr. Danvers always went out to speak to her in her carriage. But I must get on, or the missis will be back, and I would not have her know it for all the world," and a shudder ran through him as he spoke. "Well, then, ma'am," he resumed, "one day I found out—no matter how—that for years Carey had been engaged in frauds in order to prop up the bank. I was in very bad health then, so bad that I knew I should be compelled to resign my post, and starvation was staring me and mine in the face. The London climate, with its fogs, and the atmosphere of gas in which I lived, was killing me and my children. I had lost four already, and Hetty was fading away like the others. If something were not done for her, she would soon be laid by their side. It was just then, when I was at my wits' end to know what to do, that I found out Carey, and he knew that I had found him out. He went on his knees to me; he humiliated himself into the very dust before me. He promised to make me a fine allowance for life if I would swear not to expose him. The long and the short of it, ma'am, is, I yielded to temptation, and I drove a hard bargain with him. I will not make any excuses, but I did think of Hetty more than of myself, and I gave place to the devil. I took Carey's money, and with it the

whole bargain set down in black and white, for I did not trust him ; and I left the bank, telling my wife that an uncle, who had gone to Australia, had died there, and left me a fortune. I came down here, and two years later Carey and Danvers' Bank failed, and all the frauds were discovered. Why I was never called as a witness, I don't know. I think Mr. Danvers believed I was dead. At any rate, I was not subpœnaed. At the trial, as you know, the whole thing fell upon Danvers. Carey, who was a regular old fox, had so arranged his own nefarious proceedings that when they came to be exposed to daylight they were all in the name, the handwriting, of Danvers, who, beyond signing anything that Carey told him to, had no more to do with them than you have."

"And you knew this, and you let an innocent man suffer without opening your mouth!" I exclaimed, involuntarily recoiling a little from the bedside.

"Ay, ma'am ; I don't wonder you're shocked. But, for one thing, I was bound to hold my tongue in self-defence. My knowledge of Carey's goings on and my silence had made me, to a certain degree, his accomplice. If I exposed him, I exposed myself also. Besides which, I was enjoying the wages of sin, and so, although I hated Carey—hated him because he had tempted me—I said nothing. I argued with myself that one or the other must go to prison ; that it would be worse for Carey, who had a wife and family, than for Danvers, who had only one daughter ; in short, I tried to blind myself, as men will when the devil gets hold of them. But I have been a miserable man ever since. If it had not been for my garden, I think I should have gone mad ; and, but for my wife and children, I should have confessed it all long ago. I thank God that the discovery of Miss Morton being Miss Danvers has prevented me going into His presence with such an awful sin unatoned for and unconfessed. Have pity on me, ma'am—I am a dying man."

He sank back on his pillows, gasping for breath, and sobbing with emotion. Pity! From the bottom of my heart I pitied the unfortunate man, although inwardly I could not quite keep down a feeling of indignation when I thought of all May had gone through, of all Mr. Danvers must be suffering.

Mercifully, poor Coles could not see into my heart as I poured some strong beef-tea down his throat, and, stooping over him, whispered words of hope and comfort, which had the double effect of driving away my own momentary resentment and bringing something like peace to the poor tortured face before me. When, after a time, I rose from my knees, all other feelings had given place to an intense pity. What could the pains of innocent suffering be, compared to what this poor guilty man had gone through?

But meanwhile there was little time to be lost in setting wrong right. Coles, though not *in extremis*, was in imminent danger. Soon, probably, he might be delirious, or lose his powers of speech. He must make his deposition before a magistrate immediately, or he might be past making it at all.

"You are sure that you can quite substantiate all you have told me, Coles?" I asked gently, when I saw that he was capable of answering me.

"Positive, ma'am—I have forgotten nothing of that dreadful time."

"Then, you know, I ought to send for a magistrate at once?"

"I know, ma'am ; but don't let it be Mr. Bostock. He and Miss Bostock are dead against me already. Let it be Mr. Dawtrey. The trap is doing nothing. It could go to Stanhead and fetch him. I could not tell it to Mr. Bostock."

I acquiesced at once, for it struck me that as the whole matter ought to be kept secret, it would be better if the magistrate came from a distance. Mr. Dawtrey was a great friend of Mr. Talbot's, business-like and kind, and Coles could not have chosen more wisely. And just at this moment, when I was fairly puzzled how to arrange matters, my husband arrived on the scene. The very sight of him brought a look of peace to the sick man's face, and took a load off my mind, whilst in a few minutes everything seemed to settle itself without difficulty. I was to go home at once, and send Lovegrove to drive the Coles' trap to Stanhead, with an urgent note for Mr. Dawtrey, and meanwhile Mr. Talbot would stay with Coles.

On my way to my chair, I stopped a few seconds in the sitting-room to report on the invalid, and to see how far Mrs. Coles' suspicions had been aroused. I found my task an easy one, for Mrs. Polwarth had already broken the ground for me. She had persuaded Mrs. Coles, who was very much her husband's inferior in point of education, that this excitement on the patient's part, this sending her out of the room, and so on, was on account of "business"—a vague term, which had transformed itself, in Mrs. Coles' mind, into the fact that Coles had been making his will.

"But whatever it can have to do with Miss Morton—Miss Danvers, as I should say—I can't think, ma'am," she said. "You should have heard him take on about her, and all because she turns out to be Miss Danvers, which he can't help ; and because they say she will go."

"Of course, Mrs. Coles," I answered, "Miss Danvers has nothing to do with your husband's will ; but after all her kindness to Hetty, he was naturally excited at hearing who she is, more especially as he used to be a clerk in her father's bank."

Mrs. Coles drew her chair several inches closer to mine. "He told you that now, did he?" she asked, leaning forward, and speaking in a whisper. "Well, I am glad he has told you, for I can't abide secrets. But Coles, he would never let me say what he had been in London those ten years. He was afraid, you see, ma'am, lest he should be had up for a witness at the trial, for he always knew the bank would fail, and then, sure enough, there would be a fuss, and a going to law about it ; and so, says he, 'Mary, don't you go and tell the neig ours, nor any one, what position I occupied in London. If they ask you questions, just tell them that I was in business, or else, depend upon it, I shall have to give evidence, and that would right

down kill me.' So I never told a mortal soul; but oh! ma'am, it was hard. Many and many's the time Miss Bostock has come and asked me questions, for she's that prying, you know, ma'am—not what I call a real lady. 'What was your husband formerly, Mrs. Coles?' says she. 'Why, miss,' I would answer, 'he was born and bred in this village. His father worked for the squire, Sir Oliver.' 'Yes, yes,' says she——"

But here I interposed. Once get Mrs. Coles on to Miss Bostock's iniquities, and I might make up my mind to spend another half-hour with her, to say nothing of the impropriety of my listening to such gossip.

"Never mind what Miss Bostock said, Mrs. Coles," I interrupted. "You were quite right not to tell anything your husband had forbidden you to, although probably Miss Bostock had some good motive for her questions. Now, I must not wait any longer, for the rector wished me to go home at once."

"Of course, ma'am; and you're tired, too, no doubt. But there, ma'am, to think that our Miss Morton is that bad man's daughter, and he in prison, too — oh, dear! oh, dear! it is shocking! 'But,' says I to Coles, 'whoever she is, she is the sweetest young lady that I ever saw, and a real lady, too!' For Mr. Danvers, he did live in style—with carriages and horses, and butler and footmen, and I don't know what all. And to think of her being a schoolmistress! Well, to be sure!"

I foresaw that this theme would be inexhaustible, so taking advantage of Mrs. Coles' pause for breath, I hastily took my leave, after impressing on her strongly the necessity of preserving the same secrecy as to her husband's former calling as hitherto—returning home quite done up. I was good for nothing the rest of the day but to lie on my sofa, and think of all that had happened during the last few days, picturing again and again to myself May's intense happiness when she learnt her father's innocence. And Jack? Alas! I feared it could make no difference as far as bringing him and May together. Yet her joy would be his, and if ever—but there! what an absurd castle in the air! Was it likely ever to come to pass?

And here my meditations were brought to a conclusion by my husband's arrival home. I was very thankful to see him back again. He had been at the cottage for two hours, after driving from Marcombe this bitterly cold day, and had had but little to eat: hard work for a man of his age. But he never had any thought for himself.

"Dawtrey is come," he said, after anxiously inquiring about me, "and I hope and think it will be all right. There are few people about, owing to the cold, so I trust it may all pass off without much gossip." Then, after asking about May: "That young man," he continued musingly, "little thought what good service he was doing Miss Danvers when he sought to identify her, and how he would indirectly be the means of bringing poor Coles to confess his sin. It has all been wonderfully brought about."

"How is Coles?" I asked.

"Terribly exhausted, but peaceful. I think he will sleep to-night. I am going down again to him this evening. Dawtrey is kindness and patience itself with him—the very man for the purpose. We must indeed be thankful!"

"I cannot yet bring myself to forgive him," I said. "Of course it was that villain Carey——"

"Oh! hush, hush! my dear," broke in my husband in real distress. "Do not let us judge him. How can we guess how terribly he may have been tempted? We know a little of what the temptation was to Coles: his own and his children's lives. We do not know what form it took with Mr. Carey. We cannot exonerate him" (his face for the moment stern and severe), "so do not let us judge him."

"No, dear," I answered; "you are right. But I have not yet attained, nor shall I ever, to the height of your charity."

"Nothing but the infinite pity is sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life," he quoted. "I have not very much fault to find with you, my dear." Five minutes later he was enjoying a ten minutes' nap after his tea.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

LADY CHALLONER'S VISIT.

It has always been a matter of surprise to me how it was we managed to keep all the transactions to which I have alluded in the foregoing chapter a secret in a place like Monk's Hollow, where every one knew each other's affairs almost before they took place. But by some happy chance secrecy was maintained. Mr. Dawtrey came and went, bearing the precious document of Coles' confession and deposition with him, and neither coming nor going did he meet any one whom, under the circumstances, it would have been desirable to avoid.

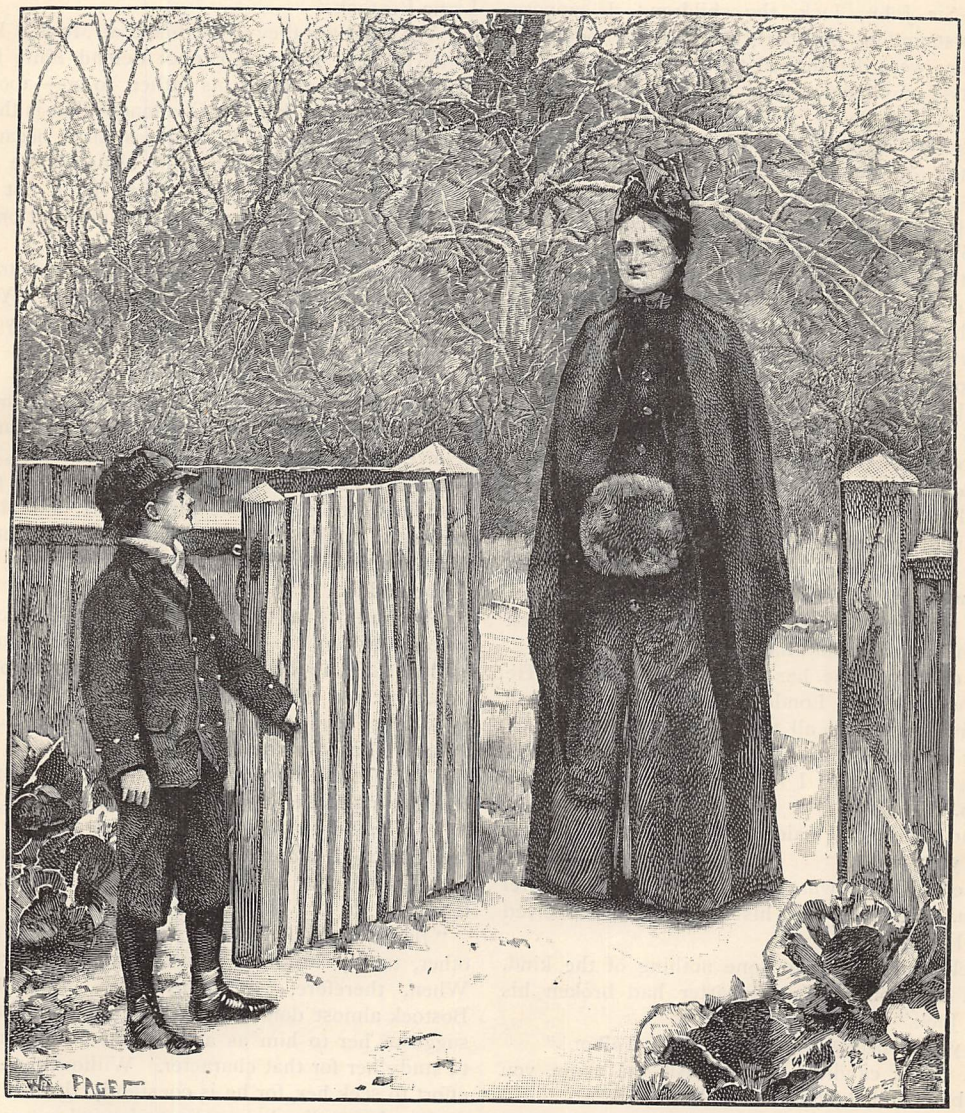
This danger tided over, the next arose from Coles' own family—Mrs. Coles and the children—who knew both too much and too little. Fortunately, however, the former was just now so overwhelmed with the rapid strides her husband's complaint had made, and with the discovery that Miss Morton was Miss Danvers, that she was quite content to imagine that Mr. Dawtrey's presence in the cottage was connected with Coles' will, an hallucination that Mr. Dawtrey fostered, whilst cautioning her very gravely to preserve the same strict secrecy as to her husband's former calling as she had hitherto done. He succeeded in thoroughly impressing on her the necessity for silence, after which, with a pencil line to Mr. Talbot to tell him that Coles' most minute details fully substantiated his charges against Mr. Carey, he returned home to take the further necessary steps to bring the real offender to justice. And here, for the present, the matter stopped. It might be weeks or months before Mr. Danvers was released from Fastmoor; it might even be that Coles' evidence would not suffice to bring about such a result at all. In my feminine impatience, I could have cried when my husband told me this, cautioning me to maintain as strict a silence as ever I had imposed on Mrs. Coles, in

case the whole thing should come to nothing. I might not even have the pleasure of telling Jack. Silent I must be, if it were torture to me. I knew I should see Jack in the course of the day, for he was sure to come to tell us the result of his visit to the Horse Guards. I was so completely knocked up by the exertions of the previous afternoon that I was fit for nothing but to take a turn at watching in May's room, listening to her rambling talk with a fresh interest, now that its principal theme would, in all probability, be shortly restored to her.

She was very gentle in her delirium, unless it happened to turn on her great trial, but, as a rule, she wandered on the subject of her old happy life, when father and daughter seemed to have been all in all to each other. This afternoon, however, Jack's name cropped up again, and I pricked up my ears to listen. "A hansom—St. James's Street—exhibition of myself—shopwoman!" What could it all mean?

"Don't scold me, dear father—Sib showed me his photo—just like his grave dark face—he never asked my name—but she told me his—Jack." She said the word in a soft, sighing voice, then kept on whispering it to herself: "Jack—Jack."

"Alas! my poor child! So he is Jack to you, and you are May to him, and he is going to India, and you will stay at home with your father, and some day, when your hair is perhaps flecked with white, you may meet once more and——" I arose impatiently from the sofa, for there was a knock at the door.



"'I'M GLAD YOU ARE COME, MA'AM,' HE SAID" (*p.* 577).

"Lady Challoner is in the drawing-room, ma'am."

It was a relief, for my imagination had been running riot with me. "You will stay with Miss Morton then, Jane, until Mrs. Bolton comes," I said, as I went downstairs, to find Gladys awaiting me. I saw, at the first glance, that she was out of humour, and had come to pour out her grievances. They all did it in turn—Sir John, Jack, the children. I suppose there was something peculiarly sympathetic about me, or else they were determined to evoke what little of the quality I may have possessed.

"Well, Gladys, dear? Delighted to see you. You don't look very bright. Anything wrong?"

"What a question, Mrs. Talbot!" as she kissed me. "Is anything ever right with us?"

She spoke bitterly and petulantly, like a spoilt child. She had a great deal to bear, and she was not cast in the heroic mould that can rise superior to circumstances. I was very sorry for her. She had been such a pretty butterfly creature when she married, and now an expression of chronic discontent had settled down on her white weary face, giving it an old, even cynical, look.

"Poor dear!" I said. "Come, sit down, and tell me all about it. We are not likely to have visitors."

"Visitors" (with a sneer) "at Monk's Hollow! Oh!" she burst out suddenly, "how I hate and detest this dreary place. What would I give to turn my back on it for ever!"

"No wonder you dislike it, dear; you have had so much trouble here. Only tell me one thing: Jack has got his appointment, hasn't he?"

"Oh, dear, yes! he has got it fast enough. He only came back from London an hour ago. He will soon turn his back on all the wretchedness of which he is the cause, whilst we starve in England. Don't speak to me of him! I have not common patience with him."

"Come, Gladys," I said, "what has he done now to rouse your wrath?"

"Done! It's for what he won't do that I quarrel with him. He has broken his word; he has deceived us all. He has——"

"I feel positive he has done nothing of the kind. I would as soon believe Ancaster had broken his word as Jack."

"Oh, you disbelieve what I say, Mrs. Talbot!"

"Yes, dear; candidly, I do. All the same, you mustn't be offended; only don't abuse Jack."

"Well, don't you call this breaking his word, when he calmly tells his father and me that he does not intend to marry Lizzie Bostock?—that he should not have mentioned the subject, but that he feared we might be cherishing hopes he could not fulfil—that was meant for me—and the sooner all our minds were disabused of the idea the better—that was meant for Lizzie. The egregious conceit of the man! As though Lizzie, with the immense fortune she will have, could not do a thousand times better than marry into a sinking ship like ours."

"Oh, no; she certainly could not. I defy her to marry so true a gentleman as Jack. But to return to the point. He has not broken his word. He never promised to marry Lizzie Bostock."

"He promised, so I understood from John—only he contradicts himself so—either to marry for money or sell Cappers, and now he won't do either the one or the other."

"But there are other women in the world besides Lizzie Bostock."

"Yes; but are they to be found at Monk's Hollow or in India? No, you cannot defend him; he has behaved abominably to his father, to me—above all, to Lizzie herself. He is a Challoner: that is the long and the short of it, and he despises Lizzie because her father has a lace factory. But although he is too great a gentleman to marry her, he is not above trifling with her affections, and deceiving not only her, but his whole family."

"Gladys," I said, "I have tried hitherto to listen to you calmly, but I can do so no longer. You are angry, and really do not mean one-half you are saying."

"Yes, I do; every syllable."

"Which—pardon me—is unjust and untrue from beginning to end. Jack agreed with his father—I believe there were no promises made—that, as he would not consent to sell Cappers, he must provide the funds for keeping the place going, and the only means he could see for so doing was to marry a woman with money. Am I so far right?"

She nodded. "Go on," she said.

"He had not far to look for an heiress, for one was waiting for him. It is my belief that Lizzie had made up her mind to become Mrs. Challoner before ever Jack appeared on the scene; otherwise, how do you explain her ready acceptance of your change of front to her? For you know you did change."

"Yes, I make no secret of it. When I found Jack was coming home, it suddenly struck me what a good thing it would be if he put matters straight by marrying Lizzie. I therefore made friends with her, and then I found out how nice she was, and how suitable for Jack."

"Just so. You and she, without a word to each other, tacitly arranged that she was to marry him. When, therefore, he comes home, he finds Miss Bostock almost domesticated at Cappers. Some one suggests her to him as a wife, and he sets to work to study her for that character. Without the slightest effort to seek her, for he is constantly thrown into her society, he studies her as dispassionately as you might a new work-pattern, without any trifling with her affections, as you call it."

"Who told you all this?"

"No one, but my own observation. The result of the study is—not liking. He dislikes Lizzie, quite independently of her birth. If she were the duke's daughter, he would dislike her equally. And yet you would have him do her the wrong of asking her to marry him? Of course he neither can nor will. Have I not proved my case?"

"No. You have made a good defence, but you have omitted one or two important points. Why

was it he found out he could not marry Lizzie only within the last ten days? Because she spoke out her disapproval of Miss Danvers, and there you have the whole secret. Miss Danvers has bewitched not only every man, but every male in the place. From Sir John down to Arthur, they are all crazy about her, and if Jack had not seen her, he would be engaged to Lizzie by this time."

I shook my head. "No, not if he had never seen another woman. She does not suit him any more than she does John. But," I continued, alarmed lest Gladys should really have discovered her step-son's secret, "you do not mean that Jack is in love with May, do you?"

"No, not exactly in love, but bewitched. She is, of course, extremely good-looking, with those wonderful eyes of hers, and what with them and her other beauties, the mystery that shrouded her, her singing, and one thing and another, she has turned the heads of all the men, and Jack's with the rest."

"She did not do so wilfully, poor child!" I said.

"I am not at all sure of that. Brought up, as she has been, by a fast, gay father, amongst a lot of fast men, and always in men's society, I expect she has been a flirt from her cradle."

"As far as my experience goes, the girls who have always been accustomed to men's society are not such flirts as those who have not. To the former they are a matter of course; to the latter a rarity, to be made much of accordingly. But whatever her former circumstances may have been, May has not shown herself a flirt since she has been here; and I ask you, Gladys, do you in your heart of hearts think so?"

"Well, I don't know what to say. I confess I have always found her most quiet; but then, of course, she would be on her best behaviour before me."

"Well, then, what does John say?"

"John! Did I not tell you he was bewitched? In spite of her being 'that rogue Danvers' daughter,' which fact would, I thought, at once transform her in his eyes from an angel to the contrary, she is still 'the prettiest girl I have seen for many a day,' and has, according to him, comported herself with the utmost decorum under her trying circumstances. He is very severe, however, on her being a village schoolmistress."

"I agree entirely with John—not about her being a schoolmistress—but about the propriety of her conduct in that character. I am not a man, but she has what you call bewitched me. I pity her more than I can say. I admire her courage, her love, and self-sacrifice; and, amidst all his troubles, Mr. Danvers is a lucky man to possess such a daughter. As to her flirting, she is far too sad, in the first place; and in the second, too proud. But to go back again. What did your husband say when Jack announced that he did not intend to marry Lizzie Bostock?"

"Would you believe it? after a little strong language he veered round! ''Pon my word, I think you are right, my boy,' he said (I could have shaken them both, with pleasure). 'There are other women in the world besides the lacemaker's daughter, although my lady there does vow that there are none so suitable, so good (mimicking me), so clever, so energetic, so conscientious, and—so monstrously uncharitable!'"

I could not help laughing—it was so exactly like Sir John; and, try as she would, Gladys herself could not refrain from smiling.

"Ah! you may laugh," she said. "It is no laughing matter to me, and so I told Jack. I was so angry with them both that I left the room, the result of which is that Jack has got over his father to let him wait a year without thinking of matrimony. If, at the end of that time, Cappers is not let, and no other stroke of good luck—as though such a thing were possible!—has befallen us, then the great Jack will consent to cut off the entail. Meanwhile we are to go on our wretched existence for another year. It is simply disgraceful."

"But, my dear Gladys, Jack has this appointment, and he is sure to do all he can for his father."

"Yes, so he says: declares he will live on nothing, &c., but oh! I am sick of it all. Only let me leave this miserable shadow of past grandeur. It would be the happiest day of my life if Cappers were sold."

Such a sentiment was to me simply profanation.

"Sold!" I cried; "and it has been in the family ever since——"

She put her two pretty hands up to her ears.

"Oh! don't please say that, Mrs. Talbot. Has it not been dinned into my ears ever since I married? Even little Arthur said to me solemnly the other day, 'Mover, what a werry, werry long time we've lived here—ever since King—King—the naughty king, you know. We're werry, werry old.' 'If ever you say that again, Arthur,' I answered him, 'you shall be well punished.'"

"What a shame! dear little pet. He shall come here, and say it to me as often as he likes."

"It's Gwen and Gerrard who teach him all that nonsense. And to think that I wore myself to a shadow in persuading John to sell the tumble-down old place, and then Jack comes back, and puts his foot down, Challoner fashion, and says, 'I won't have it.' Oh! it's enough to make one mad!"

"Poor dear! It is hard for you, for you aren't a Challoner."

"No, thank goodness! but, unfortunately, my children are."

"No, no, Gladys, you must not say that. The Challoners are a fine race, and you ought to be proud of belonging to them. The fact is, you don't mean a half or a quarter you have been saying."

She smiled a bitter smile.

"They are a worn-out race, Mrs. Talbot. Their sun is set, their day is done."

"No, no, dear," I answered, stroking her pretty hair, "not as long as there is such a man as Jack, such a boy as Gerrard belonging to them. A few months ago how proud you all were of Jack and of his doings in the Soudan! Have you forgotten the real stuff he is made of, because he refuses, like the honest gentleman he is, to perjure himself before the altar, and swear to love a woman whom he knows he dislikes?"

"Dear me! Mrs. Talbot, you do use strong expressions."

"I wanted to put the unvarnished truth in plain words before you—a truth that you cannot deny."

"No," she said wearily; "and what will be the result? Only this morning, John—*à propos* of Lizzie—remarked that a disappointed woman is like a lioness robbed of her cubs. Now, Lizzie is that disappointed woman. Of course I know she wanted to reign at Cappers, and also she was undoubtedly taken with Jack. I don't go so far as John, who thinks no woman can look at him without being in love with him; but, at any rate, Lizzie is disappointed, and, depend upon it, we shall soon feel her disappointment. Her father will foreclose. John says so himself, for we have paid no interest on the mortgages for ages."

"But, Gladys, that must not be. Ancaster——"

"Oh! whatever you do, do not let out that I have told you. No, things must take their course, and as Jack has wrought all the mischief, he must find the remedy Ah! here comes Mr. Talbot. Mind, not one word about the mortgages!" Then, as my husband entered the room, followed by the tea, "How d'ye do, dear Mr. Talbot?" she said. "I am glad you are come home; you always put me in a good humour. I warn you, I am in a very bad one. I feel as though I should like to scratch every one."

My husband smiled his beautiful smile.

"East wind, my dear," he said; "it is a very strong one to-day. I hope, however, you will let me off the scratching."

"Oh, yes," she answered; "I always sheathe my claws with you. As to the wind being in the east, I fear it is permanently in that quarter with me."

"Are you asking me to give you a scolding, Gladys?" he asked.

"She wants it," I said. "She has been vituperating her nearest and dearest in the most unseemly way."

"And Mrs. Talbot has been defending them almost as warmly as if you had presumed to vituperate me, I conclude."

"Yes," she answered. "We have been having a really enjoyable argument, and it has done me a lot of good."

"Let off the steam, I suppose. The Rectory is always the parish safety-valve. Well," sinking into his arm-chair, "I have just finished my work at Cappers, where I went to congratulate on Jack's appointment. What a good one it is, and a great compliment to him! I found poor John very ailing. This east wind tries him very much."

Gladys looked compunctious. "I'm sure it does," she said. "He has been so cross all day."

"Ah! my dear, I think we none of us quite know what he goes through. When I remember the man he used to be, and look at him now, I sometimes marvel at his patience. He was always hot-tempered; his very disease makes him irritable, yet you rarely hear him complain. Jack told me to-day he thought he was suffering agonies with neuralgia."

"Ah! Mr. Talbot, you see the good in every one. Poor dear John! Of course his is a fearful trial."

"I can't help seeing the good in John: there is so much of it."

"Yes, so there is," answered Gladys softly, "an immense deal. I ought not to be leaving him any longer now, so I will say good-bye."

"He has got Jack, who has come back laden with news; so stay and have some tea before you go out into this bitter cold. Have you heard that actually Kit's Pool is frozen?" and, with that, the two launched out into sundry local topics, ending with May.

"She is much the same, I hear," said Gladys; then suddenly, "Mr. Talbot, what do you think about her?—I do not mean her illness, but her character, her conduct?"

"In coming here as Miss Morton, you mean? It was not right, of course; but, poor child! it was very pardonable, for her motive was a pure and good one—to be near her father. Perhaps I take too lenient a view of the matter, for I cannot find it in my heart to blame her, and her presence has been an unmixed good in the village. There is quite a little crowd here of a morning to ask after her, so greatly has she endeared herself to every one; and as to the children—"

"The boys especially."

"No, the girls equally. Why, there is nothing they would not do for her."

"But your opinion, Mr. Talbot? I want that."

"Shall I tell you what old Betty Buckle said of her this afternoon?" She nodded.

"I was telling her how seriously ill she is. 'Well, sir,' she answered, 'if it do please the Almighty to take her, we all know where she will go to—straight as an arrow to heaven.'"

"Poor old Betty!" I said. "May has done wonders with her."

Gladys rose to go, looking grave and softened. "Good-bye," she said to Mr. Talbot; "I don't feel inclined to scratch any longer."

"Your tea has done you good," he said.

"No, you have done me good; you always do;" and so saying, she passed out into the hall, and was gone.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

GOOD NEWS.

FIVE weeks had passed away, and March had come in as a lamb, with sunshine and soft winds, and all around there was a rustling and a heaving, a murmuring and whispering of newly-awakened life.

Much had happened during these five weeks besides the merciful change in the weather, which had chased away Sir John's neuralgia, taken from Gladys the pinched white look that always seemed to age her, and last, but not least, brought returning health and strength to May. Spring had come, and with spring, hope to all of us: to Cappers as well as to the Rectory, to Jack as well as to May, to Gladys as well as to Sir John. May's room and the drawing-room were redolent of violets, which, from Cappers down to the tiniest cottage, were brought in handfuls to the invalid, diversified with snowdrops, crocuses, and aconites. And now the primroses in our mild climate were

beginning to show their pale sweet heads, and May's sofa and Coles' bed were literally strewn with them. For Coles was still alive, falsifying all our predictions. Every day Mr. Talbot went to him, feeling that it would be his last, and still he lingered on. It seemed as though he could not die until he knew that the gates of Fastmoor were unlocked to give liberty to their innocent victim.

For that Mr. Danvers was innocent was now established beyond a doubt. Mr. Carey, stricken with paralysis in all his limbs at the first intimation that he was not to be allowed to go scot-free, had had sufficient reason left to him to intimate where lay a certain book, containing a full confession of his own guilt and Mr. Danvers' complete innocence; and in a very few days now, father and daughter would be reunited.

I had the intense pleasure of telling May the good news, Dr. Charlton having, at last, given me his sanction; but when it came to the point I really feared for the result, so white and shadowy had her illness left her. Still, I argued, happiness could do no one any harm, and so, after due circumlocution, I plunged into the subject.

"My darling," I said, "can you bear a very, very great happiness?"

She sprang up from the sofa, her face radiant with light, a perfectly transformed creature.

"He has been proved innocent?" she cried.

I nodded, for I could not speak. The next minute I had to bestir myself, for she had fainted away. It took us some time to bring her round—the sudden happiness had been too much for her; but when at last she was fully restored, I could not take my eyes off her, so changed did she look. The shadow had departed; the cloud was gone.

I sent my husband to tell her the whole story of the discovery, and of Coles' share in the transaction. I knew that he would relate it in such a form that no bitterness should be left in her mind against the dying man who had so grievously wronged her, so peculiarly had he the power of communicating to others his own perfect charity. And I was right. From the hour that I returned to May's room, to find her with a look of exquisite peace on her face, down to the one when she lay in her father's arms, I never heard her say one bitter word against Coles. On the contrary, she sent him, through Mr. Talbot, her full and free forgiveness—a forgiveness which lightened the poor man's dying days, and gave him some hours of peaceful sleep, such as he had not known for weeks.

After this, during what seemed the intolerably long interval before Mr. Danvers was to pass out of Fastmoor, he was our one topic of conversation. May told me all about her childhood, girlhood, and former life, with a lingering love of detail that made me understand something of the strong affection that subsisted between the father and daughter, and see, as in a picture, the happy luxurious home where she had reigned supreme, her every wish gratified, her every fancy considered.

And the more she told me of the society in which she had lived—of autumns in Scotland, winters at Melton, of visits to the Continent, of her lovely home in Berkshire, where she was always happiest, of yachting and hunting, and all the busy idleness and the whirl and rush of modern fashionable life—the more I could see how the girl's good and refined nature had kept her from being ruined—nay, spoilt—by the foolish indulgence of a self-indulgent father. Further, I gathered that this same father, like a great many such men, had been most particular about his daughter, and, although gratifying her every wish, and overwhelming her with really absurd luxury, had been most fastidious as to her personal acquaintances and surroundings. In fact, it seemed to me that she had been more carefully shielded and looked after than many a modern country clergyman's daughter. And this girl, brought up with all this comfort, had, when the hour of trial came, braced herself to meet it with a brave front, had trained as a schoolmistress, and taken the situation at Monk's Hollow in order to be near her father; and yet more, had been the very best mistress we had ever had!

Little by little, too, I found out that when the crash had come she had not been left destitute. Her mother's fortune of £10,000 had been hers, but she had voluntarily surrendered its yearly interest—reserving only £25 for herself—for the benefit of the helpless widows and other innocent people who had been ruined by the failure of the bank. And this was the girl that Miss Bostock did not hesitate to designate as bad, designing—an impostor!

She had many visitors, too, during these days, anxious to congratulate her, and see for themselves how she looked, but only a few—Gladys, Gwen, Sib, and little Hetty—were admitted for five minutes at a time to her room, where she lay on the sofa, still white and weak, but hourly gaining strength, and with a radiance in her sweet eyes that made her lovelier than ever.

And no one sent her kinder or more frequent messages than my dear, good-hearted Cousin John.

"I don't know when I have been more pleased," he said to me over and over again. "I always liked Danvers—a thoroughly good fellow, and the most popular man in London."

"And yet every one believed him guilty?" I said.

"So they did. You see, the evidence was so dead against him, and his habits and extravagance all lent colour to the supposition. You will do me the justice to remember that I always said I felt sure old Carey had a hand in it."

"Indeed you did, John." If I had heard him say it once, I had heard him say it fifty times.

"I told Miss Bostock so when she came full of the wonderful discovery that Carey had made. She little thought that it was to be the means whereby Danvers' innocence and old Carey's guilt were to be discovered. I wonder what she says now. By the way, I suppose you know, Blanche, as you are his prime friend, that it is all up between her and Jack. It always was a one-sided affair, as far as it

went, and now Jack has somehow contrived to give her to understand that it is useless."

"Has he, really?" I asked. "How did he do that?"

"You know that he is not one to be coerced into doing what he does not intend to do, and as Gladys taunted him with trifling with Miss Bostock's affections, he was determined that there should be no further mistake on that subject. They met, it seems, as he was returning from here" (we were sitting in my drawing-room) "one day last week, in the classical ground of Love Lane, and somehow the conversation took such a turn that he was able to convey, even to her obtuse senses, that he intended to go out to India as a bachelor. Of course he never told me a word of what passed between them, but this is what I gather."

"And you are glad, John?"

"Well, yes, I am on the whole. Of course I should have been thankful to have had the burden of debt and liability and poverty, and all the rest of it, removed, but still she was rather a bitter pill to swallow. As I tell Jack, there are other women in the world."

"And yet she is a very nice, good girl, in a great many ways," I answered.

"H'm!" he said. "Do you think it nice and good to hunt down an unfortunate girl, who has never done her a shadow of harm, because she happens to be a great deal better-looking than herself? That is what 'dear Lizzie' did to Miss Danvers, and that finished Jack. He would have nothing to say to her after that."

"He never took to her."

"Never. And anxious as I am that something should be done, as he refuses to sell Cappers, I should not like it to be at the expense of a lifetime of wretchedness for him. He would not have been happy with her. She don't suit him, any more than she does me. And with all her cleverness she talks unbounded nonsense sometimes, such as calling Miss Danvers an impostor. She is no more an impostor than I am."

"Of course not," I answered. "She came to be our schoolmistress, and she was the schoolmistress. There was no imposition in the case."

"Whatever Jack may have said to Miss Bostock, she is highly incensed. We have seen nothing of her since the interview. She passes 'dear Lady Challoner' with a frigid bow, and she will barely look at me. We—at least I—don't break my heart about it; Gladys moans over it, and abuses Jack soundly, but that hurts no one. I don't know what she will say when Miss Bostock takes her revenge—an event I am daily expecting."

"Her revenge?" I asked, guessing what he meant.

"Yes," he answered, but I could get nothing more out of him.

"There is Jack's appointment," I continued, "as a set-off to all this, and an excellent one it seems to be."

"Ah, yes, first-rate. Of course it will be a great help, and we shall tide somehow over the year, particularly if old Danvers takes the place. He ought to be coming to see it soon, now the weather has changed. What a romantic meeting it will be between the uncle, the nephew, and the great-niece!"

We continued chatting together over these and other topics, and I could see that, in spite of the threatened foreclosure, Sir John was immensely relieved to think that Lizzie Bostock was not to be his daughter-in-law. He did not do her justice, but then her faults were those particularly distasteful to the male sex, and if she did persuade her father to foreclose, it would certainly be as nasty a bit of spite as a woman could well be guilty of.

The next morning was big with events, such as seemed the normal condition now of our once quiet matter-of-fact village, which, as a rule, only woke up to anything like life in the summer tourist season. I rose to a day mild and balmy as a typical May Day. I dressed as quickly as I could, and crossed the landing to May's room. To my dismay, I found her sitting up in bed, crying as though her heart would break. At first I was frightened, fearing I don't know what evil, till she lifted her face to me, and, with a lovely smile, told me it was for joy, as she handed me the letter she held in her hand. It was from Captain Johnson, the Governor of Fastmoor, saying that Mr. Danvers would pass out of the prison the following day, and naming the hour.

"Oh, Mrs. Talbot," she cried, "I must go and meet him!"

I shook my head. "Impossible, my child!" I said. "It would be sheer madness, for you are barely convalescent. It would never do to greet your father with going back to bed again, would it?" She saw the force of my reasoning, and reluctantly gave in. "Mr. Talbot and I will arrange it all," I continued. "I promise you he shall be here as quickly as a horse's legs can bring him."

She smiled blissfully, and put her arms round my neck.

"Dear, dear Mrs. Talbot!" she said, "I never can, but he will, thank you sufficiently for all your intense goodness to me."

"Nonsense, child!" I said, but there was a lump in my throat, and I had to turn away to hide the tears in my eyes. What a sweet, loving daughter May must have been, would be in the future, to her father, and oh, how we should miss her! However, I had not much time for sentiment. The prayer-bell had rung, and I hastened downstairs to join my husband.

I found that he, too, had received a letter from Captain Johnson, and had already settled in his own mind that he would drive over to Fastmoor and meet Mr. Danvers the next day. This seemed the best arrangement we could make, although not a good one. Our old horse was on its last legs—the twenty-mile drive would try him somewhat severely; and though we might borrow of a farmer, Mr. Talbot was unwilling to do this under the circumstances. At last we came to the conclusion that we would refer the matter to Jack, and with that Mr. Talbot went about his business, and I about mine.

I had not long to wait for Jack. As I lay on my sofa, taking a little rest after the labours of housekeeping, I espied him coming up the path from Cappers. I looked again, for there was something unusual about him—a springiness and elasticity of gait, that had naturally been lacking since he returned home crippled. He had, however, discarded his crutches for the last two months and more, and to-day he came walking up the path like the Jack of old days. From the contemplation of his gait I turned to his face, and there, too, I saw an improvement. It was brighter than I had known it for a long time. When he saw me, he waved his hand to me, and the next minute he had thrown up the sash, and was in the room.

"Well, my boy? Any good news?"

"Yes, two pieces. How is Miss Danvers?"

I think if Jack had suddenly been made Viceroy of India, before telling me the astounding news he would have asked after May.

"Much better," I answered. "Mr. Danvers comes out to-morrow." If it had been Sir John, Jack could not have looked more pleased. He drew close to me.

"It has not been too much for her, I hope?" he said.

"No, she is all the better for it. She is coming down here this afternoon." How his eyes glistened!

"May I—may I—see her?" he stammered. "I should like to tell her that I will meet her father—of course if such an arrangement should suit her—and bring him over here."

"Will you, Jack? That would be very kind. It is a long drive for Mr. Talbot, and still longer for our old Bombardier. But what horse will you take?"

"I shall borrow Dawtrey's. He is as excited over Danvers as we are, for, like every one else, he knew him formerly. He has a cob that can do his twelve miles an hour easily. We will have Danvers over here in no time, and then—— Is she very happy?" he broke off suddenly.

"Intensely; so happy that it makes me cry. The real fact is, I believe, that I cannot bear the idea of losing her. She has grown into our hearts as I never thought any girl would—again."

"She is so like her," he said, "not only in looks, but in voice and manner."

We were both silent for a second, and then I roused myself.

"My dear boy, what am I thinking of? Your two good pieces of news at once, please."

"Here is the first. Mr. Danvers, the uncle, has arrived at Marcombe, and comes over to-day, about twelve-thirty, to see Cappers. I am therefore charged to invite you and Mr. Talbot to lunch, to be introduced to your future squire."

"I shall detest him."

"Yes, at first. But to-day you must be wreathed in smiles. We want to make a good impression on him, and we thought we could not do better than invite his future rector and rectoress to meet him, for are they not, in themselves, an inducement to take Cappers?"

"But, my dear boy, I never lunch out. You know how stupid I am!"

"Won't you make an exception this time? Don't you feel any curiosity to see your future squire?"

"My curiosity is enormous, but not so my strength. I think, however, May would like me to inspect him, for she has never seen him, and if it will please her, I will consent to be laid up for a week. Go into the hall, and give Sarah a call, whilst I write May the question."

The answer came back promptly: "I should certainly like you to see Uncle Bertram, for if he should speak of us, I know how safe our cause would be in your hands. Also I am curious to know all about him, but please do just as you like, and don't think of me."

"Then that decides it, Jack. We will both come, for I can answer for Ancaster. Now, please, for Number Two piece of news."

"Number Two is quite personal, but none the less good for that, for I don't know what it may not lead to. I think you know that, since I have been home, I have been writing, not articles as before, but a book this time."

"Yes, you said something about it to me. What kind of a book?"

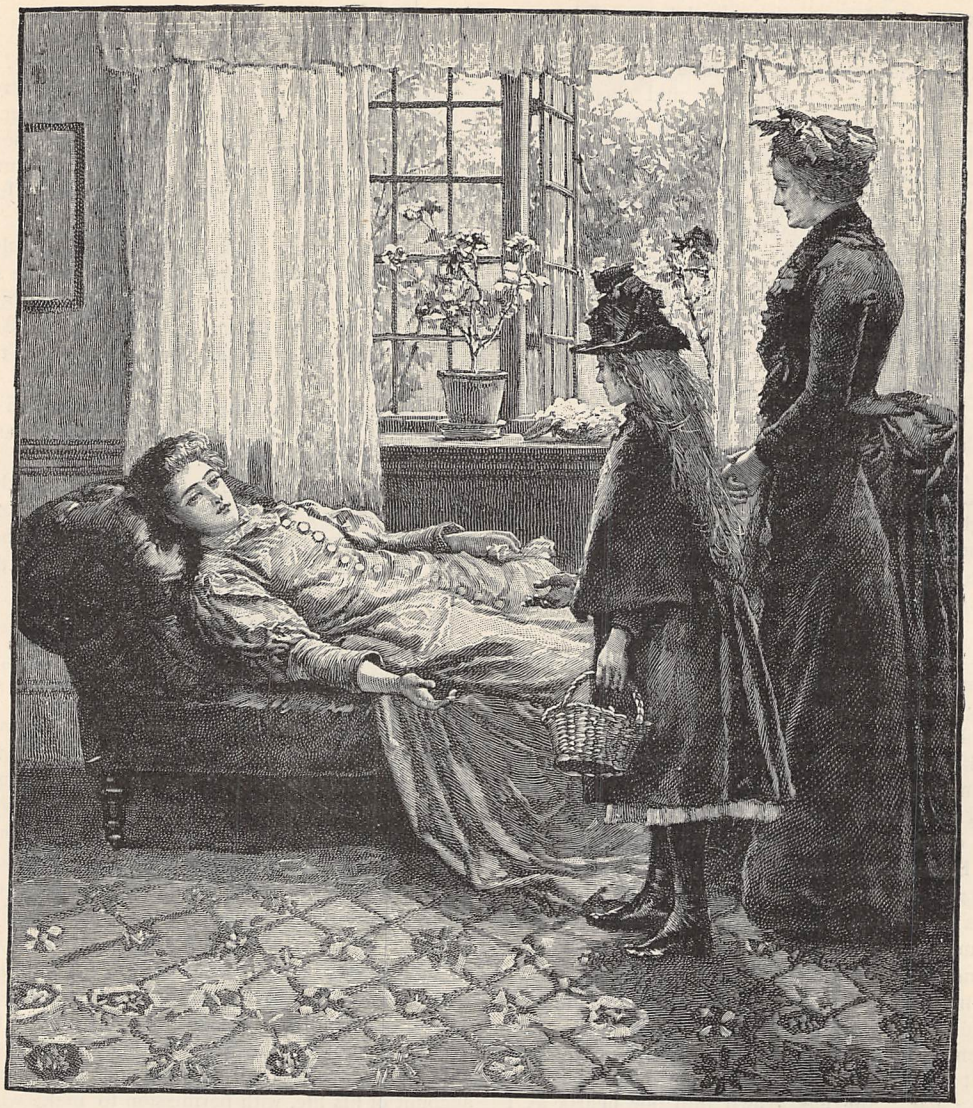
"A story—that is to say, a kind of romance."

"What is it about?"

"The groundwork is fact, the history of an extraordinarily interesting man, whom I met on board the steamer coming home from Egypt. He was mortally ill, and was on his way home to die. He knew me by name, had read some of my articles, and for some reason or other took a fancy to me. Consequently we struck up a great friendship, and during the short time we were together became as intimate as if we had known each other all our lives. He fascinated me as no man ever has before: he was so original, his conversation so brilliant and enthralling, and his history one long romance. When we were about to part from one another—he to go to his sister, I to come here—he gave me all his papers, containing the account of his life, with permission to make what use of them I chose when he was dead. At the same time he gave me this diamond ring that I have shown you before. He died two days after landing, and I, with the consent of his sister—his only relative, it seems—have worked his papers into a book. I sent it to Boyd and Cuppage, with very little hope of its being taken, and this morning, to my amazement, I hear from them that they accept it; and, moreover, offer me quite a decent little sum for it, a great deal more than I expected. Now, is not that good news?"

"It is simply enchanting. Oh! my dear Jack, how delighted I am, for if you have written one book you can write two, or twenty; and if only you get big cheques, like Anthony Trollope and George Eliot, why, you will save Cappers."

He laughed. "Nothing like a very big castle whilst you are about it," he said. "You run on rather too fast, for I fear I am neither an Anthony Trollope nor a George Eliot; but, at any rate, if I cannot save



"SHE LAY ON THE SOFA, STILL WHITE AND WEAK" (*p.* 585).

Cappers—which shall not be the case for want of trying—I can defy old Bostock. You know he has threatened to foreclose unless the interest is paid up very speedily."

"No? Has he? When?"

"The letter arrived by hand yesterday evening, and of course we all passed a sleepless night. But we shall not do so again. With Boyd and Cuppage's letter in my pocket, I can borrow the money to pay up: sure that I shall be able to repay it. That done, I will set to work to try and save Cappers."

"And you will do it, too, if you mean to. Fancy Mr. Bostock threatening to foreclose! But there, I will not talk about it, or I am sure to say something I had better leave unsaid. I suppose your book is no secret? I may tell every one?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Do you put your name to it?"

"Not this time. We shall see how it goes off. Next time, perhaps."

"How interested May will be!" I could not refrain from saying.

"Will she?" Leaning forward, "By the way, you never answered me. May I see her, to arrange about meeting her father? I think she would like me to, as I knew him formerly."

I debated inwardly for a minute. Was it wise to let him see her?

"If you will promise me faithfully that you will only stay ten minutes—not a second longer."

"I will promise you anything you like," he answered; "but I must see her before I meet Mr. Danvers, in order to report to him."

"Yes, I suppose you must. By the way, I always

meant to ask you if you ever met Miss Danvers in her old life."

"Once," he answered.

"Then how was it that you never recognised her?"

"For one thing, she is very much altered both in looks and dress, &c.; for another, I believe that that cut I got over the head in Egypt has impaired my memory."

"Stuff!" I answered. "How can you talk such nonsense?"

He laughed quite his old bright laugh.

"Then how do you account for it that until I saw her in a dead faint in Love Lane, I never recognised her?"

"That depends on the circumstances under which you saw her before."

"She had been upset out of a hansom in St. James' Street. It was about five years or so ago—a few weeks after Blanche died—and I was on the point of embarking for Canada, and was up to my eyes in business. I happened to be passing when the accident took place, and I helped her to get up, and took her into the nearest shop—one I knew well—to be looked to. She was very white and dazed, and I felt sure that she had slight concussion of the brain. She seemed, however, to be so annoyed at the affair, for she was quite alone, and was evidently a girl in society, that I did not ask her name, but left her in the hands of a very worthy shopwoman, who was summoned, and who promised to find out her address, and to send for a relation or maid to see her home. I remember being struck with a slight likeness to Blanche at the time, but it was not nearly so apparent as it is now. She was much plumper and rounder, and wore her hair differently in those days."

"Very pretty, I suppose?"

"Yes, a lovely girl. But I was in that frame of mind just then that no woman's loveliness appealed to me. That evening I left England. So now I have told you the whole history, and I must be going, for I have to arrange with Dawtrey about the horse between now and this afternoon. What time do you say I am to be here?"

"About four."

"All right; then I must make haste. Good-bye," and before I could stop him he was off through the window again, and half-way down the path, whilst I remained musing behind. "Was it still hopeless?" I asked myself. Ah! yes. May would never leave her father; and Jack, why, he would have to scribble morning, noon, and night to make good, in any degree, the money that his father had squandered and lost.

And yet how hopeful he had looked!

END OF CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

"NEXT OF KIN WANTED."

THE NUMBER of persons who die without leaving kith and kin behind them must be small indeed, but if we judge only by the announcements in the "agony column" of the newspapers, there are plenty who have lost all touch with their relations. Perhaps in this busy and bustling world there is nothing very strange in this. Families get scattered in different parts of the globe, new ties replace the old, and in a few generations the links are broken, never perhaps to be again riveted together. There are few people who have not been now and again struck with the rapidity of the transformations wrought by the whirligig of time. We go to a place where a few years ago we knew every stone, and where almost every passer-by was familiar to us, to find the very face of the earth changed, and the inhabitants strangers of whom we know nothing, and to whom we are ourselves unknown. It is weary work hunting up old haunts. It is a sad experience tracing the footsteps of friends of long ago, whose very homes know them no more. In truth, it is, in a world of change, no very wonderful thing that there should be "next of kin wanted."

From the mutability of all human affairs to the fabled wealth that has thus, in common belief, accumulated, and now lies waiting for claimants, is an easy transition. "One hundred millions," we are told in black and white, "lies buried in Chancery," and few of us pause to doubt the fact, although we are all agreed that it is a pity and a scandal. The secret coffers of that mysterious and Argus-eyed monster yclept the "Crown," must, too, if half we see in the journals be true, be groaning with untold wealth, which has been ruthlessly seized upon, failing the rightful owners. Long lists, consisting for the most part of names which are common enough to leave no doubt that plenty of claimants will be forthcoming, are from time to time published in the advertisement columns of the newspapers, purporting to be those of persons whose next of kin are wanted.

Is there a hidden El Dorado lying idle in the books of the Bank of England to the credit of the Paymaster-General? If any curious person ventures to brave the terrors of the labyrinth of corridors which are to be found in Mr. Street's Palace of Justice, and to beard the officials in possession, he will probably depart under the impression that the Paymaster-General has little or nothing to distribute among claimants of all classes, and is, in short, rather "hard up" than otherwise. The popular belief and the official statements are, in fact, hopelessly incon-

sistent. Fortunately, we are able to judge between these two extremes from sundry ascertained facts and general considerations. By various Acts and rules, which it would be superfluous to enumerate more particularly, much of the mystery which formerly surrounded what are known as the "dormant funds" in Chancery has been dissipated. We may, however, be excused for stating that these funds consist only of sums of stock, with dividends, and sums of cash, which have come into the possession of the Paymaster-General, and as to which there have been no dealings for fifteen years. Now, one of the chief causes of the confusion existing in the public mind as to these moneys, is the belief that the "dormant funds" are only another name for the Chancery funds. We are from time to time reminded that the Paymaster-General's accounts show a turn-over of something like twelve millions a year, and it is no wonder that a large section of the community should be only too ready to jump to the conclusion that a considerable portion of this prodigious income issues out of the accumulations of unclaimed wealth of persons whose next of kin are "wanted." There is not, of course, the flimsiest foundation for any such theory.

Without going into details which would be wearisome—and few things are more uninteresting than legal technicalities — it is enough to say that, as to the great bulk of the money which is paid into Court, there are already only too many claimants. Of the eighty-four millions only one is going a-begging. In fact, a dispute as to the ownership is the very reason that most of the money is being taken care of by the Court, which is always ready and willing to play the part of stakeholder while the parties fight out the quarrel or so long as the funds hold out. We are far from saying that the old and evil reputation of the Court of Chancery is now deserved. There is a vast difference between the Chancery of to-day and that of fifty, thirty, or twenty years ago. But so long as human nature remains the same there will be suitors almost as unfortunate as Miss Flite and "Gridley," the man from Shropshire. There may not be many such suits as "Jarndyce and Jarndyce" nowadays, but there are some. Only the other day, for instance, a case was heard in which all the available funds, and, of course, all that was in dispute, had been paid out of Court in discharge of the costs incurred. But it may be fairly assumed that there are few estates worth fighting about, until law is a good deal cheaper than it is at present, which are "dormant." It is easy to understand that a large number of small balances may make a brave show on paper, so long as the amounts are not stated, and practically that is the foundation of the bulk of the fabled fortunes waiting for owners at the Bank of England.

Nor are we without positive information upon this head. Thanks to the inquisitorial spirit of the time, we now have fuller information than is generally known. The list or index to titles of accounts which now appears from time to time, in accordance with the new regulations on the subject, covers the whole of the funds in Court as to which have there been no dealings, otherwise than by the continuous investment or placing on deposit of dividends, during the fifteen years immediately preceding the date of publication. The last list is a formidable document, occupying some hundred and fifty pages of the *London Gazette*, and consisting of some thousands of entries, even when allowance is made for cross-references, of which there are plenty and to spare. Now, we are frankly told as to these (we quote from the *London Gazette*) that "of the balances standing to the credit of the accounts, only one-nineteenth exceed £1,000, and only one-third exceed £100." The Chief Accountant of the Bank of England has, we believe, vouched for the fact that in the aggregate the credits do not amount to more than £1,000,000. In truth, the great majority of the dormant accounts represent capital sums of either less than £50 or of from £50 to £100.

There is, further, no reason why any of the persons really entitled should not ascertain for themselves all the necessary details. The Paymaster-General will answer all proper applications, which can be made on a form provided, stamped with a 2s. 6d. stamp. The applicant will then be able to ascertain without further expense whether it will pay to proceed with the claim. Now, as to the lists which are occasionally advertised, it may be said at once that they are absolutely misleading to the thoughtless reader. These accounts are only kept in the name of the cause or matter in which they were paid into Court. It may, therefore, easily follow that the persons entitled bear a totally different name altogether. The only real guide which is at present available to ordinary people, is to ascertain by disinterring from the family archives whether there are any records of a suit or proceeding of the title appearing in the lists. The year in which the account is opened is also given, and there cannot. in many cases, be any real difficulty in finding out whether there are any grounds for believing that they are next of kin, and if so whether they are likely to hear of anything to their advantage. But it is a serious business to revive a dormant Chancery suit. The discovery of a forgotten hoard worth having generally brings with it a host of claimants. It is often best to "let sleeping dogs lie."

Many if not most of the stories of sensational windfalls which now and then find their way into the newspapers have a Transatlantic origin. The details are, in fact, commonly copied from some American or colonial journal. Nor is it difficult to account for many of these tales of the marvellous. Those untiring *chevaliers d'industrie* who trade upon the cupidity of ignorant people have long found the Far West a fertile field for their operations. In the outlying States the next of kin of a large number of Smiths and Browns and Robinsons are continually being advertised for. The bait seldom fails to attract some unfortunate victims. The ingenuity with which the game is kept up would be amusing if it were not so disastrous. A remittance of £2 or £3 is generally first asked for as "cover," and a copy of the will is promised ; then a larger sum is demanded to meet

———"WHEN THEY WEAR
ALL SUMMER IN THEIR SMILES."

"*A SONG OF THREE BEAUTIFUL THINGS*" (*p.* 591).

the cost of making sundry inquiries and searches; and so on through all the possible stages of proceedings of the kind. Often blackmail is successfully extorted for years before the fraud is discovered. It was announced some time ago that of the thousands of claims which are eventually referred to the United States Legation, not one-tenth per cent. have any validity whatever. There were dozens of American claimants to the famous "Jennens Estate" anxiously prosecuting their claims long after the property had gone to the heirs-at-law. The "Jennens Association of the United States of America," indeed, long served as a monument of the heights of human credulity. And yet it was succeeded by a "Hedges Estate," and a "Hyde Estate," and a "Bradford Estate," and a "Horne Estate," and hosts of others.

"Crown windfalls" dispute with the Chancery funds the palm of incredibility. Here the "excavators" have a sufficiently solid basis of fact to go upon to render it more difficult to expose their methods. Every one remembers the case of Mrs. Mangin Brown, who died intestate in 1871, leaving personal property of the value of more than £200,000, of which the Treasury Solicitor took possession, but to which four Italians established their claim after eleven years' litigation. And, although it is now forgotten, a good deal of interest was excited by the sudden death of John Montague Upcroft in 1861, with no known kin and a personal estate of £120,000; and of Mrs. Helen Blake, whose death left the Crown in possession of £140,000, as well as some valuable freehold property, but as to which there are so many claimants in the field that it will be long before the question of ownership is settled. But all these cases are absolutely misleading if taken as typical of those which happen every year. The Treasury Solicitor, as the "Crown's Nominee," deals, it is true, every twelvemonth with from fifty to ninety intestates' estates, amounting in the aggregate to a considerable sum, but of these a very large proportion are in themselves very small in amount. It is only very rarely that a Crown windfall is of any great importance. But this said, it must be confessed that the present system fosters an unwholesome belief that the State thus becomes improperly possessed of huge hoards of wealth, and prevents a few people from being aware of the moneys, whether little or much, to which they may be really entitled. The official advertisement is generally so obscurely worded as to leave it extremely uncertain whether it would be desirable to claim any relationship. The expense of proving a title is, too, often so great that it is generally far cheaper to abandon it altogether, and the details published in the "Crown's Nominee Account" are needlessly meagre. The Treasury are, however, always willing to assist applicants who give proof of their *bona fides*, and are always very liberal in making grants to meet any moral claim, even if it rests upon no legal basis.

From all this it will be seen that as to the two great sources of unclaimed wealth the popular belief greatly exaggerates the facts. It is some satisfaction to know that strong measures have been taken to put a stop to the nefarious practices of unscrupulous agents. No doubt there are *bonâ fide* firms, but there are also firms which are otherwise. Two swindlers were not long since condemned to terms of imprisonment for having successfully plundered credulous people for years. It was shown at the trial that their receipts had long averaged $100 a day—an eloquent testimony to the heights of human folly. "Next of kin" will undoubtedly continue to be wanted so long as the world lasts, but people will do well to ponder long before they make up their minds that they will thus "hear of something to their advantage."

A SONG OF THREE BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

GOD three beautiful things hath made,
Birds and women and flowers,
To charm the roving eye, and spread
Sweet magic o'er the hours;
And whoso' loves not all the three,
Let him live with his loveless self alone,
Like a crab in a shell, or a toad in a stone,
Far away from me!

FLOWERS are beautiful when the brae
Is purpled o'er with blossom,
And all the buds that crown the spray
Their fragrant stores unbosom;
And who loves not this one of the three, &c.

BIRDS are beautiful when they keep
High concert in the spring,
Or wheel their mazes o'er the deep
With gently sloping wing;
And who loves not this second of three, &c.

WOMEN are beautiful when they wear
All summer in their smiles,
And sweetly lighten while they share
The workman's weary toils;
And who loves not this best of the three, &c.

God three beautiful things hath made,
To feed discerning eyes
With outflow of His glory shed
O'er earth and sea and skies;
And whoso loves not all the three,
Let him live with his loveless self alone,
Like a crab in a shell, or a toad in a stone,
Far away from me!

J. STUART BLACKIE.

THE GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER.

TO put it as gently as we can, *la première jeunesse* of the fair summer of 1889 has passed away. Yet it would argue neither more nor less than a disappointed spitefulness to say that her beauty has anything like fled; though we have no lilies of the valley and the tender green of the May evenings and of "leafy June" has passed away, still we are loaded with a super-abundance of the brightest flowers to intertwine amongst her "bonny brown hair." The epergne on the centre of the dining-room table never, perhaps, looks so noble and so gay as in the month of September, and the maiden-hair fern, which is now in its very pride, largely contributes to its grace and effectiveness. Still, when a distant shot tells us that another partridge has succumbed, or when we meet the merry children on their way home from a long blackberrying ramble in Nature's garden, striving with little purpled tongues to mock the harsh cry of the cock-pheasant in the neighbouring wood, we have a touch of sadness at the thought that summer is going.

But what have we got to do in the garden in September? Work, and plenty of it; let us see. And, with propriety, we had better notice first those operations that will not any longer admit of delay. To one of these we only adverted last month, when talking about our dahlias that are still so gay in this, and that is the taking of our stock of cuttings. August is certainly the proper month for this, but in a good and summer-lingering season the early days of September will do, but if you put it off any longer you will run a good many risks of failure. When you have judiciously robbed your flower-beds of the little three-inch cuttings, and got them all in goodly rows in their boxes, pans, and pots, and given them a careful watering, keeping them in the shade, you still want a little bright summer weather in which, as it were, to start them. To expose your hopeful stock on the one hand to a scorching glare of the sun, or, on the other, to stand them out in nothing but the cheerless drip of an almost incipient winter, would be alike fatal to them. Hence the importance of "taking time by the forelock" in this matter of the cuttings, and not postponing attention to them later than the last week of August or the first few days of September.

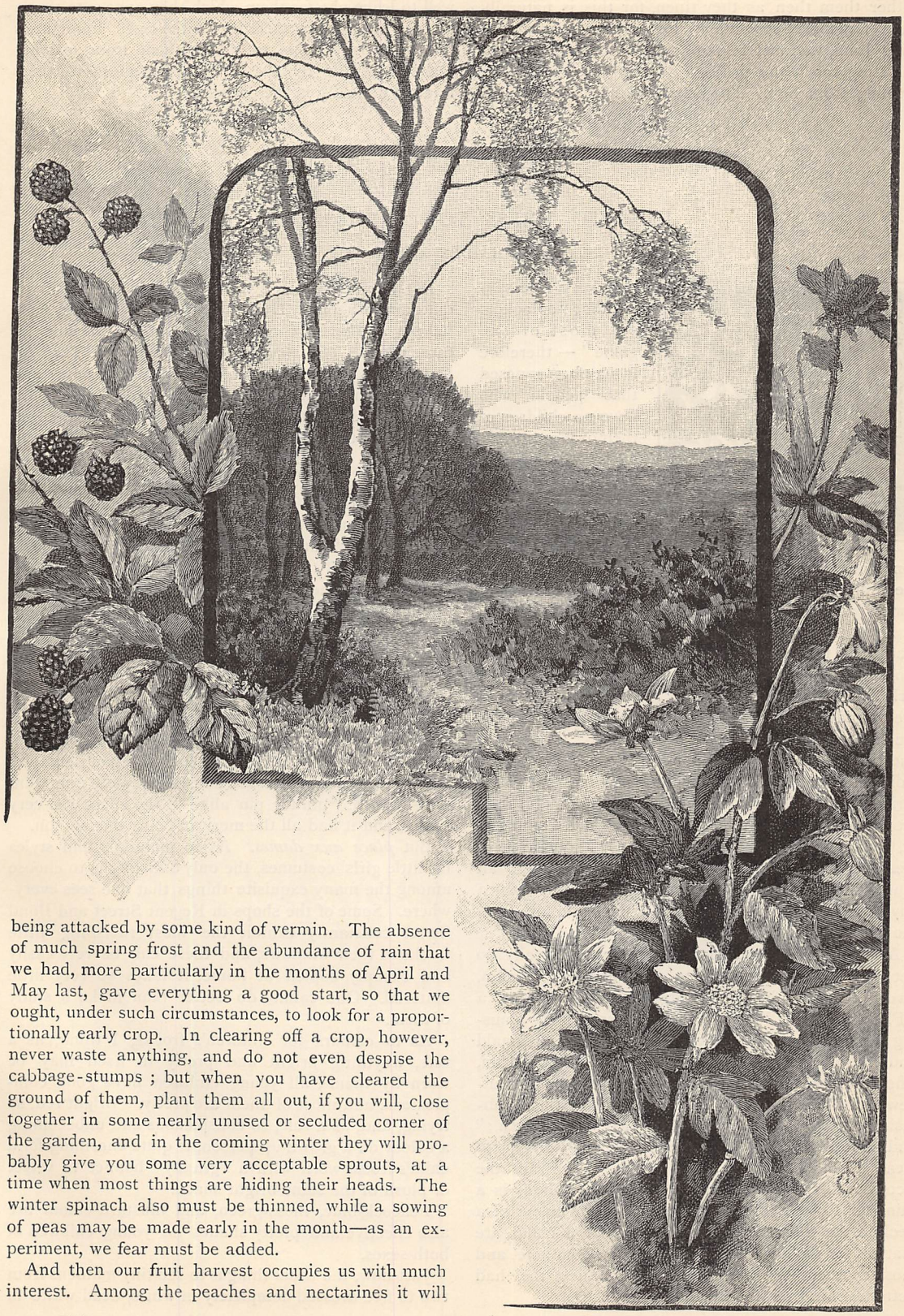
Now, if you have housed your cuttings already in the greenhouse, it is most important that you give them plenty of thorough ventilation. If you are frightened of air, and are too fond of shutting up your glass, you will find your cuttings getting weak and spindly, and in the autumn rains many will begin to wither and damp off altogether. Then again, sometimes you will notice that some few of your cuttings are disposed to suddenly run up, or that a little unnatural head of blossom is showing itself; pinch off all these little extravagances, which, if you were to allow them to remain on, would only weaken and exhaust your little plant, and perhaps finally destroy it. So long, however, as no actual frost is about, it is a wise plan to allow your whole stock of cuttings to stand out on boards or along a plank in the open garden. This will render them strong and more able to stand the winter. Moreover, if you house them too early in the season they will, under the influence of the increased warmth of the greenhouse, be disposed to grow unduly. At Michaelmas, then, or a little earlier, according to the state of the season, have your whole stock housed, together, it may be, with your camellias and azaleas.

Finally, on the subject of the cuttings, let me say, do not overstock yourself. This is an evil, and there is a strong temptation to fall into the mistake at this time and thus overcrowd the greenhouse, and take up room which should be otherwise appropriated by other varieties.

The experiment may be tried in the middle of the month of sowing annuals to stand over the winter, in the beds and borders; or you may sow them in a sheltered spot and afterwards plant them out elsewhere in the spring; yet you will find that if you are successful in getting any to stand the winter, they will flower both earlier and stronger in the places where they have been originally sown. Notice too, in passing along your flower garden, any seed that is ripening, where, at least, you have also noticed that the bloom has been particularly fine. In this case gather the seed *in the pod*, and put all aside in some thoroughly dry and airy place, where the seeds can quite perfect themselves. It is a mistake to take them out of the pod at this early stage, and it will be quite time enough to do so when in the following spring the time has come for sowing again.

Then, again, by the end of the month we should be thinking what bulbs will be necessary to put in, but perhaps October will be a more suitable time to speak of this; even November is not too late, provided only there is no actual frost about when we are setting them in. But a busy time we must have of it, both this month and the next, in the kitchen and fruit gardens, for the fruit harvest is extended over both, while we must have endless planting and winter preparation.

Then again, in our kitchen garden, there are a good many crops to clear off the ground, for we should never allow a used-up pea or bean crop to disfigure and exhaust the soil. Perhaps, too, we may notice that a potato crop has ripened early, and if this is decidedly the case, it is a mistake to allow the tubers to remain too long in the soil, as they run, more or less, a risk of



being attacked by some kind of vermin. The absence of much spring frost and the abundance of rain that we had, more particularly in the months of April and May last, gave everything a good start, so that we ought, under such circumstances, to look for a proportionally early crop. In clearing off a crop, however, never waste anything, and do not even despise the cabbage-stumps ; but when you have cleared the ground of them, plant them all out, if you will, close together in some nearly unused or secluded corner of the garden, and in the coming winter they will probably give you some very acceptable sprouts, at a time when most things are hiding their heads. The winter spinach also must be thinned, while a sowing of peas may be made early in the month—as an experiment, we fear must be added.

And then our fruit harvest occupies us with much interest. Among the peaches and nectarines it will

be noticed that they do not ripen all at the same time; gather them then as they ripen, for this is naturally often far more convenient for domestic purposes. King John, we must remember, it has been said, died of eating too many peaches at once, so let us take warning from him. The wasp and blue-bottle, however, seem to thrive by following his example, so it is well to leave one for them which they appear to single out for attack in preference to the rest. Sometimes this generosity helps to divert them from feasting upon those that remain. The insect question is certainly a difficulty in the garden.

HOW TO DRESS YOUR CHILDREN.

BY A MAIDEN AUNT.

IT is a very true saying that "onlookers see most of the game" — therefore it may be supposed that people who have no children of their own are pretty well able to criticise the clothing and costumes of the rising generation. A maiden aunt is constantly in the way of hearing discussions about the children's garments, and her opinion is, if not always accepted, at least often asked for. "Here is summer coming on, and I have no thin frocks ready for the children. What shall I get them? Do suggest something." Or "What shall I get the girls for Mrs. Friendly's party? I want something pretty and cheap. Fred complains dreadfully of how much I spend on the girls' gowns." These are questions often asked, and not so easily answered; children's dress, even where expense has not to be seriously considered, is an important thing, and they are often made quite unhappy by being unbecomingly, or, worse still, over-smartly dressed. Many a girl's pleasure, at her first party, is completely spoiled by an injudicious mother's way of dressing her; and many a boy's first term at school is made a misery to him from the same cause.

As to a schoolboy's clothing, however, I really do not feel at all competent to pronounce an opinion. Every one who has read Mrs. Ewing's tale of a "Flat Iron for a Farthing" will remember the amusing conversation which takes place between Reginald and his nurse, on his first return home from Eton, when she asks him what has become of "them brand-new fine linen shirts of his," and "where them rubbishing cotton rags in his box have come from;" and he loftily replies that he has used the former "to clean Damer's lamp," and that the latter are the "correct thing." This shows that a boy's dress is a thing not to be lightly tampered with—the colour of a necktie, the shape of a hat, the depth of a collar, are matters far too abstruse to be entered upon here, and most mothers will find that on this subject they had better refrain from too much interference.

But the dress of a little boy still in the nursery is quite another thing. Here the maternal fancy may have full play. There are countless charming little suits for these urchins of tender years. The "Jack Tar," for instance, is one of the most popular just now; and though, to my thinking, it looks decidedly out of place in town, it is just the thing for the country or the seaside, where the small wearer may dabble in sea-water or bedaub himself with mud to his heart's content. There are also the Jersey suits, in navy blue, red, or white, with the "jelly-bag" cap of the same material; while for London wear, I think there is nothing prettier than the "Patience suit," in cloth, velvet, or plush, with either a Tam o' Shanter or a plain polo cap as head-gear. There seems to have been rather an attempt lately to revive the Highland kilt, but in cold weather it is decidedly out of place, and even dangerous, for a child to go about with semi-bare legs; besides, these said legs must be very bonny ones to look well in this kind of costume.

A midshipman's dress is charmingly piquant on a very little boy. In Kensington Gardens, not long ago, I saw two little fellows, who looked about six and seven years of age, dressed as two complete miniature midshipmen, "pin for pin alike"; the effect was very pretty, and it had all the merit of being uncommon.

But *place aux dames*. As to materials and styles for little girls' costumes, the only difficulty is to choose among the many exquisite things that one sees everywhere. Some of the shops in Regent Street and Bond Street constantly exhibit the most ravishing little frocks in their windows, and these can be very easily and cheaply copied at home, it takes so very little material. One cannot do better than make a study of them.

As to colours for children's frocks, I think, as a rule, anything bright and pretty in itself may be worn by them; all young children have good complexions, and most of them are pretty. Bright red, so trying, and, as a rule, so conspicuous and unbecoming a colour on a grown-up person, is quite charming for a child's frock, worn with a "granny" bonnet in velvet or plush of the same bright shade.

Peacock-blue, moss-green, and mustard-colour are also effective and pretty shades for young children of both sexes.

Just now, the usual thing is to see tiny maidens from two to five dressed completely in white, dead white in

the summer, and a cream shade, suitable to the thicker materials, in winter. Certainly, where expense is not the primary object, nothing can look better than these last, while they are fresh and clean ; but the smuts of London necessitate a constant renewal, for the thick material will not often wash or even clean satisfactorily, and this falls heavily on mammas whose purses are not long. In the summer, however, when the little cambric or muslin frocks can be washed every week, they may very well be worn : at any rate, put on for going out of doors, with the pink or white sunbonnets, which shade the little faces so charmingly. There is no doubt that white is the colour, *par excellence*, for children.

Children's frocks should always be made quite simply, and comfort be the first thing considered. The fashion of dressing up little folks in white open-work socks and thin kid shoes for an out-door walk has now happily disappeared, and the low necks and short sleeves are also going the same way ; one now sees the tiniest "dots" in long black stockings and long-sleeved frocks. At the Health Exhibition, some two or three years ago, among the many ludicrous and ill-constructed monstrosities designated "rational costumes," there were some really charming frocks for little girls exhibited, though perhaps there was nothing startlingly new about the patterns, and many, no doubt, had been long familiar to mothers and nurses. Most of these little frocks were of the "smock" type, the dress hanging from the shoulders almost straight, the bodice part being made with a yoke prettily "honeycombed," the sleeves loose and drawn into a band at the wrist, the waist just "hinted at" by a broad soft silk sash. This is a very good and healthy style of dress for a girl in the schoolroom who has entered upon the "leggy" stage of her existence, for at nine or ten years old it is quite time to leave off dressing a little girl smartly and picturesquely. While they are in the schoolroom their dress cannot be too simple for good sense, good taste, and economy ; though, at the same time, there is not the slightest reason why the frocks should be unbecomingly or badly made, and harmony of colours and suitability of materials should be always considered. There is not the least excuse for a girl being sent out for her daily walk in a brown dress, a black jacket, and a grey hat, because she is "only in the schoolroom," or that she should be made to go on wearing a winter felt hat into July for the same reason, and because "it is not worth while to get her another one for every day."

Incongruity of attire should no more be tolerated in a girl in the schoolroom than in a young lady making her *début* in London society, these things being precisely what make so many girls uncomfortable about themselves, and often seriously unhappy, especially when getting on in their teens, and beginning to consider their own dress for the first time.

As a rule, light-coloured materials, except in very hot weather, should be eschewed for, at any rate, every-day frocks, as they soon become soiled and messy-looking.

Navy blue serge is one of the best of materials for a school frock, and it is almost unending wear ; also the infinite variety of checks and stripes in neutral-tinted woollen stuffs make useful and neat dresses.

If no maid sufficiently advanced with her needle is kept, the frocks should always be made by a thoroughly good dressmaker. There are many who make quite a study of children's dress, and things last twice as long which are thoroughly well made and finished off at first. The neat little cloth jackets, and useful tweed ulster or Newmarket coats, should be always made by a tailor.

Hats, which are very expensive items if bought ready made and trimmed from a milliner, can generally be most successfully trimmed at home. Many mothers with a knowledge of and taste for millinery trim all their children's hats, and very easily this is done, and very neat and pretty the effect. The countless varieties of the sailor hat, either trimmed with a plain band of ribbon to match the frock, or a cluster of upstanding bows at front, side, or back, are quite the prettiest and most useful for the summer, and, trimmed with white bows of ribbon, are sufficient for the most dressy occasions. Even in the winter they can now be obtained of felt or velvet, and trimmed with a few bright silk pompons in the front, or a bow of velvet and a wing. Most mothers, I think, find the hats a pretty easy business, and there are quantities of pretty shapes brought out every season which, simply and quietly trimmed, may be worn by these "little maids from school."

Now as to boots and shoes, to go from one extreme to the other, I think that these, not excepting even gloves, are the most troublesome and expensive articles of all in a child's wardrobe, and bootmakers are perverse people. When choosing their boots, it should always be borne in mind that they should, if anything, be a little longer than the foot ; a short boot is a most dangerous thing, often tending to produce that painful affection, ingrowth of nail. Boots that come tolerably high up the leg, also, should be worn, as they help to support the ankles ; the heel should be always square and tolerably low. Indoor shoes perhaps wear out soonest, especially with school-girls, and many mothers have despaired over this, and almost wished to return to the old-fashioned copper-toed shoes. Except on the most dressy occasions, therefore, those with very thin soles should never be worn. Oxford shoes, with flat heels and a tolerably thick sole, are, I think, the best, though some people think house-boots should always be worn by growing girls, as they prevent the feet from spreading.

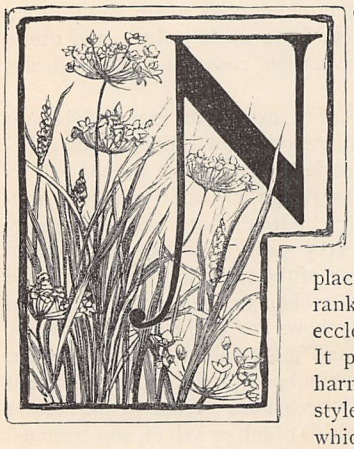
Shoes, however, of the slipper type must be avoided, as they encourage a slouching style of walk, and are sure to be "trodden over." Now-a-days girls take so much more exercise than formerly, and are treading so closely on their brothers' heels in their games and gymnastics, that tight shoes, or tight clothes of any kind, would be simply an impossibility. We no longer see little girls decked out in exact imitation of their mothers and grown-up sisters ; and even French people now follow our sensible fashion, and dress their children *à l'Anglaise*.

THE MISSING DEAN.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

THE DEAN'S DISAPPEARANCE.



NORCHESTER Cathedral is not so grand as York or Lincoln, or so finely situated as Durham, but it has, nevertheless, special features and beauties of its own, which place it in the front rank of our greatest ecclesiastical buildings. It presents the usual harmonious mixtures of styles and carvings which tell in stone, to the initiated, distinct periods of history. Its ivy-clad surroundings, partially in ruins, attest its thoroughly English character, still further evidenced by the closely-shaven turf which, even in winter, charms with its evergreen freshness as it creeps up to the walls of the venerable pile, or spreads itself in rich luxuriance "within the precincts" The great Continental churches are doubtless colossal compared to even our largest English cathedrals; but a piece of waste land absolutely arid, or covered with rank weeds as an apology for grass, or, still worse, a wide expanse of uneven paving-stones with a background of shops, is a poor substitute for mouldering gateways, the remains of a refectory, or the fragments of the Bishop's palace which form the setting of Norchester Cathedral—a type in this, as in many other respects, of the picturesque surroundings of our great insular churches. Besides, it is doubtful if the average tourist ever *does* see our English cathedrals at their best. Most of our holiday-making takes place in the autumn, and it is in June that the beauty of the exterior view reaches its climax. The gardens of the "Close" are bright with the blossoms, not merely of the flowers, but of the trees and creepers. The pink and white chestnuts and hawthorns impart a vividness of colour to the scene, heightened by the grape-like clusters of mauve wisteria which scent the air with an almost tropical sweetness. The graceful laburnums hang over the mottled walls in groups of golden rain, and complete a picture of the richest colouring which is the despair of all true artists.

The slight hum of the city ceases entirely as you pass under one of the ruined gateways at Norchester into the Cathedral Close. Not merely is the silence profound, but the effect of the old-fashioned houses is somewhat dismal, and it requires all the brightness of the "leafy month" and the warmth of a mid-day sun to scatter the pervading gloom; for the front gardens are small and sunken, and too near the roadway to admit of much cultivation. As may be supposed, the Dean's house is the largest and finest in every way. The creepers are carefully, but not too rigidly, trained, and a few really good rose-trees give a fair index of the wealth of beauty which the garden at the back of the house now exhibits.

The virtual possessor of all this loveliness is sauntering home with a listless and abstracted air, which certainly does not betoken satisfaction with his lot. The stamp of ill-health is upon his face and figure. His complexion is sallow, and his clothes look as if they had been made for another and a larger man, for they hang limp upon his broad back in quite unintended folds. The Honourable and Very Reverend Pelham Dale, Dean of Norchester, was a bachelor, with considerable private means, living the life which, of all others, he would have himself selected as the pleasantest in the world. It was the ideal combination of work and leisure, of authority and veneration. It was the realisation of his youthful day-dreams. And yet, at the present moment, existence seemed to have lost all relish. Life was a burden; his sleep was troubled and brought him no real repose; and even when the day's work was comparatively light he had to mentally flog himself to get through with it. As he passed through his gate he scarcely glanced at his beloved rose-trees. They actually conjured up in his memory a dream of a most annoying character, which had disturbed his rest more than once recently—viz., that masses of gigantic aphides had attacked and destroyed his pet bushes beyond possibility of recovery. His niece and housekeeper (of whom more anon) met him on the threshold with a petulant "Jane has given notice, just as she has got nicely into our ways," whereat—a most unusual circumstance—the Dean actually lost his temper, and muttering, "Pity you did not appreciate her sooner, and then you might have been less fault-finding," he passed quickly into his study, and even slammed the door. As he sinks wearily into his chair, and contemplates numerous and oft-repeated instructions as to his books and papers to be given to a new domestic, he begins to think himself a most unfortunate man; and in that uncomfortable frame of mind we must leave him for the present, and recur to Miss Dale, abandoned so very unceremoniously at the hall door.

Miss Dale had arrived at that period of life which was cleverly described in the census paper by a sister spinster as "the same age as most people." But if her age was doubtful, her temper certainly was not—that is to say, it was uniformly bad—and this was another item in the overflowing cup of the poor Dean's life. So far as regards her uncle's domestic wants, Miss Dale fulfilled her duties with scrupulous fidelity, indeed with a somewhat unbending rigidity, which at times might have been relaxed with advantage. The

steady regularity of the household routine was apt to induce a feeling of dulness to creep over the inmates, and there was no patter of childish feet and voices to break the solemn stillness of the gloomy rooms and passages. Miss Dale, besides, was ill-fitted for her position by her personal views, which went the length of considering the cathedral services a waste of time, except on Sundays; and as she acted upon this principle during the week, and seldom attended any of the daily services, she was by no means popular within the precincts, nor, for the matter of that, with Norchester folk in general. But, withal, she loved and respected her uncle, and was deeply concerned at his obviously failing condition of mind and body. In addition to this, she was keenly alive to the fact that her position was one of considerable dignity and importance, and that in the event of her uncle's death many privileges and honours which she now enjoyed would become only the memory of a pleasant past. "It is certainly very provoking of the Dean," she said to herself. "He's not yet fifty-five—a perfect child in cathedral life. Why, there are actually two of the canons—decidedly older men—who conduct themselves with an air of friskiness which, owing to their well-preserved condition, well becomes them! What *can* be the matter with him? Does he want change of air, or more company?" It was true they had not indulged in much gaiety of late, but he never seemed to care very much for those solemn festivities which were considered proper to the severe atmosphere of the Deanery; and, indeed, these had latterly become very infrequent, owing to the Dean's growing distaste for any company save his own, however uncongenial that might be.

"THE BISHOP WAS SOON ENGAGED IN A CONSULTATION VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT HE HAD EXPECTED" (*p.* 598).

Miss Dale's temper was not improved by an influx of visitors to afternoon tea. "Of course she had heard the news?" As a matter of fact she had *not*, and was driven reluctantly to confess the same. "Oh!" came the chorus, "the Dean has promised a new and splendid pulpit, *entirely* his own gift."

Miss Dale sat almost dumb throughout the volley of congratulations. Indeed, her inmost comment was

that "her uncle must be going out of his mind," for she knew that he had long opposed this costly adornment as unnecessary, and he had not given her the faintest indication of a change in his opinion.

The Dean had carefully avoided his visitors, but was, of course, unable to prevent Miss Dale opening fire upon him during dinner. Much to her surprise and chagrin (for, it must be owned, she rather relished an argument, especially when she felt, as she did in this case, pretty sure of her ground), the Dean did not attempt to explain his conduct, save by the extraordinary and alarming remark, "I regard it as a memorial of my connection with the cathedral. I shall take care that it is in good taste, and it will be a better and handsomer thing than anything my friends are likely to set up after I am gone." There was no glow of exaltation at what he had been told was his "noble and generous conduct." He had heard this repeated *ad nauseam* already: indeed, so frequently that he had almost begun to repent his resolution. And he had no heart for the impending numerous interviews with the cathedral architect, and others, who had to be consulted in the matter, though naturally he revelled in building operations of any kind. The fact was, the Dean had completely "run down," and, as is usual in such cases, his mind was in as morbid a state as his body. Although in reality (during his later life especially) his acts of charity had been most judicious and numerous, far beyond the knowledge of even his most intimate friends, the thought that weighed him down most now was that his life had been utterly barren of really useful results. After dinner he sat and mused, and his musings consisted chiefly of all the painful episodes which had occurred since his boyhood. Even Miss Dale's presence became an unconscious irritant; for years ago he had been crossed in love—perhaps the only great failure of his life. And even that was almost a blessing in disguise. For not only had he been thus left free and untrammelled for the Church's work, but it was pretty well agreed by others, if not entirely by himself, that the lady was sufficiently mercenary to have been willing to give an entirely different answer had she known that the poor country vicar would very soon develop into an important Church dignitary, with considerable private wealth unexpectedly bequeathed to him. But this was not the aspect which this subject assumed to-night. It was, he thought, because there was something inherently repellent in his character that he was now, despite his position and wealth, a stranded unit, useless to society in general, and a burden to himself.

The chariot-wheels of conversation drove very heavily that night, despite several well-meant efforts on Miss Dale's part to lift the settled gloom on her uncle's face. The Dean's contributions were curt, and not always relevant. At last, at an unusually early hour, he passed his hand wearily over his brow, and said apologetically, "I don't feel very well, and I'm very tired. I think I shall go to bed at once. No," in answer to an appeal from Miss Dale, "I don't want anything, except a good night's rest—if I can get it." And forthwith the Dean said "Good night" and departed.

About an hour later, Miss Dale read family prayers, and assisted, as was her wont, the servants in shutting up the house. She had fancied once or twice that she had heard the Dean moving about in his bedroom; but when she passed his door all was still, and, rejoicing to think that he had, perhaps, obtained the sleep he so much required, she was soon herself also wrapped in slumber.

There was one point upon which, at least, uncle and niece were thoroughly agreed, viz., the necessity for habitual punctuality, especially at meal-times. It was, therefore, with considerable surprise that Miss Dale found herself waiting for the Dean at the breakfast table at least fifteen minutes after the customary hour. A peremptory order to the servant "to go and tell her master that breakfast had been ready for more than a quarter of an hour," presently received the amazing reply that "the Dean could not be found anywhere!" It was only too true. He had vanished as effectually as if he had been translated; and as the day advanced Norchester was excited to an almost frenzied condition by what the evening papers termed "Mysterious Disappearance of the Dean of Norchester."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE DEAN'S ABSENCE.

MISS DALE had almost choked over her breakfast, and then instituted a search to see if anything could account for the Dean's absence. She soon found that the front door was unlocked, and that her uncle's hat and stick had vanished from the hall. For a time she tried to content herself with the idea that he had merely accidentally prolonged a morning walk, having found himself, as usual recently, unable to sleep. But as the forenoon passed away, and no sound of the familiar footfall greeted the ears of the anxious listener, she became seriously alarmed. That very day the Bishop was coming to lunch at the Deanery, and arrange the final details of a diocesan conference. Miss Dale was, naturally enough, at her wits' end to invent a satisfactory excuse for her uncle's non-appearance. At noon she considered herself warranted in searching the Dean's study and bedroom, to see if any light could be cast on his strange behaviour. She even, in her pardonable anxiety, read hastily any letters she could lay hands on, examined his wardrobe to see if any of his clothes were missing, and carefully accounted for all available bags and portmanteaus. But the examination proved perfectly fruitless. The Dean had apparently passed out in his ordinary walking costume, without the slightest extra attire for even the shortest absence from home. The Bishop duly arrived, and was soon engaged in a consultation very different from what he had expected would occupy his time. Had the Dean's usual conduct been erratic, there would have been less alarm; but he had been so methodical in his habits, and so scrupulous in keeping his appointments, that it was simply impossible to explain his absence save on the most serious grounds.

Some accident *must* have occurred to him during his morning walk, and it was absolutely necessary, however great the fuss and worry, to institute a search for him in all likely quarters. It was with extreme reluctance and the gravest regret that the Bishop finally assented to Miss Dale's firm determination to place the matter at once in the hands of the police, on the ground that delay might mean tardy or possibly useless help.

And so, as we have seen, by the afternoon of this eventful day all Norchester people were aware of the extraordinary news, and had practically constituted themselves "amateur searchers" in aid of the detectives already hard at work. Upon the slightest pretext the river would have been dragged, for the ominous words "Murder!" and "Suicide!" were being freely bandied about already. Indeed, as the days and months passed away without a single clue, there was scarcely a theory to account for the disappearance which was not broached; but the solution became apparently more and more remote. At last public feeling settled down into stolid and permanent wonderment. At Norchester, the exclamation, "Oh! I was thinking about the Dean," became a species of stock excuse for any acts of forgetfulness; and even the children, with whom the Dean had been deservedly popular, skilfully utilised the prevailing apology.

Meanwhile a remarkable growth of admiration, and even affection, for the vanished head of their beautiful cathedral had developed, and attained astonishing proportions. Slowly Norchester awoke to the fact that a very good and a very generous Christian had been at work in their midst, and that they had accorded him exceedingly scanty recognition. The hospitals and charities of Norchester and its suburbs missed certain anonymous contributions which had hitherto arrived with an almost monotonous regularity, and somehow it leaked out that the donor was the missing Dean, who had not infrequently been accused of miserly habits by ill-natured and ill-informed critics. Individual recipients of his bounty swelled the chorus bewailing his departure, while even in the highly decorous atmosphere of the "Close" frictions arose, which the inhabitants felt had been held in abeyance by the tact of a vanished head. Indeed, complications developed which threatened to become positive scandals. The cathedral organist, who had always been somewhat "touchy," and had frequently only yielded to the delicate manipulation of the lost Dean, had flouted the ecclesiastical authorities, and had engendered a spirit of insubordination throughout the whole choir, which promised the most unhappy results if not speedily checked; and not one of the Chapter appeared to know how to set about it. In short, in every direction the unconscious instruments of the Dean's tact, generosity, and firmness missed the control which had hitherto kept them in their proper paths.

After the lapse of six months, without any clue to the disappearance being obtained, the question actually began to be mooted whether or not the Deanery could be declared vacant, and the Crown lawyers were consulted on the subject; and after protracted consideration, the decision was given that further delay before proceeding to fill up the appointment was advisable. Somehow, this was not merely a popular verdict, but it begot an altogether unreasoning belief that the lawyers deemed it probable that the Dean would turn up again before very long. The wish was evidently the father of the thought.

It was, of course, impossible that all this concern and, as it were, posthumous popularity of the missing Dean could fail to exercise a strong effect upon Miss Dale's mind. She, too, began to feel reproachful qualms of conscience that she had not appreciated her uncle properly. Though she could readily acquit herself of any vital neglect, still she was obliged to own to herself that she had exhibited but scant sympathy with his inner life and work, and had certainly vastly under-estimated his influence and generosity. Much to her surprise, she had recently been pestered by enterprising publishers for sermons, or even any fragmentary writings of the lost Dean; though even his warmest admirers had been wont to admit that his pulpit efforts were more scholarly than popular.

This was the last straw in her accumulated trials, and, sick in mind and body, she resolved to quit the Deanery and reside with distant friends. The anniversary of her uncle's mysterious departure was approaching, and she admitted to herself that unless he speedily made his re-appearance she must reluctantly abandon all hope of ever seeing him again in the land of the living. And in this state of mingled apprehension and groundless expectation we must leave her, in order to place ourselves on the track of the delinquent.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE DEAN'S HOLIDAY.

WHEN the Dean reached his bedroom he undressed quickly, and soon found himself in bed, seeking sleep—in vain, as usual. In vain did he resort to various little tricks of memory or reflection to aid his pursuit of the fickle goddess; in vain did he rise and bathe his aching head, and fling himself again on his couch. At last he abandoned the useless quest, and began to hunt up some old relics which had long lain undisturbed in a large oaken chest—one of the few survivals of the furniture of his earlier residences that he had cared to bring to the Deanery. He soon found himself "rummaging" through the varied contents with considerable interest. Here were some forgotten sketches made on his first Continental tour during the "long vacation." They were very crude affairs, but what pleasant memories they invoked! He was an unknown undergraduate then, very different from the important personage he had now become, but how he had enjoyed his own company then! The change of scene, language, and air—how refreshing! And here, down at the very bottom of the chest, was the somewhat faded tourist suit he had worn on that ever-memorable trip! He had kept this as one of the pleasantest links in the chain of his recollections of his lay life; and now he sighed to think how impos-

"THE BUNDLE WAS TOSSED INTO THE STREAM."

sible it was he could ever don such a picturesque and comfortable attire again. It was really an agitating thought, and hastily throwing back the various articles into the chest, he once more resumed his bed, and was soon fast asleep.

When he awoke it was just three o'clock. Dawn was breaking, and the birds were singing with most undesirable vigour and persistency. Further sleep was out of the question, and he began to think, with a heavy heart, and even with actual "sinkings," that another day of weary work was fast approaching. Part of the tourist suit was hanging untidily out of the chest, and a smile stole over his worn and pallid face as he thought, "If I could only sport this garb for to-day, what a droll time of it I should have!" The idea grew upon him. "I verily believe," he ruminated, "I have been choked by my own dignity; and perhaps Carlyle is right, and my clothes have contributed to my sombre feelings. After all, *one* day's amusement and relaxation would not do very much for me. Why not a week, a month, a year of complete emancipation?"

He sprang from his bed, and almost before he knew what he was about, found himself clothed in the old tourist suit. He folded up his ordinary clothes into a bundle, stole softly downstairs, caught up his hat and stick, and passed out into the sunlight a different man!

Carlyle was certainly right—old clothes had a peculiar effect; he revelled in a new-born sense of freedom, his stride was long and easy, his stoop was gone, the blood surged through his veins, he felt like a schoolboy playing truant with no prospect of punishment. With rapid steps he strode towards Belston, a manufacturing town about ten miles off, where he very sensibly thought he would more easily escape undetected than at the Norchester terminus. In a few minutes he was crossing the bridge spanning the sleepy little river which skirted the outer limits of the cathedral precincts. The bundle was tossed with a somewhat inane chuckle into the stream, and he watched with keen interest the bubbles which rose as it vanished from sight.

After *that* he felt there was no possibility of his return. The Rubicon was passed, and with one brief pathetic glance at the tapering spire of his beloved cathedral, bathed in rosy morning light, he turned hastily away, and almost ran towards Belston. The pace was too hot to last, especially for a dyspeptic invalid. The run soon became a trot, the trot a walk, and then—the Dean suddenly stopped as if he had been shot. The horrible thought had darted into his mind, "Have I forgotten my purse and pocket-book? Can I have left them in the bundle just thrown into the river? Shall I require, after all, to slink back to the Deanery?"

It was only for a moment that a cold chill passed through his frame as these agitating thoughts disturbed him, for a brief inspection of his ample pockets reassured him as to their contents. Metho-

dical habits rescue people from more errors than is commonly supposed. Quite unconsciously he had placed in his new attire all the various articles he was wont to carry, and as he had only the day previous drawn a considerable sum from his bankers in the shape of notes and gold, his confidence was restored, and he resumed his progress towards Belston. His rapid examination of the contents of his pockets had exhumed two valuable treasures which served him in good stead. One was a pair of dark-tinted spectacles, which he had once used for snow-blindness, and the other a soft cloth travelling-cap.

With an almost savage delight the Dean now doffed his hat, and, calmly cutting it into fragments, tossed the remnants into a wayside ditch. With the cloth cap on his head, and his tinted spectacles on his nose, his disguise was complete; his own mother would have passed him without recognition, and possibly would have considered him a rather doubtful-looking person.

When he arrived at the Belston terminus the early morning train for London was on the point of starting. He had only time for a hasty meal, for which, however, he found himself the happy possessor of a long-lost appetite, and then he was shortly *en route* for the metropolis, and fairly launched upon his anticipated holiday.

On his arrival in town, he purchased a knapsack, stored it with the requisite materials for his journey, and, scarcely feeling the fatigue in his excitement, a few hours later landed on the other side of the "silver streak," inwardly chuckling at the masterly manner in which he had effected his escape from those environments which had apparently held him in an almost deadly grip.

* * * * * *

It is not necessary for our story to follow the very reverend gentleman in his truant wanderings. To escape detection, he carefully avoided the beaten track of the ordinary English tourist, and took up his abode in obscure lodgings. As his bodily strength returned, he took keen pleasure in vigorous "spade drill" in many a humble peasant's garden, much to the astonishment and amusement of the owner, who marvelled greatly at the manner of man who temporarily sojourned under his hospitable roof.

Owing to this frugal method of life, it was nearly twelve months after his departure from Norchester ere he found his money "giving out," and the thought being consequently forced upon him how he could possibly replenish his funds without revealing his identity so as to cause his present residence to become known. Some explanation of his conduct would certainly be required by his bankers, otherwise it was doubtful if any draft of his upon them would be duly honoured.

In this frame of mind he one day wandered almost within the limits of eternal snow, drinking in the crisp mountain air, and gazing with rapture on the magnificent scenery spread around him.

Once again the current of the Dean's life was changed by an irresistible impulse. His was not what is usually termed an emotional nature. His general course of conduct was dictated by calm reflection, and carried into effect through methodical habits. It had been the complete disorganisation of his nervous system which had impelled him to embark on his eccentric holiday, and the Dean more than ever felt certain that that remarkable freak had been the actual salvation of his mind and body. It had been an act of instinctive self-preservation. Sometimes patients themselves prescribe a cure for the ailment which has completely baffled the most skilled physicians. He felt that if he had entered upon the elaborate preparations which would have been expected from him at Norchester preparatory to taking a prolonged holiday of the customary character, he would have hopelessly broken down ere he had got the length of mapping out his route, and that his exit would have been to that "bourn whence no traveller returns."

"And that would have been a pity," he said softly to himself, as he inflated his chest, now several inches broader than when he left the Deanery, and gazed upon his hands thick with muscle, and brown with exposure and toil. A few nights ago he had easily solved an abstruse mathematical problem as an amusement, a feat which, a year ago, he would never have dreamt of attempting unless under direst compulsion. In brief, his mind was now as sound as his body; and as this fact came home to him, an inward monitor called out imperiously, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" It was enough. The Dean came to his better self again. The time for play was past, and his work called clamantly for the immediate exercise of his restored powers.

That very afternoon he began his homeward way. He travelled leisurely, thinking out carefully his future proceedings, and in due time landed once more on his native shore, and forthwith set about his arrangements for his return to Norchester.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

THE DEAN'S RETURN.

IT was exactly twelve months from the date of his sudden departure that the Dean, seated in a comfortable closed carriage hired at the Belston terminus, might have been seen rapidly approaching Norchester. For a precisely similar reason—viz., to avoid being recognised—he had chosen to make his re-entry by the same route whence he had departed. Some suspicious glances had, indeed, been cast upon him at the Belston railway station, which would have been intensified if the order to the driver had been overheard.

It was certainly peculiar for any person to elect to drive from Belston to Norchester when the railway would have taken less time and money. But the day was fine, and so long as he got a good fare this expensive and eccentric transit did not concern the driver otherwise than by giving him considerable satisfaction. As regards the Dean, his object was attained, and (as we have said) he was now nearly at home without the slightest suspicion of his advent having been aroused at Norchester.

He had not allowed the grass to grow under his feet since he had arrived in London. He had there successfully passed through several somewhat difficult interviews with his bankers and his tailors. Both these important persons had been very dubious about his identity. A year ago their valued customer (or client, as we suppose we ought to say) had presented the appearance of a prematurely aged, gaunt, and attenuated ecclesiastic, and it was difficult to believe that the rather youthful-looking, vigorous, and bronzed individual who now claimed to be the veritable "lost Dean of Norchester" was the same person. But they at last satisfied themselves that there was no deception, and they agreed to keep his secret till he had arrived at Norchester and resumed his duties. For the Dean wished to return as quietly as he had vanished, and thus escape any formal reception which might have proved painful to all concerned. At least, that was how he regarded the prospective reunion with the inhabitants of his cathedral city.

It was difficult for the Dean to realise that a year had passed away here without leaving some traces which would arrest his attention. But everything looked almost exactly as he remembered it on that memorable morning twelve months ago when he had accomplished his "Hegira." How his soul warmed to the old walls, to the thatched cottages, to the very flowers, creepers, and trees as he peeped out of his carriage, now on this side, now on that, cautiously drawing back his head as he caught sight of any human figure. And now at last the glorious old spire of the cathedral could be clearly discerned—not as a far-off speck on the hazy horizon, but green with lichen, and brown with old age and rough weather, towering grandly above all its surroundings with an air of peaceful dignity.

The carriage stopped at the Deanery gate, and the driver alighted, rang the bell, and proceeded to take the Dean's baggage up to the doorway. Miss Dale had employed an old servant, who had married a policeman, to act as caretaker with her husband during her absence, and it was the well-known face and form of Mrs. Martha Tubbs which now stood dumb and awe-struck in the entrance-hall. Miss Dale had certainly never told her to expect a visitor. There was no lunch ready, no sheets aired, and yet here was a distinguished Church dignitary alighting at the Deanery with the evident intention of staying there! But who can describe her joyful terror when a bright, cheery voice called out, "Halloo, Martha! You here again? Quite like old times, isn't it? Just give me a hand with some of these things, please."

Yes, it was the Dean! "And yet," Martha thought, "it can scarcely be him, after all! I have known him ten years and more, and he certainly never looked as young and lively as he does to-day. But that's his voice sure enough," she continued to herself as the Dean called out—

"Why didn't Miss Dale wire me this morning, in answer to my letter?"

"Oh! I suppose, sir, that was your letter I sent off to Miss Dale this morning. She is at Brighton, sir. It only came by first post this morning, and I sent it on at once. I thought it looked important, but I never imagined——"

"There, that will do," interrupted the Dean. "I dare say she will get it to-night, and we shall hear from her to-morrow."

And then he passed into his study. It was the first of a series of joyful surprises which, ere the day closed, was to fill the Dean's soul with penitent emotion. Everything was there ready for his immediate use, whenever he chose to return, that thoughtfulness could devise. A letter lay on his desk from Miss Dale, saying that all important papers which had arrived in his absence had been left in the hands of his Norchester lawyers.

"Oh! never mind, Martha. Of course you can't get anything ready. But I can eat leather now, and thrive upon it, too; and I dare say your bread and cheese is not quite so tough as that."

Could this be the Dean?—this the fastidious gentleman whose palate Martha remembered she had often failed to tempt with her most dainty dishes? More than ever amazed, Martha laid the frugal fare in the dining-room, and longed for the arrival of anybody to relieve her pent-up feelings. But no one came, and after a hearty meal the Dean kept her for over an hour telling him as much as she knew about Norchester affairs, now and then checking the voluble matron as she degenerated into mere gossip.

"It was quite a lesson," the Dean said afterwards privately to Miss Dale, "to find how much servants know about the ins and outs of local affairs. People have often since wondered how I knew so much of what took place in Norchester while I was away. Really, on the whole, she was most accurate, and I have found her information extremely useful."

But the cathedral bells have begun their sleepy chime for evensong, and in a few minutes the Dean, with a selection of his new robes thrown over his arm, has walked with springy tread and a thankful heart through the cloisters, under the old Norman porch, and seats himself—the first arrival—in the robing-room.

"Just help me on with these," said the Dean calmly to old Morris, the senior verger, as that astonished functionary entered to see if all was in proper order for the clergy.

The request was simplicity itself, and yet old Morris said afterwards, "It struck me all of a heap. There he was, only about half as young again, as cool as a cucumber, talking to me as if he had only been away since the day before yesterday. I can tell you I wondered whether he had come down from above or up from below! Anyways, I thought at first it was his ghost, and not him at all!"

Poor old Morris's statement was a little confused, but his astonishment was rivalled by the rest of the cathedral staff, one and all of whom, either before or after service, received a grip from the Dean's hand which informed them that a new apostle of muscular Christianity had arrived among them. The few *habitués* who attended the evening service had an

unexpected and delicious sensation that afternoon, and were in great demand that night to narrate their experiences to the social circles they respectively adorned. The organist actually forgot the voluntary, and was plainly visible straining his neck over the gallery to feast his vision on the Dean's stalwart form. A choir-boy, a minor canon, and two vicars-choral, singular to relate, all became afflicted with sudden illness, from which, however, they speedily recovered when they reached the open air, and were able to spread the news in Norchester with almost incredible swiftness; and not a few set out for the cathedral, eager to catch a glimpse of the truant gentleman.

As had been his wont, he read the second lesson. It revealed to more than one auditor the change that had passed over both the bodily and mental physique of the Dean. His voice rang like a clarion. It was a stronger and a better man who now stood before them, fit and eager for the battle against "the world, the flesh, and the devil."

The service was over, and the Dean, after inviting some of his special friends to come to-morrow after "morning prayer" to hear his story, was once more seated in his quiet study, thinking over the events of the day. But his reflections were rudely disturbed by a thundering knock at the front door, and by the subsequent flurried entrance of Martha to say—

"Here be the ringers, sir. They want your leave to ring a peal in honour of your return."

"Oh, nonsense!" was the response; "there is not the slightest occasion for such a fuss."

"But please, sir," continued Martha, "they say all the bells in the town will be going in a few minutes, and they don't want to be left behind."

But the Dean's orders never reached the men that day. For at that very moment such a merry din broke forth from every spire and steeple in Norchester as had never been heard before, except perhaps for a royal visit. The ringers had suddenly fled, and in a few minutes the cathedral bells were adding their sonorous notes to the clamour now filling the whole air with a joyous sound, which found an answering echo in the Dean's heart of mingled wonder and delight.

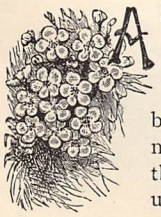
But the climax of his astonishment was reached when a little later on a "Special Edition" of the *Norchester Evening News* was handed in, "with the compliments of the Editor." Now, the Dean had not been a favourite with the gentlemen of the press. But what was this he read under the heading, "Return of the Dean of Norchester"?—"We rejoice to be able to inform our readers, in the most positive manner, that the long-lost Dean of Norchester has returned, and has already resumed his customary duties. We are pleased also to be able to state that his appearance indicates that he is in the most robust health, and evidently thoroughly fit for his work. In his absence we have at least partially realised how sorely in times past we have undervalued his influence, and failed to comprehend the quiet liberality of his *charity*, using that word in its widest sense. We have not the faintest idea of the cause of the reverend gentleman's temporary disappearance, and are quite content to wait his explanation until he chooses to give it. For ourselves, we firmly believe that we are expressing the universal opinion of the inhabitants of this ancient cathedral city, when we say that we are so unfeignedly glad to get him back again in our midst, that we are not disposed to inquire too particularly into the reasons which induced a departure, which has not been without its advantages in teaching us to value more correctly a man of whom we are all proud—the Dean of Norchester."

The Dean's heart welled with emotion, in which gratitude was strangely blended with shame. "God forgive me," he cried, as he fell upon his knees, "for my lack of faith and hope! I had, indeed, forgotten that 'in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not.'"

Little remains to be told. Miss Dale returned in joyful haste the very next day, and the meeting of uncle and niece was characterised by a warmth which had never before existed during their previous intercourse. Ere this the meeting with the Dean's special cronies had duly taken place, and the causes and explanation of his "escapade" had been not merely inwardly digested, but freely forgiven. In due time the story filtered down, with many unauthorised embellishments, through "the classes to the masses," but its reception was pretty much the same everywhere. What that reception was may be pretty well summed up in our last words—the Dean was never tempted to run away again.

C. A.

A "SUGARING OFF" PARTY IN CANADA.



A SOMEWHAT strange sound to English ears probably is the above title, but what a *sweet* picture passes before the mind's eye of the true-born Canadian at the mention of the magic name! To a stranger visiting the country a "sugaring off" is a unique experience, interesting enough to bear the relation I am about to make.

In the Easter holidays we received an invitation from a young married couple to come out to their home at St. Thérèse, for the purpose of attending a "sugaring off." We started by an early train, and reached our destination at nine a.m. St. Thérèse is a pretty village between twenty and twenty-five miles distance from Montreal. A small river flows through the village, greatly enhancing the beauty of the landscape.

When our party, ten in number, had assembled at our kind host's, we took our seats in an old-fashioned

box-sleigh. This vehicle, the most comfortable thing to travel in you can possibly imagine, has long fallen into disuse, except amongst the French Canadian farmers. It is a wooden sled, walled in at the sides and ends, forming a square enclosure. Straw is put in the bottom, fur rugs over the straw, then the traveller seats himself, draws the upper buffalo robes around him, and starts away to the merry jingle of the sleigh-bells in a conveyance fit for a king.

It was a fine clear day in the early part of April, the sky a splendid blue, not a cloud visible, the air keen and invigorating.

"A bad day for the sap," observed our host.

"Too much frost in the air," said another.

"What does that mean?" asked a third, to whom our present expedition was a novel experience.

"Why, the sap won't run when it is freezing as hard as this," out host began; "but wait till we get a little farther in, and you will see for yourself without need of an explanation."

After driving about four miles we came to the "bush," an extensive wood of sugar-maples. A rough road led through the trees, but soon the drifts of snow became so heavy that our progress was blocked, and one after another leaped from the sleigh and found a footing without any difficulty on the icy surface of the snow-drifts at the side of the road, while the horses, relieved by this movement, struggled on. We now knew we were drawing near the base of operations by a singular and ridiculous sight. The bush was very thick, and every tree was adorned with a kettle as large as a wooden water-bucket. Wherever the eye fell there grew a tree and a kettle. We felt we were attending a tremendous "kettle-drum;" in fact, there were six hundred kettles all told. Each hung upon a spigot, a small wooden peg grooved in the centre, down which the sap runs from a cut in the trunk of the tree into the vessel below. To-day, however, there was a hard frost, and the sap would not flow.

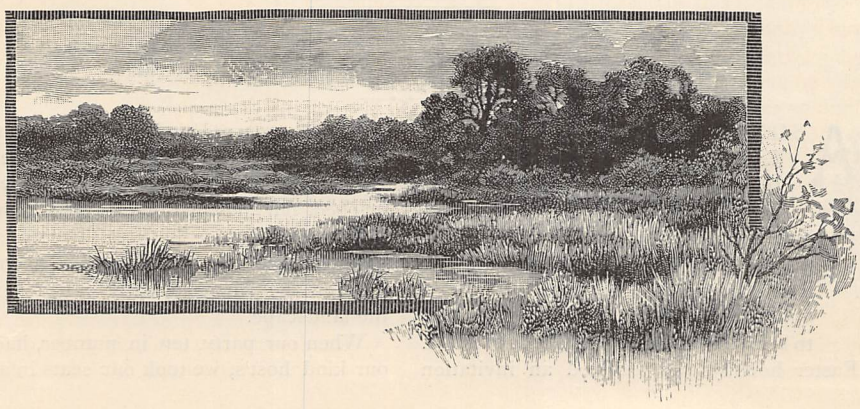
We soon reached the sugar-house, a log cabin with a slanting roof over rafters, and no chimney. The smoke came through a long aperture made by leaving out the top logs on each side of the roof. The floor was bare earth, save at one end of the cabin, where a portion had been boarded over for the men to sleep on. A bed was an unknown luxury; the men who looked after the sugar rolled themselves in blankets at night, and slept on the bare boards. At the further end of the cabin stood a huge fireplace, built of brick, containing two compartments, in which the fire is built to boil the sap. These are joined by a brick arch corresponding in height to the sides of the fireplace, and help to support the great tins in which the sap is boiled. These tins are about eight feet long and a foot deep.

The sap is first poured from the kettles into huge barrels, and transferred from the barrels to these tins. The sap produces sugar, candy, and syrup; it is very thin in its raw state, and requires to be boiled almost a day before it produces syrup. If the sap is intended for candy or sugar, it must be boiled two or three hours longer. The candy stage is arrived at about five minutes before it sugars, when it has the appearance of toffy or *wax*, as it is called, and is poured off into the snow and left to cool.

The following test is applied to the sap to see if it has sugared. A spoonful is taken from the boiling tins, then blown upon with the mouth, and if glassy bubbles float off into the air, the sap has "sugared." It is then poured into tins, where it hardens into the thick cakes known in Canada as maple sugar. While the sap is boiling, a piece of fat pork is hung up over the tins to clarify the sugar and keep the sap from running over. The heat of the steam causes the pork to melt and fall in drops below. Cold sap is also poured in to prevent the boiling pan from running over.

We had brought a lunch of bacon, bread, tea, and eggs, and we now began to picnic in true sugar-camp style. Some gathered around a barrel of cold boiled sap standing in a corner, into which they dipped slices of bread, declaring the taste was delicious. Tea, too, was made, the tea being infused in boiling sap instead of boiling water, the sap of course being in its first stage, which is very thin. In its raw state the sap looks and tastes like faintly sweetened water, but has a delicate, wild flavour impossible to describe. We also partook of eggs, the great dish at a "sugaring off." They are, of course, cooked in the sap. Many prefer them boiled in the shell in the sap, but the French Canadians delight in eggs *poached* in the sweet boiling sap, and consider them a great delicacy.

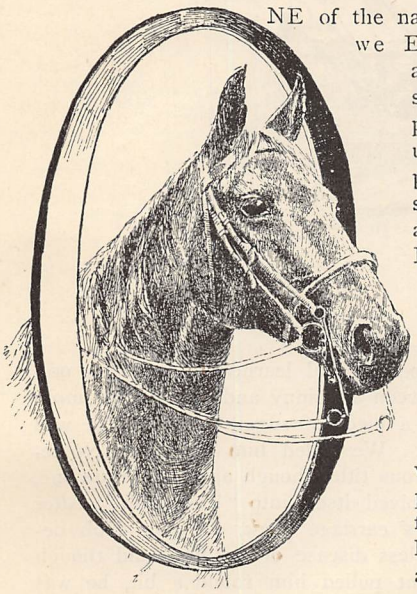
F. G.



OUR FRIENDS THE HORSES.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

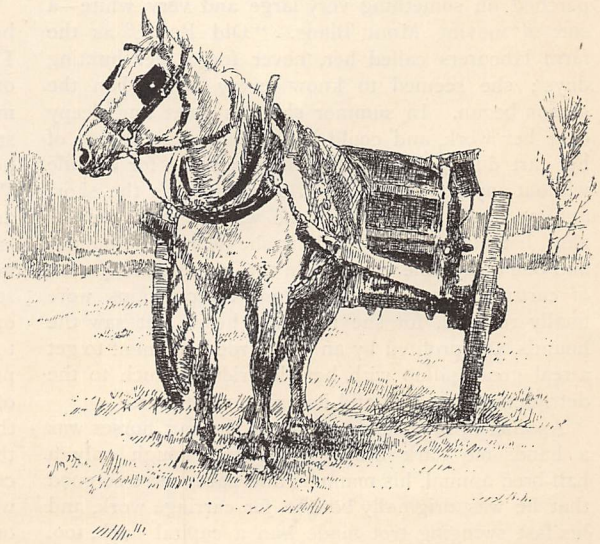
CHAPTER THE FIRST.



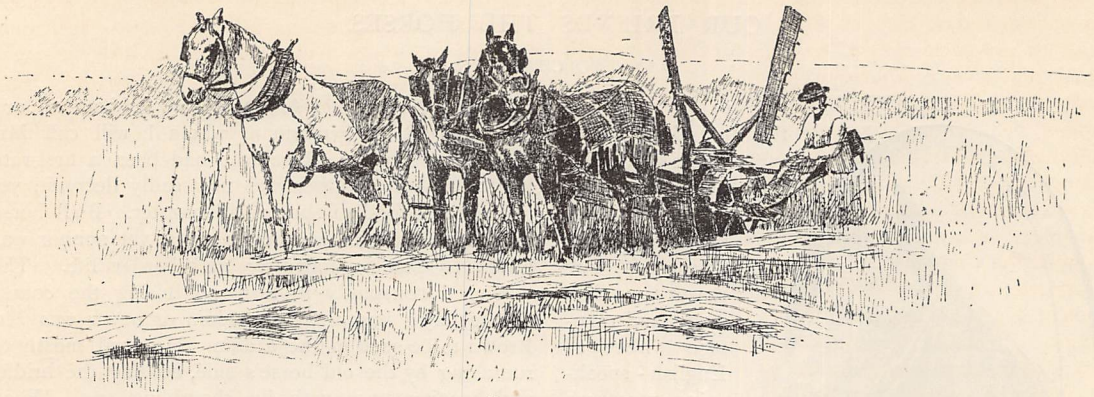
ONE of the natural gifts that we Englishmen—and women, I suppose — most pride ourselves upon is our power to understand and manage horses. English-speaking races, we complacently say, are the finest riders and drivers on the face of the globe; and we confidently point to the feats of Australian rough-riders and American coach-drivers in confirmation of this statement, not omitting to couple with them the well-established reputation of our jockeys and cross-country riders at home. Our Continental neighbours, especially Frenchmen and Austrians, however, contemptuously refute the assertion. Englishmen, they allow, know how to gallop over hedges and ditches well enough, but of any real scientific management of horses by means of bit, bridle, whip, and spur, they are childishly ignorant; the all-important science of *manége* riding is a dead letter to them.

Into these vexed questions I will not venture to enter. The English may or may not be the finest horsemen in the world, but I doubt whether any other nation—with the exception, perhaps, of the Arabs—are on such thoroughly confidential, friendly terms with their horses as the English. The mutual good understanding is most complete, I think, where but one or two horses comprise the stud: then horse and man are most dependent on each other for their enjoyment and comfort, and observe most closely each other's habits and idiosyncrasies. Most strikingly is this the case when a man or woman has but one hunter; if either the human being or the horse is worth anything, they must become attached under these circumstances. I remember seeing this quite pathetically illustrated some years ago. We were hunting at the time constantly in Devonshire, in a wild rough part of the country, where foxes were plentiful and farmers friendly, and where we thought nothing of riding twelve or fifteen miles to the meet. Amongst the *habitués* of our hunt was an old gentleman, whom I will call Mr. Brown. He had a horse who had been a first-rate hunter in his day, but was now sadly decrepit, yet as keen and fond of sport as his master. Both horse and rider had known better days, yet neither was afraid to face a narrower and harder life. The two used constantly to turn up during the course of the day's hunting, but seldom or never was Mr. Brown to be seen in the saddle. He used mostly to run along by the old horse's side, holding the bridle, and keeping pace with his shambling trot. When asked why he did not ride more, he would say, "No, no; better spare the old horse; we're a long way from home, and we get along very well, don't we, Jock?" and the two would then exchange a glance of mutual sympathy and encouragement. We used to call them "the pilgrims" in the field, for both seemed inspired by the same unwearying impulse in a good cause. At last a day came when old Mr. Brown appeared alone. "The old horse had a bit of a cold," he admitted, and presently after we heard that he was dead. A little fund was soon raised amongst the members of the hunt to procure the old gentleman another mount, but we could not get him to accept it. He felt our kindness, he said, but he was "too old to make another friend like dear old Jock."

Circumstances, of course, are more favourable to friendship between hunters and their riders than almost any other class of horse; but draught-horses, too, are not to be despised as acquaintances, and even the slow matter-of-fact cart-horse will often be found affectionate and responsive. In most cases cart-horses are very gentle and reliable, if somewhat slow



OLD BERRY THINKS SHE HEARS THE HOUNDS.



"THE NOB" AND HIS COMPANIONS.

of comprehension, and they are particularly kindly and considerate to small children. In my youth I was on visiting terms with several, for my grandfather was a country parson in the Midlands, and in those simple Arcadian days of the past, when steam was in its infancy, and American competition unheard of, a clergyman found he could make a pleasant and profitable occupation out of farming his glebe. So there was a large, old-fashioned, delightfully dirty farm-yard, and some four or five cart-horses, with whom I spent many happy hours. One or two of these had known better days, and could have told of rattling runs with a famous pack before advancing years and infirmities obliged them to subside into the peaceful obscurity of the plough or cart-shafts. An old white mare, named Snowberry, was an especial favourite of mine. She had had a distinguished past as a huntress, and had negotiated a park wall on one occasion with singular address. My first ride was taken on her back—a solemn progress of about ten yards, of which my only recollection is of being perched on something very large and very white—a sort of moving Mont Blanc. "Old Berry," as the farm labourers called her, never forgot her hunting days; she seemed to know every year when the season began. In summer she was quiet and sleepy over her work, and could be left alone in charge of her cart during hay-making or harvesting for a while without any apprehension. But as soon as the short autumn days came round she was for ever on the alert, listening for and thinking she heard the hounds; and one day, while engaged in the humble occupation of carting manure, her constant anticipations were finally realised, for she not only heard but saw the hounds, and profited by an unguarded moment to get a real good gallop with her old friends, much to the detriment of her cart and its prosaic contents.

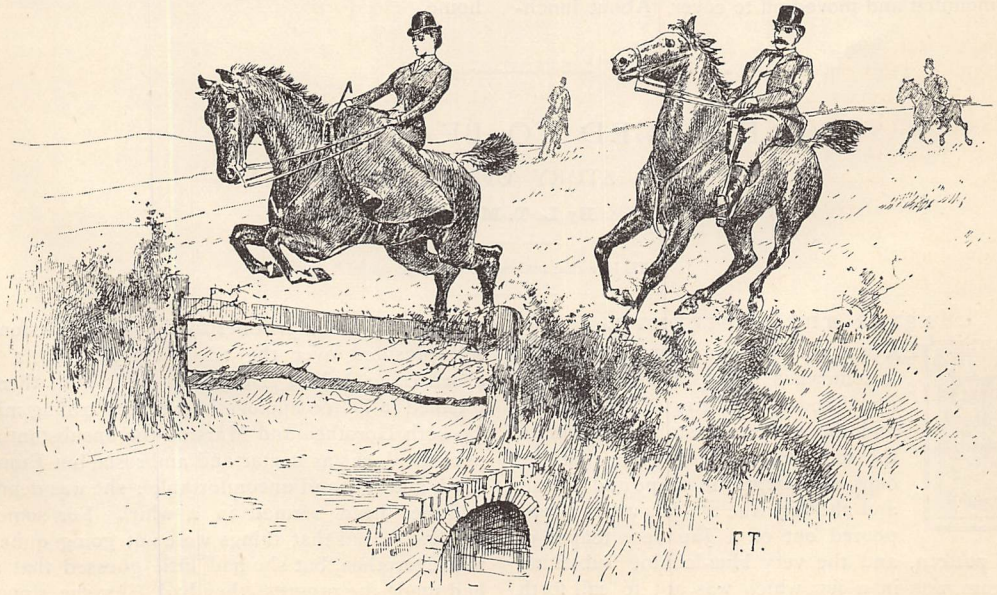
Another of my friends amongst the cart-horses was a handsome dark brown gelding. Though only a half-bred animal, his manners and paces were so good that he was originally bought for carriage work, and his fast swinging trot made him a capital hack, too. I often drove and rode him, and he liked much being talked to and petted, and learned to utter an odd little sound, between a whinny and a grunt, to imply that he wanted a piece of sugar, of which he was extremely fond. We called him "Nature's Nobleman"—a cumbrous title, though an appropriate one, which soon resolved itself into "The Nob." After a very few years' carriage work, the poor Nob developed a hopeless disease of the feet, and though careful treatment pulled him round a bit, he was never fit for the road any more, but was relegated to slow easy work on the farm. It was curious and sad to note how his altered circumstances affected him; he lost all spirit and interest in his work, and regarded his new companions—good commonplace cart-horses—with evident disdain. Yet his old friendship for me never changed, and if I came into the field where he was at work, he would prick up his ears directly he heard my voice, and when I said, "Well, Nob?" would at once utter his odd little sound of greeting, and look for his *gage d'amour* of happier days, the unfailing piece of sugar.

Amongst hunters and hacks my friendships have been many and affectionate—indeed, the only horses I have constantly ridden, with whom I have been on distant terms, were those whose acquaintance I made on a visit to Australia. During a two years' stay in that continent nearly every variety of colonial horse came under my notice: Victorian, New South Welshman, Tasmanian, Queenslander, bush horses, and town horses. All passed under review, but I can't say I found any of them really friendly. Colonial horses are roughly broken and handled, and consequently learn to regard all human beings with more or less suspicion. They are far more mischievous, too, than English horses, and the latent talent for practical joking, which exists in almost every member of the equine species, is much more developed with them. If they don't all buck, they all know how, and the best-trained animals amongst them will what the colonials call "pig-jump" in a most unseating fashion when they are in good heart and condition. Now, one can't feel real affection and esteem for a horse who is capable of launching one, together with bridle

and saddle, into the unknown in a mere impulse of what a departed statesman would have aptly termed "irresponsible frivolity."

But to go back to my English friends: I once owned the rare combination of a good hack and hunter, in the person of a charming little Cornish horse—"Pen Dragon" by name—whom I rode for several years, and who ended his career, full of years and honour, in his eighteenth season. His only fault was self-assertion: he would be first at every fence, if he pulled one's arms off to get there. It became a recognised fact amongst my hunting friends that when he was in the field he was to give every one the lead—which I must say he did in very good style, rarely making a mistake. "Little Drag," as we affectionately called him, was certainly a very remarkable jumper, for on one occasion he undoubtedly cleared a turnpike gate with a two-wheeled basket carriage behind him. He performed this feat under the following circumstances:—He was being driven home by a stable-lad one winter's evening just as it was growing dark. Before long he overtook another horse trotting in front of him; this irritated him, and speedily roused his habitual determination to be first. He accordingly shot forward at a sharp gallop, which presently became a bolt. The turnpike-gate, closed and bolted for the night, then came into view. He saw in it only an ordinary fence, at which he must, of course, be first, so he merely redoubled his pace. The terrified stable-boy shouted loudly; the bewildered gate-keeper, seeing the state of affairs, and hoping to prevent an accident, made an attempt to open the gate, but it was too late, so the unfortunate boy shut his eyes, no doubt mentally "wrote to his friends," and hung on to the reins like grim death. An upward bound, a horrible jolt, a jarring crash, and he found himself neither killed nor insensible, but still in the cart, and safely in the road again, with the gate behind him, and little Dragon sobering into a walk. It seems scarcely conceivable, but horse, cart, and occupant had got over the gate with but little damage to it or themselves. That they had so passed there is no doubt, for though the boy could give no account of himself, the wheel-marks and the splintering of the wood on the top bar of the gate showed that the cart had really gone over it. The startled old gate-keeper, too, added his testimony in the most convincing fashion. "When I saw that horse and them two red lights a-flyin' over me," he said, "why, I knew it must be t'ould gintleman hisself."

The behaviour of horses in the pursuit of their profession as hunters is very varied. Some do their duty in the most steady business-like fashion, and, if sound in wind and limb, are invaluable to dealers, as they can be confidently advertised, in the jargon of the trade, as "first-rate animals for any timid lady or gentleman to learn to ride hunting on." Others, again, but few in number, are as keen and knowing about sport as their masters, or a good deal more so. These are delightful mounts when they and their riders happen to entertain the same theories about the noble art of being with the hounds, but most exasperating when there is not this mutual understanding, for not only do they insist on choosing as much as possible their own line and pace, but if they and their rider should at any time in the day part company, the chances of their meeting again are very problematical, for such horses always cheerfully pursue the sport on their own account. Then there is another class of hunters—a most disagreeable one—who never settle down, and to whom the presence of hounds and other horses is a perpetual source of excitement and irritation: their heads are always in the air, and as to the ultimate destination of their feet, they seem to



PEN DRAGON TAKES THE LEAD.

have neither thought nor care. Such horses either speedily break down or come to grief with their riders. It was my bad luck at one time to own such a one in the person of a very handsome chestnut mare, who, after being successively named the "Red Princess," "Rowena," and "Firebrand," finally became known as "Fidget," and nothing else, being recognisable under no other title. As a hack, when ridden alone she was pleasant enough, having easy paces and being very free; but the presence of other horses speedily made her foolishly excited, and in the hunting-field she was quite unmanageable. She was not loved in the stable, for she was difficult to clean, would never stand, and when about to be ridden had to be led about at some distance from the house, and only brought round just at the moment when her rider was ready to jump into the saddle.

But she was so handsome and taking in appearance, that among the inexperienced she had many admirers. One of the latter, a somewhat complacent young man, named Grey, who fancied himself greatly as a horseman, came to stay with us one season when we were hunting in the New Forest. My husband offered him a mount for the day, giving him his choice amongst two or three horses, and he agreed to "run his eye over our cattle" and make his selection. Some conversation soon after took place about "Fidget" and her idiosyncrasies, and, finally, nothing would satisfy young Grey but to be allowed to ride the mare, and to show us how he, at all events, could make her a steady, clever huntress. Remonstrance was useless—he knew all about the mare: we did not; besides, was he not the youngest, and therefore, necessarily, the most infallible of us? Well, he had his way, and I hope he enjoyed himself. We drove to the meet, he riding on first, alone. When we reached the tryst, nothing was to be seen of him, so we mounted and moved off to cover. About lunch-time, while we were drawing a large fir plantation, a dusky mounted form appeared on the sky-line. It could not be young Grey: he had started in irreproachable pink, and white leathers; and "Fidget" was bright chestnut. Nevertheless, as the figure came closer there was no doubt that it was he, for he feebly hailed us, but both horse and rider were so thickly coated with good rich bog soil and water as to be quite unrecognisable.

And then came a piteous tale, for poor young Grey was so tired and depressed as to be for once absolutely truthful. He had arrived, it seemed, all right at the meet, but the appearance of the other horses and the hounds had, as usual, quite upset "Fidget." She reared, plunged, and finally bolted madly off across the Forest. A long chain of bogs loomed in the distance, and into these she wildly plunged. Happily, none were very deep; but she speedily unseated young Grey, and they floundered after one another for some time before they reached sound ground. When they did, she allowed herself to be caught, but not mounted, and then followed a dreary scramble over the heath-lands, during which Grey kept making vain efforts to get on her back. At last, when he was going to let go of the bridle altogether in despair, she got into another bog, and while she was once more floundering, he succeeded in regaining the saddle, and presently got her on to sound heather again. Then, finding her at last somewhat manageable once more, he endeavoured to make his way home, determining at all costs to avoid the humiliation of displaying himself before the field. But it was in vain; he kept seeing us everywhere in the distance, but met no one else of whom to ask his way. The flask and sandwich-case had been lost in one of the bogs; he was wearied out, his pride temporarily quite invalided; so he humbly surrendered at discretion, and begged us to tell him his nearest way home.

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

TEA was served on a brass tray; it was a somewhat unsubstantial meal, the bread-and-butter being of the thinnest, and the somewhat stale cake cut to the most fairy dimensions; but the cups were artistic in shape and colour, and although the tea was weak, it was poured out of a Japanese teapot of quaint pattern, and the very blue-looking substitute for cream was in a jug which was apt to call forth exclamations on its quaintness and beauty.

As Nelly was a prisoner to the sofa, Marston himself presided over the tea equipage. In a fit of absence he helped Dorothea first, and then was inclined to be too apologetic over this trifling mistake. To both Dorothea and Marston the unsubstantial and poor meal was as nectar and ambrosia, but Emmy felt tired, and hot, and uncomfortable; she was depressed, and her head seemed in a whirl. For some time she had feared that things were not going quite right with Dorothea, but she had little guessed that affairs had made the progress they had. As she sipped her weak tea, and munched her dry bread-and-butter, and

tried to listen to Nelly's somewhat aimless chatter, the vision of Helen's grave, intellectual, somewhat stern, and yet surely most noble face rose before her. She saw it wherever she turned, and she wondered how Dolly could sit there so calm and contented, so radiant, so obviously happy. She was conscious of a feeling of relief when Dolly at last rose to go, and was also glad to find that Marston did not intend to accompany them home. He pressed Dorothea's hand, said something about to-morrow, and then the two girls found themselves alone, and walking quickly through Kensington Gardens. Dorothea was much taller than Emmy, but she took her arm now, and pressed it to her side.

"You know all about it, Emmy, don't you?" she said. "I made a pretence of bringing you to see Nelly to-night, for that was the easiest way to tell you. Emmy darling, I'm the happiest girl in the world: yes, the very happiest; and you can sympathise with me, for you, too, know what it means. Emmy, I have longed to tell you, but I was a coward; although my heart was full of him, I could not get my lips to speak, but now you know everything. Emmy, darling, congratulate me; give me your blessing."

"I hope you will be happy, Dorothea," said Emmy. "Have you been long engaged to Mr. Marston?"

"How coldly you speak, Emmy! as if somehow or other you did not approve. I have not been long 'engaged,' as you call it; I mean, we did not speak until to-night."

"*We?*" said Emmy, half smiling.

"Well, yes, if you put it so. I believe he said it first, if it comes to that; but the words 'I love you' trembled on both our lips. We both knew all about it from the first, from the very first, and to-night—well, yes, we spoke about it to-night."

Emmy looked at Dorothea; her face was all aglow, she seemed to tread on air; she was indifferent to the coldness which Emmy felt encompassing her all about; she thought of Helen, and her congratulations could not be hearty; and yet she did not know why she felt uncomfortable, nor why she disapproved, for if Dorothea loved this man, and he was found to be worthy of her, Helen was surely the last to stand between her and happiness.

Dolly walked on in blissful silence; in the radiant atmosphere in which she moved Emmy's coldness could not touch her. They entered the house, let themselves in with a latchkey, and then Emmy busied herself lighting the lamp, drawing the curtains, and making the room look cosy and comfortable.

"You will have some supper, won't you, Dolly?" she said. "You ate hardly any tea."

"Supper; no, I am not hungry. Emmy, I wish you would come and kiss me, and tell me how you rejoice with me."

"But I do not quite rejoice, Dorothea; I am frightened and uncomfortable. This is all so sudden, and we know nothing really about the Marstons."

"As if that mattered," said Dorothea, stamping her foot impatiently. "He was made for me, and I for him, is not that enough? Oh, don't let us talk common-places on this night of all nights."

"You will write and tell Helen at once, won't you?" said Emmy, after another pause.

"I don't know; yes, I suppose so."

"If you write now, I will post it; you will catch the mail that leaves early to-morrow morning. Do, Dolly; do write at once, Dolly dearest."

Emmy lost her coldness, and the old soft inflexions came into her pretty voice.

"Here are pen, ink, and paper; write at once, and tell her all that is in your heart, Dolly, and I will post the letter to-night."

To Emmy's surprise Dorothea suddenly covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears.

"I cannot," she said. "In that way I am a coward. If Helen hears it like that, it will break her heart; I cannot write and tell her, Emmy, I cannot."

"Then let me," entreated Emmy.

"You? No; a thousand times no."

At this moment the postman's ring was heard at the door. Emmy ran to the letter-box, and presently returned with two letters—one for herself, and one for Dolly. Dolly's bore the New York postmark, and was in Helen's well-known hand; Emmy's was from her sister Bertha. This was the third or fourth letter which had come from Helen since she had reached America. Emmy knew, but for circumstances which had lately arisen, and which seemed to have completely metamorphosed Dolly, with what delight she would have torn open the envelope, and acquainted herself with the contents of the closely-written pages.

"I will put the lamp here, and then you can read your letter comfortably," said Emmy. But Dolly still kept the letter unopened in her lap.

Emmy sighed, and turned her attention to her own epistle. She had scarcely read a few words before she started, and exclaimed impulsively—

"Dolly, mother is ill, and wants me; I must go to her at once."

Emmy's lips were trembling, and that intensified expression of watching and of suffering which had been so noticeable in the Sister of the Red Cross came out again on her young face.

"I am torn in two," she said. "Mother is ill, and wants me; she has sent for me. And yet, how can I leave you now, Dolly?"

"You must leave me," said Dolly. "What do you mean? I don't understand you, Emmy."

"If you would only come with me, Dolly. We might go to-morrow morning, and see Mr. Anstruther, and if mother is not really very ill I would not stay away very long, and Mr. Anstruther would give you a few days' holiday, now that you have finished your Academy picture."

"I don't understand you," said Dolly, in an almost cold voice. "Why should I give up my lessons, which cost so much money, and go down in the country to your people, just when your mother is ill, and when it would be most inconvenient to have me? I don't know what you mean, Emmy, by even proposing it; do you suppose I cannot take care of myself?"

"I am not sure that you can," said Emmy, with spirit. "Not now, at least. You are living in a dream-life, when everything is unreal to you; you are engaged to be married to a man about whom I know nothing—about whom Helen knows nothing. You will not write and tell Helen, although it is the only right and honourable thing to do. Helen asked me to take care of you, Dolly; I cannot leave you alone in a crisis like this. Oh, do come with me, *do*, Dolly dear!"

"I will not," said Dorothea. "Do you suppose I would go away from Edgar now, just when he has spoken, and when our lives are all one sunshine? I don't understand you to-night, Emmy—I don't believe you know what love means. At least, you know nothing of love such as mine."

"And yet I know what it means," said Emmy Thorn, as later that night she knelt by her little bed, and pressed her hands to her hot cheeks. "God knows that my heart aches much because I know well what love means. Oh, mother, if you die, my heart will be broken! Oh, Frank, if I do not hear from you soon, how can I live?"

But as Emmy closed her eyes in sleep that night, she firmly resolved that, come what might, she would not leave Dorothea alone in London.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

THE next morning she went down to breakfast with many traces on her face of the long vigil through which she had passed. There were dark lines under her eyes, and her beautifully-curved delicate lips were tremulous. Dorothea, on the contrary, flashed into the breakfast-room, looking almost as beautiful as a vision of hope.

"My dear little Emmy!" she said, going up and kissing her, and looking down into the young girl's weary eyes with her own all lustrous and sparkling, "when I could think of any one but Edgar last night, I thought of you. I wish you were as happy as I am; I wish you had your Frank to kiss you, and love you, and draw your heart out until it meets his heart. Oh, Emmy, Emmy, what a mistake poor Helen and I made!"

"A mistake?" queried Emmy.

"Yes—a mistake. We thought love would not come into our lives—that we could live without it—that we could be happy with the colourless existence which the pursuit of intellect alone gives. Oh, Emmy, if only Helen would meet her other half—the completion of herself—in America!"

Emmy could not help laughing.

"I do sympathise with you, Dolly," she said, looking up at the radiant creature and returning her caress warmly; "but I cannot help thinking that the excitement of all this has half turned your head. You talk quite wildly."

"I must talk wildly to such a sober-sides as you are," retorted Dolly. "Now let us have breakfast—I am going to Mr. Anstruther's afterwards. I mean to do a hard day's work to-day. Edgar gave me a suggestion last night, and perhaps I shall paint his thought. Who knows but I may have two pictures in the Academy next May?"

Emmy said nothing, and Dorothea, seating herself at the breakfast-table, began to eat with a vigour and appetite which were denied her last night.

In the midst of breakfast there came an imperative peal to the front door. Dolly rushed out, and the next moment Emmy's trembling fingers were tearing open a telegram. She glanced at the contents; her face, already too pale, grew ghastly.

"My mother is worse," she said, as she dropped the pink paper on the floor.

"You must go to her at once, dear," said Dolly. "I won't go to Mr. Anstruther; I'll take a holiday, and help you to pack and see you off."

"But you will come with me, Dolly? Dolly, I vowed last night that I would not leave you alone in London just now."

Dorothea knelt down by Emmy's side, and took her cold little hand within her own. She was sobered by the other girl's distress, and a very sweet tender light filled her eyes and lingered round her lips.

"Emmy, darling, how can I go with you? Use your common sense, Emmy, for you are really almost silly about this. How can I go with you when I have to work at Mr. Anstruther's, and Helen has paid so much for my lessons there, and when these rooms are paid for, too, so much in advance? Why should I give up everything, and go away from London just when I am most wanted here? Just because I am engaged to Edgar Marston?"

"Yes, that is the reason," replied Emmy; "because your judgment is a little blinded just now, and you see everything through his eyes."

"That is true, Emmy: he does guide me and influence me."

"And he prevents you writing to Helen—to the one whose heart is bound up with yours."

Dorothea flushed—the soft look left her face, and it grew proud and angry.

"You are unjust, Emmy," she said; "and you say things that are almost cruel. I will write to Helen to-day. There, will that content you?"

"It will certainly please me," replied Emmy. And again she took up her telegram, and looked at it with a long, shivering sigh.

"Mother dangerously ill. Come at once," was Bertha's message. Dolly read the words over her shoulder.

"Poor Emmy!" she said; "you must go, and instantly. If we are quick you can catch the eleven o'clock train at Paddington."

"I vowed last night," said Emmy, rising to her feet and trembling; "but I can't keep it—I must go."

And then she ran out of the room to hide the tears which were raining down her cheeks.

Before Emmy left she found time to say a word or two to Miss Phillimore.

"Dolly will be all alone when I am gone. Send for her sometimes, talk to her, make her useful to you."

"Miss Dorothea?" replied the old lady—"but I have scarcely ever seen her, dear. Her sister, the one who watched the clock, was a good friend to me; but Miss Dorothea was always too busy to come here. She is a genius and a beauty, so I have heard, but I could not take liberties with her."

Emmy instantly ran to the door of the room, and called aloud.

"Dolly, come here," she said.

Dorothea quickly responded. She came into the room in her white dress, with her face all aglow.

"Miss Phillimore is my great friend, Dolly, and she says she will be lonely while I am away. Will you come to her sometimes, just to cheer her, and for my sake?"

"Every day, if Miss Phillimore likes," said Dolly, with a sweet smile, for her heart was warm, and full of all generous impulses just then.

"Just to let me look at you, dear," said Miss Phillimore, gazing up at the frank, handsome face with admiration.

"Oh, for a great deal more than that," retorted Emmy. "She wants—listen, Dolly——" then she went through a list of little services, which, rendered daily, and without stint or grudge, had made the blank life of the confirmed invalid almost bright, almost happy, and certainly full of thanksgiving.

"Can you do these things?" asked the impetuous Emmy; "for they are almost necessary for Miss Phillimore's comfort."

"Certainly I can, if Miss Phillimore will accept my services both morning and evening," replied Dorothea frankly. "In the day-time I am always occupied."

Then Emmy kissed her old friend, and went away almost happy. She had a thought down deep in her heart that Miss Phillimore's friendship might be the saving of Dolly.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

EMMY went home by the next train, and there she found matters in such a state of hopeless confusion, of anguish and distress, that all other subjects were for the time driven out of her head. She forgot Dorothea's very existence; she forgot that snug little nook at Table C in the Reading-room of the British Museum, where she worked and lost herself in happy, healthy day-dreams; she forgot the life in London which had already seemed to her to be part and parcel of her being. Once again she was the anxious daughter of the perplexed, and nervous, and over-burdened mother—once again the boys and Bertha were clinging to her as limpets to a rock. She was the head of the household, to whom every one looked: whose little purse was supposed to be deep enough and wide enough to supply all needs, unexpected or otherwise: whose capable brain had resources for all emergencies: whose tender, watchful love might prove a shelter and a rest. Emmy was nineteen, and ever since she was ten she had been accustomed to this life. The few months in London were thrown aside in the space of as many moments, and she was once again the Emmy on whom everybody leant.

Mrs. Thorn was dangerously ill; Bertha was incapable of nursing her, because she cried so loudly and boisterously that the poor invalid started from her broken sleep to ask in terror what was the matter. Bertha dropped her tears into the beef-tea and allowed the milk to burn, while she sobbed unrestrainedly, with her head pressed against the drawing-room sofa. Under these circumstances the boys tried to take the reins, but they, too, failed miserably; it was certainly time for Emmy to come home. Had any Sister of the Red Cross a graver face than this little nurse wore during the long, long anxious weeks which followed? Mrs. Thorn lay between life and death. What was money? what was anything to these children, if their mother died? Emmy lived and breathed alone for her mother now. She was a strong and capable nurse. Whatever she felt, she shed no tears, and wherever her presence was seen there was order, and at least outward peace.

At last, after a month and more of the most terrible suspense, the crisis came; the worn-out, exhausted mother slept; the children held their breaths, and waited. Out of that sleep she would awake to say good-bye to them, or to live again for them. Even Bertha stopped crying; noiselessly the boys crept about the house in their stockings.

Emmy left the door of her mother's room a little ajar, and the hours crept by, and there was not a sound, a whisper. Bertha established herself in a nook outside the door, and then one by one her brothers came, and nestled up against her, and almost held their breaths—poor little fellows—in their suspense and agony, not to make a sound.

When Emmy at last, in the early dawn of the morning, came out of the room with the tears wet on her eyelashes, she saw the little group huddled together, and fast asleep. She stooped down and kissed them, and brought some shawls and pillows to make them more comfortable. When the children awoke they were told by the happy Emmy that their mother would live.

Very slowly Mrs. Thorn came back to life, and then, as the anxiety for her mother lessened, poor Emmy began to receive sharp pricks from all kinds of other quarters.

"Emmy," said Bertha, "do you know that the rent was not paid at the end of the June quarter? It's August now, and there's a man coming about it. He's such a scolding, disagreeable man, so perhaps you had better see him."

Emmy put her hand up to her forehead.

"The rent is seven pounds ten shillings," she said. "I must manage it somehow, I suppose. By the way, Bertha, what is the day of the month?"

"The twentieth of August," replied Bertha shortly.

"I thought you were to be back at school now; you know your holidays began quite early, on account of Miss Pearson getting away. And the boys, too, they ought to be back at their lessons."

"I ought to have been back with Miss Pearson a week ago," retorted Bertha. "She and Mr. Pearson gave us all our holidays in June; but I can't go, nor

can the boys, until Miss Pearson and her brother are paid."

Emmy sighed heavily.

"I will see about it," she said. And then she went upstairs with slow and rather lagging footsteps to her mother's room.

The kind of depression which comes on from great fatigue, from being run down in every way, was over her. Her mother was asleep, and while she slept Emmy could drop her smiling mask, and wear that patient careworn expression which was so sad to see in a girl of her years. She was not very anxious about the rent, nor the money for the children's schooling; she knew that Mrs. Thorn ran up no debts, and that she always managed to make her tiny income cover absolute necessities. She felt very little doubt that when her mother was strong enough she could put her hand upon the money which was necessary to cover these expenses, and in the meantime she might advance the rent at least from her own tiny London store. Emmy tried to forget the money worries, which, after all, are the most irritating and most youth-destroying things in the world. She let her head drop on her hands, and gave herself up to other musings of a sore and perplexing character.

Was Captain Redfern dead? Was that the cause of that terrible awful veil of silence which had suddenly dropped between them? Emmy remembered the last letter she had received from him. That letter was quite six months old now. It was warm with love, and hope, and feeling. It responded to all the echoes of her heart. It was the kind of letter to make a girl proud and hopeful.

After this warm epistle had followed silence: a silence, a thick darkness of silence, which surely might be felt. Emmy's heart had gone through many phases; she had suffered all the tortures that a loving, trustful, and proud girl might be expected to undergo. She had not given way even yet to absolute faithlessness or absolute despair. She would not allow herself to doubt the man whose eyes looked so true, who had said such good words to her; who had promised to take her young life into his shelter and keeping. No; Frank Redfern must be ill or dead: that was the only way to account for his silence. Engaged? yes, she had heard that absurd rumour; he was engaged to her, to no one else.

Mrs. Thorn slept for a long time. When she awoke Emmy gave her some strong beef-tea, and propped her up in bed, and made her comfortable.

"You are beginning to look like yourself, mammy dearest," she said, and she kissed the worn and beloved face with a feeling of infinite satisfaction and love.

Mrs. Thorn was still too weak to talk much, but she smiled at Emmy, and took her hand, and owned that she was better, and that it was once more a pleasant and a happy thing to live. Presently the hall-door was heard to open after the boisterous style in which Bertha generally effected her entrance. Eager, vigorous steps were heard running up the stairs, going past Mrs. Thorn's chamber to the attic bedroom, which Emmy and Bertha shared together. The noisy steps pounded about on the floor over Mrs. Thorn's head; then they came down again: down every step with eager speed—the hall-door was banged vigorously, and Emmy, rising to look, saw Bertha flying across the common in her cotton dress.

"That child ought to be back at school," she could not help saying aloud.

Mrs. Thorn overheard her.

"Has not Bertha returned to school?" she said. "I don't know how time has passed, Emmy dearest; but I should have thought that Bertha's holidays were long over, and the boys' too; they ought all to be working. It is most important that the poor children should lose nothing in the way of educational advantages."

Mrs. Thorn spoke in a quavering, almost querulous voice; the pink of fever and weakness deepened on her thin cheeks, and her eyes were fixed on Emmy with almost reproach. Emmy stooped down and kissed her.

"Bertha and the boys shall return to school to-morrow," she said. "Don't you fret, mother; you must think of nothing now but how to make us happy."

"Make you happy? To be a useless log like me?"

"Make us happy by getting well as soon as possible—by taking every care of your precious self—by throwing worries to the winds."

"Emmy," said the invalid, "perhaps it is my weakness; but I cannot quite tell: do you believe that God really troubles Himself about such insignificant people as we are?"

Emmy's gentle face was turned on her mother with a look of almost reproach.

"You must be weak, mother, to say that; if I did not believe—believe fully in the Father's infinite care, I could not live."

That evening, after Mrs. Thorn had been comfortably settled for the night, Emmy, stealing softly upstairs, was surprised to see Bertha sitting up in bed. Bertha's eyes were bright, and she called Emmy to her with considerable excitement of manner.

"Come here, Emm; I have been perfectly worn out with waiting for you."

The candle was on a little table by the bedside, and Bertha, putting her hand under the pillow, drew something out, which she kept carefully concealed between her two hands.

"Guess what I've got," she said, looking up at Emmy with an air of mystery, not unmixed with uneasiness.

"I can't guess, Bertha dear; I am very tired, and would like to go to bed. Bertha, I am going round in the morning to have a talk with Mr. and Miss Pearson, for I have promised mother that you and the boys shall return to school at once."

"Hot! hot! scorching hot!" exclaimed Bertha, her cheeks growing crimson. "Oh, Emmy, do guess what I've got in my hand!"

"You queer child, how excited you are! You had

better show me the wonderful mystery, Bertha, for I am too tired to guess anything."

"Well!" Bertha unclasped her fingers a very little. "How are you to manage about paying Mr. and Miss Pearson, Emmy? They won't take us back without fees in advance. You know that; it is a rule they never break."

"I must pay with a little of my London money," said Emmy, suppressing a heavy sigh; "for whatever happens, mother must not be worried just now. She was talking to me about your school to-day, and was vexed that you were not all busy with your studies."

"And you want to take your poor little London money, and spoil your own career!" exclaimed Bertha. "Will not this do better?" And here she unclasped her large, unformed girlish hands, and showed to Emmy's astonished vision a glittering pile of sovereigns.

"Look at them—count them—it is almost enough to make a girl go crazy to have such a lot of money. Here is enough to pay for all our schooling, and something over for the rent."

"Ten sovereigns!" said Emmy. "How in the world did you get them, Bertha?"

Bertha's air of triumph ceased, and her uneasiness of manner became very marked.

"Never you mind that part," she stammered. "If you're tired you had better get into bed and sleep. There, if you must know, you queer, suspicious old thing, I'll tell you in the morning."

"No, Bertha, to-night: before we are half an hour older. By what possible means did you become the possessor of ten sovereigns?"

"Emmy, you quite frighten me. I did not steal them."

"Bertha dear, how did you get them?"

"Well, well, if you must know—only I promised I wouldn't tell you as long as I could help—Sir Percival Redfern gave them to me."

Emmy felt herself turning cold.

"Sir Percival!" she repeated. "Bertha, tell me everything. I—I—am interested. I want to know everything about Sir Percival."

"Well, I met him, and we had a talk. He's not at all a bad old man, when you get to know him. I rather like him: he's quite amusing; and once when he pinched up his face I laughed out loud. He wasn't offended; oh, no! he patted me under the chin, and said I was a fine girl."

"'GUESS WHAT I'VE GOT,' SHE SAID" (*p.* 612).

"Yes, Bertha; go on. How did he come to give you all that money?"

"Oh, he did not exactly give it to me. I sold him something: it was quite a fair exchange. And, by the way, now I come to think of it, the money is yours, not mine."

"Oh, Bertha, for pity's sake do go on!"

"Well, well, Emmy, you're not going to faint, are you? He wanted something, and I gave it to him for the ten pounds. I knew how dreadfully, dreadfully that ten pounds was needed, and I thought how glad you'd be, Emmy, to buy mother nice nourishment and things: so I gave him that ring of yours, out of the dressing-case: the one with the bright stone in it, that you always wore on your finger until mother got so ill. Why, Emmy, what is the matter? Are you angry with me? speak, dearest Emmy! I would not hurt you; no, no, not for all the world; and I thought you'd be so glad of the ten pounds, Emmy sweet. Don't look so dreadful. Tell me you're not angry with me?"

"You did not mean it, Bertha," said Emmy, speaking in a queer, constrained voice. "Lie down now,

dear, and go to sleep. Yes, you had better give me that money. It is, as you say, not yours. Thanks; go to sleep, go to sleep."

"Emmy, you are not leaving the room? you are tired, Emmy; surely you are coming to bed?"

"Not just yet, Bertha. Go to sleep; I will come upstairs presently."

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

AT an early hour the next morning a girl might have been seen walking quickly up the steep avenue which led to Corcastle—a panting, eager, resolute-looking girl, whose curling hair was pushed back from her forehead, and whose gentle eyes had a strained look, pitiable to see in one so young.

The girl was Emmy Thorn; she had spent an absolutely sleepless night, and now, in the first brilliance of a lovely August morning, she was hastening to beard that most terrible of all dragons, Sir Percival Redfern, in his den.

The ring was gone: the engagement ring which Frank Redfern had put upon her finger. He had said to her when he did so—

"I will never marry any woman who does not wear this ring; it has been for hundreds of years in our family. My mother wore it, my grandmother before her, and so on, and so on. I am not the eldest son, but my brother is not strong, and says he will never marry; the ring is mine, and I give it to you, Emmy. As long as you wear it on your finger you will know to a certainty that no other woman can be my wife. If, on the other hand, when I am far away in India, you should happen to say to that poor little heart of yours, 'Frank is so far off, and I am so weary of waiting, and there is another who can make me happy at once'—why, then, Emmy, all you will have to do is to send the ring back to my father. When I see it I will understand."

"Only I could never say that," retorted Emmy Thorn; "for no one, no one else in all the world could make me happy."

Then Frank kissed her, and was pleased to say he believed her words, and said further that he was quite sure that the little finger which now wore the ring belonged to the only woman who would ever be his wife.

"And now I know Sir Percival is against me; I know he will do something treacherous with that ring," said Emmy, as she panted and ran up the avenue, too blinded with her own passion, and grief, and despair to notice Jasper, the old mastiff, as he came up to her, and tried to lick her hand affectionately.

Emmy pulled the bell which hung at the side of the old oak door, and waited, with what patience she could muster, for Hepsibah to open it. She waited for nearly five minutes, then she pulled the ponderous old bell again. In a short time after the second summons the sounds of bolts and bars being withdrawn were heard, the door was opened about three inches, and a voice sang out into the air, just as it had done six months ago—

"There ain't no one at home. No one need come with fool's errands up to Corcastle; for there ain't no one ever to home."

Emmy had a small hand, and she pushed it suddenly through the open door, and caught Hepsibah's horny fingers between her own.

"You can say words of that kind to strangers, you know, Hepsibah," she said; "but I am—you know who I am—Emmy Thorn."

"Goodness, mercy me, Miss Emmy!" said old Hepsibah, letting the door go, and revealing her person, more ragged and rusty even than usual. "Why, I thought you had got swallowed up, so to speak, in London. Who'd ever have thought of seeing you here?"

"Let me in, Hepsibah," said Emmy; and without waiting for permission, she stepped into the stone-flagged hall.

"Oh, yes, dear; you may come in, with all the good-will in the world. But it's Gospel truth that I'm saying: there ain't never a soul in the house; there ain't no one at home this blessed minute in Corcastle but old Hepsibah herself."

"I'm in great trouble, Hepsibah," said Emmy, and she went up to her, and took her arm, and laid her pretty, bright little head against the old woman's rusty sleeve. "I can scarcely see, Hepsibah. I have had a good deal of trouble in one way or another, lately, and this last has just crushed me. May I sit down on the stone bench for a little?"

"To be sure, love. Bless your poor heart! but you does look poorly. Mr. Frank wouldn't like to see you like this, Miss Emmy. If the captain was to come in now, and was to see you like this, wouldn't he give it to me, just? He was always masterful, and a bit unreasonable was the captain, for how I'd be to blame for you looking white and faded like, no mortal could say, and yet if he was to see you just now, blame me he would."

"If he were to come, I wouldn't look faded," said Emmy. "It would be like wine—better. But he's not coming, Hepsibah, and I am in great trouble. I want you to help me, Hepsibah. You have a kind heart, and you are fond of Frank. Hepsibah, I must see Sir Percival at once."

"Bless you, dear child! didn't I say I was the only one in the house? Sir Percival went to London last night."

"Sir Percival! Sir Percival gone away from Corcastle! Why, I thought he never slept out of this house?"

"No more he have, dear, for years and years. But for all that, he went away last night. He have been in no end of a fidget lately, and not sitting any longer by himself in that old, dismal study of his; but wandering all about the place, and giving orders here, and orders there, and muttering under his breath about Mr. Frank, and what he'd do when Mr. Frank came home. It was plain for us all to see that Mr. Frank was as the apple of his eye, and it seemed to me that he was always writing to him, and thinking of him, just for all the world as if he was the eldest

son, and Mr. Percy wasn't nowhere. By the way, Miss Emmy, there have come worse news than ever of Mr. Percy's health, and I suppose the old man has quite made up his mind that Mr. Frank is to be the heir. Yesterday morning there came a letter from Mr. Frank. I know the handwriting well, and when I took it to Sir Percival, he made a grab at it as if he'd taken a bit of my hand off at the same time. He was mighty pleased at whatever was said in the letter. I knew that by the way he spoke when I went to him after breakfast for orders. 'I'm going to London this evening, Hepsibah,' he said. 'To London, sir?' I said. 'Yes,' he answered, 'to London. And you needn't stare your eyes out of your head because I state an ordinary bit of news to you. You needn't get in no more meat until you hear from me, for there's plenty left on the ribs of beef for you; and mind my orders: no fresh bread allowed, and see that you keep to your allowance of butter. You'll save a good bit while I'm away, Hepsibah; and much I need that you should, for if I'm not greatly mistaken there'll be festive doings at Corcastle before long, when I'll have to have my hands in my pockets from morning till night, so the more need of saving while we can. You understand, Hepsibah; I speak plain, don't I?'

"I said that he ever and always spoke uncommon plain, and that I understood him as plain as if he was a card with the alphabet written on it—which was likely enough, Miss Emmy, seeing that I've lived with him, and put up with his ways, which are more mean than I care to speak of, for close upon thirty years. Well, anyhow, he went to London last night, miss, and mighty pleased and cheerful he looked; and I don't know when he will be back, and he haven't given us no address."

Hepsibah, having finished her somewhat long narrative, waited for Emmy to make a response. The girl's face had grown whiter and whiter—all the charming soft lines of youth seemed to have left it; its expression was rigid and painful.

"It's quite true, my dear," said the old woman, as she watched the rigid look growing and growing round the lips which ought to be so pretty and dimpled and smiling. "You must come another day to see him, dear, and I don't know when he'll be back.

"I won't come again, Hepsibah," said Emmy; "I know that your story is true, and I know that Sir Percival is too strong for me. He was happy yesterday, Hepsibah, because he had succeeded in doing something which he knew would break a girl's heart. Hepsibah, are you very much afraid of Sir Percival?"

"I, my dear? Bless your heart! if I was much afraid of him would I stay in his house? No, no, child; I ain't that. All he can do is to storm at me, and I'm so accustomed to that kind of thing. I don't listen to a word he says."

"Well, Hepsibah, if you are not afraid, will you give him a message from me?"

"Oh, a message from you, dear?"

"For the captain's sake, Hepsibah."

"Bless your heart! wouldn't the captain give it to me if he see'd you looking like that? Well, what's the message, love?"

"Give him this parcel—give it to him the moment he comes back—it contains ten sovereigns. Tell him that Emmy Thorn brought the money back to him—that it was the price of blood."

"Ten sovereigns! Bless us, Miss Emmy dear! but the old master must have gone quite demented when he parted with so much money as this. Miss Emmy dear——"

But Emmy was gone. Hepsibah saw the flutter of her light dress as she disappeared down the avenue. Old Jasper, trying to draw her attention, and failing, set up a dismal howl.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

IN the great anxiety caused by her mother's illness and danger Emmy had forgotten Dorothea. The absorbing interest which she had felt in the beautiful and capricious creature had vanished. Her letters remained scarcely read, scarcely answered. But when her mother could creep downstairs again, and when the boys and Bertha spent the long hours of every day at school, and the house had returned to its normal quiet, Emmy awoke from a kind of torpor in which she had been living—the pain on her mother's account was over, and the shock which she had received in the loss of her ring no longer showed itself by any outward tokens. Whatever she felt, she made no sign. For a couple of days she had looked queer; and Bertha, who had repented of her rash and unjustifiable act in the most violent and stormy manner, was forced to keep out of her way. Bertha's eyelids were quite blistered with tears; and had Emmy given her even a glance of encouragement, she would have flung herself on her neck with wails and sobs; but there are limits to even the most patient endurance, and as no amount of grief on Bertha's part could now get back the ring, Emmy felt she would rather not speak of it.

She roused herself, and put aside the grief which for the first time was almost akin to despair, and once again occupied her mind wholly with thoughts of others. Dorothea's letters were attended to and read carefully; and Emmy, not liking something in their tone, often wished that, for Dorothea's sake, she were back in London. There was very little chance of this, however—Mrs. Thorn was far too weak to be left, and Emmy's small fund for London expenses had already been seriously encroached upon.

"You want change, mother dear," she said one day. "Oh, what would I not give to be able to take you to the seaside for a month! Mother dear, I do long for riches for your sake."

"That five hundred pounds which Sir Percival Redfern never paid me——" began Mrs. Thorn.

But Emmy, turning white, with a gesture begged her mother to stop.

"Don't let us talk about Sir Percival," she said. "We can—we must—live our lives without him or his."

Mrs. Thorn gazed at Emmy in surprise.

"Without *his*," she murmured. "Emmy dear, when have you heard from Frank?"

"I don't hear from him, mother."

"What, never? But you are engaged to him, my darling?"

"Yes, mother, I am certainly engaged to him; but there is a little cloud between us just now—I don't understand it—I can't talk of it. Mammy dear, don't question me."

Frank Redfern just then that no mere money troubles could have seemed to her all-important, but nevertheless the lightening of money cares can prove a great alleviation, as she discovered the next morning.

The postman brought her a letter, which she opened with that languor and indifference that was beginning to characterise all her movements. She read a few words, the colour flying into her cheeks, her heart beating wildly; then, with a quick bounding step, never regarding the astonished faces of her sister and

"'I MUST SEE SIR PERCIVAL AT ONCE'" (*p.* 614).

Emmy's pretty curly head went down on her hands. Mrs. Thorn laid one of her own thin shadowy hands on the young bowed head. The touch was so infinitely tender that it soothed where anything else must have wounded. Emmy caught the beloved hand between her own and kissed it passionately.

"While I have you I am not desolate," she said.

She went to bed that night feeling particularly tired and hopeless. There was scarcely any chance of her returning to London. There was no money for this, nor for change for her mother. So serious an illness had swallowed up all the little surplus fund which Emmy had put aside for her mother's need. Her own few pounds had been drawn upon to put the boys and Bertha to school. Emmy was so unhappy about

brothers, she had flown upstairs and into her mother's room.

"Oh, mother! oh, mother! how can I tell you? Something so delightful, so blessed, so wonderful has happened. I have just had another letter from the lawyer who wrote to me in the spring. Mr. Dodd—and my cousin—oh, mother, mother, how can I tell you?"

Emmy felt almost choking—her calm had given way and the tears were raining down her cheeks.

"Quiet yourself, darling. You say it is good news—sit here by me on the bed and hold my hand. Ever since she was a little child Emmy used to say that mother's hand quieted her. Take it now, dearest. Oh, Emmy, is your great anxiety at rest?"

"*One* anxiety is at rest, so I won't think of gloomy things upon this happy, this blessed day. Listen, mother, to what Mr. Dodd says :—

"DEAR MADAM,—I have the pleasure to inform you that an unexpected codicil has been found to the late Miss Thornicroft's will, in which she leaves you a further legacy of two hundred pounds, and also a small property called 'White Rose Cottage,' situated on the south coast, near Dover. The cottage is now vacant, and both it and its furniture are yours. It contains four bedrooms and two sitting-rooms—all in excellent order—and has, in addition, about half an acre of excellent well-stocked garden. Miss Thornicroft was in the habit of spending the summer of each year at White Rose Cottage. Allow me to congratulate you on the possession of a very pretty little residence, which will let well in the autumn."

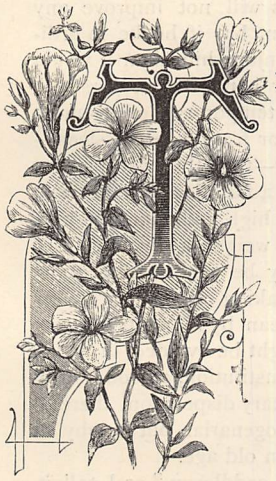
"No, it won't let well," said Emmy, not caring to finish her letter, "for we will live there. Oh, mother! what will not those sea-breezes do for you?"

Whatever the sea-breezes were to do for Mrs. Thorn, the present good news acted as a tonic. She and Emmy, and Bertha and the boys really became quite childish over that wonderful letter. The legacy of two hundred pounds was delightful, and, of course, dear Emmy could go back to London now—but what was it in comparison with the cottage with the picturesque name, the cottage with the garden, and the sea?

END OF CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

ON LIVING TO BE NINETY.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



"THERE is no earthly reason why every man or woman in the British Islands should not live to be the age of ninety," said an octogenarian acquaintance of mine one day, as we were travelling in the same carriage to town.

He did not make the remark to me exactly, but to his friend; only as I had made one in the conversation previously, I thought myself justified now in putting an oar in. "Oh, nonsense!" I said, with emphasis.

The octogenarian turned sharply round on me. "Doctor," he exclaimed indignantly, "you're exceedingly polite, I must say. Ex—ceed—ingly polite!"

"Medical men are permitted to be polite sometimes," I replied. "Remember Abernethy, for example. He was politeness personified."

"Boor!" muttered the man of eighty summers, as he commenced to read his paper upside-down.

As there was no means of knowing whether the epithet were hurled at me or at the shade of the great physician, I took no notice of it, but continued talking to the other occupant of the compartment, a young man and an intelligent listener.

"Instead," I said, "of there being no earthly reason why every one should not reach the age of ninety, the reasons are legion, and they are all earthly. We have all of us a debt to pay to Nature, and they live longest who, while always prepared and resigned, never think of it, but at the same time take care to avoid the more ordinary causes of disease, and to live rationally without, mind you, making molly-coddles of themselves. For whenever the more ordinary causes of disease take to any person the form of bugbears they become depressants of life and action; the man or woman, as the case might be, would therefore live in a world full of bogies, and these bogies would, before very many years, scare him or her over the brink of the grave.

"Every physician could give you scores of instances of bogie-haunted molly-coddleism; one occurs to myself at the present moment. The subject is a man of about thirty-five, a jolly-looking fellow, strong and rosy, with perhaps a slight inclination to *embonpoint*—his corners are well rounded off, at any rate. But he is one of the biggest cowards in Christendom; he would not sit in a draught, get his toes wet, or keep his window open in summer, or take a cold bath in the morning, if he were offered a dukedom for so doing. He died in the spring of 1888—not entirely, though. I am talking figuratively, for you know cowards die often, the brave but once. It was a cold that killed him that time. However, he died a more painful death in the following June. He had to have a tooth out: the shock to his system he felt sure would stop the beating of his heart, so he made his will before he set out in a cab for the dentist's. I dined with him the same evening, and he sang, "Let me like a soldier fall," so sonorously that I was half afraid the gaselier would come down. Well, this gentleman died again in the autumn of a whitlow—his flesh is rather soft, you know—but he did not require to be buried even yet. I have not heard of him since, and, for aught I know, he may be dying away of something, somewhere, at this very moment. But life is not a bed of roses to him, jolly and all as he looks.

"One of the most curious cases of prostration caused by timidity occurred to a friend of mine, in the city where we were both Arts students. The cholera was pretty rife just then, and in certain streets the black flag was up. When a case succumbed, the bedding, &c., were taken in a covered cart to a spot among the sand dunes near the sea, and burned. I went to meet my friend one day near the beach—we were going to bathe—and found him sitting close to the heap of black-grey ashes. He was quietly reading.

"'I wonder,' he said, 'what boys have been making a bonfire here.'

"'M——,' I replied, 'that was no bonfire. That is the spot where they burn the clothes of those who die of cholera.'

"He turned ghastly pale as I spoke, and, though he soon recovered, he complained of cold and refused to bathe with me. Nor would he, though usually brimful of fun, talk, save in monosyllables, all the way home.

"I missed him at classes next day, and going to his rooms, found him in bed.

"'Don't come near me,' he cried, 'I'm booked. My clothes will be burned on the sands in less than eight-and-forty hours!'

"The doctor came and laughed at him, but M—— stuck to his bed for three days, and he was very ill from pure nervous fear. Only there was no symptom of cholera, and he made me promise not to mention the nature of his ailment to the 'fellows.'

"We see then that terror itself can produce illness. It sometimes actually opens the door for the very infection one would seek to avoid. If, for instance, five men are exposed to the contagion of, say, scarlet fever —men I mean who have not had the trouble before— probably two out of the five will become affected. The three who escape, some medical men will tell you, are unsusceptible to the peculiar poison. I think this is wrong, and that their immunity depended more on their being at the time in 'good form,' to use simple language, and not subject to fear. A medical man himself will work in the midst of pestilence without fear or, perhaps, even danger, until his system becomes debilitated by his exertions—then he may be speedily overcome. From these facts, I think we may gather a hint or two how to avoid those accidental ailments that are due to infection and contagion. In times of trouble of this kind the plentiful use of disinfectants is, of course, to be recommended, but we must wear the breast-plate of health if we would go scot-free.

"One of the reasons then why people do not become nonagenarians, lies in this:—We are all just like soldiers in a battle, all exposed to innumerable dangers, and no sooner clear of one than we are confronted with another."

Now, reader, this paper of mine is a purely cautionary one. I do not intend telling you how to cure anything to-day, but the hints I give may help you to avoid illnesses of an accidental nature.

Neuralgia may often be classed as one of these. To be sure, many persons are predisposed to this painful complaint, but one of the commonest causes is the "accident of sleeplessness," or even of not having a chance to get proper rest. This may be owing to the serious illness of some dear friend, or from the fatigue of travel, from over-brain-work, from worry or excess of any kind; but I say, let a person who is susceptible to neuralgia want good rest for a few nights, and be unable, in consequence, to take a proper allowance of food, then he is almost sure to be knocked out of time by his old enemy.

We all of us have some one particular organ weaker than the other, and when exposed to causes that provoke congestion or inflammation, it is usually this organ, whether the lungs, liver, or kidneys, or heart, that is sought out and determined to. The reader will, no doubt, remember the story of the "wonderful one-horse shay" that was built to last exactly a hundred years and a day. This "shay" was equally strong all over, it never lost a tire nor bent an axle, but ran its appointed time, and at the end thereof collapsed all at once, the driver finding himself suddenly seated in a heap of dust. But human beings are not built like that "shay."

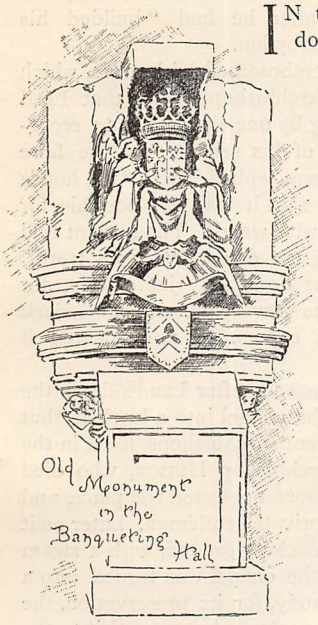
However, for the comfort of those individuals who are nervous as to the causes of illnesses which, like inflammations, bronchitic, or otherwise, may be called accidental, I may mention that seldom, if ever, does any single cause produce a severe illness. For example, some one is going to Paris, as every one will this summer, and in crossing the silver streak he gets wet with a green sea. Now this will not improve any landsman's physical condition, but if he be in ordinary health, it will no more injure him than it would injure a duck. On the other hand, if that person is suffering at the time from temporary derangement of liver or digestive organs, or from want of sleep— if, in a word, he be below par—then that wetting may cause serious illness. If he be a full-blooded man, who has been in the habit of living high, inflammation may be the result. If he be under weight, a severe cold or some nervous complaint may be generated that he will have some difficulty in shaking off.

You will see then what I mean by ailments that are accidental. Most of these might be avoided, in which case, if a person has a fair constitution, a good flow of animal spirits, and no hereditary disposition, there is no reason on earth, as the octogenarian put it, why he should not enjoy life to a green old age.

I have condemned "molly-coddleism" as I call it, but, nevertheless, unless we take reasonable care of ourselves, we are almost certain to stumble in the way of one of those accidental ailments. Food and clothing should be studied above everything. The first is the great generator of heat, health, and power; and the second is the rightful conservator of heat, health, and power. The man who eats too much or too little, or eats irregularly, certainly does not eat to live or to avoid accidental ailments. He lives—well, exists, rather—in a state of constant fever, nervous or otherwise, his sleep cannot be refreshing, and if attacked by illness, he is very likely to go down. The person who errs in clothing is also liable to sickness at any time. If he wears too little or wears harsh, cold, cotton stuffs, the attack of illness is direct, if he wears too heavy clothing it is an indirect attack, but none the less certain and severe. Walking with heavy clothing on is a most foolish and dangerous proceeding, for perspiration is caused, the clothes become damp, and after that the cooling process sets in, and trouble may ensue.

Regularity of living includes exercise, recreation, fresh air, and the bath, and these are indispensable if we want to avoid accidental illnesses, and so live and be happy.

IN THE OLD PALACE OF CROYDON.



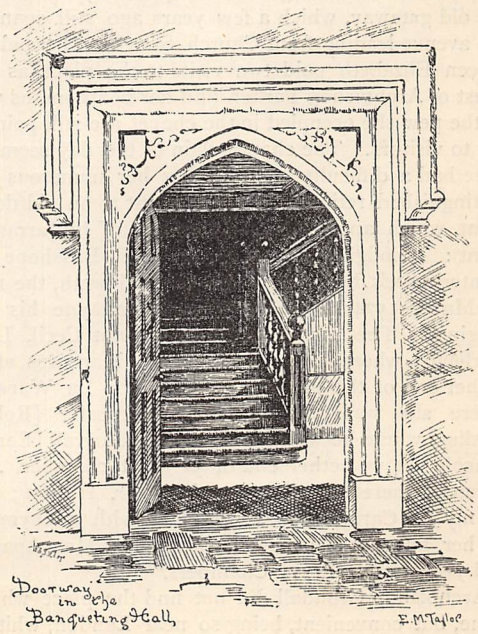
IN the middle of old Croydon, and behind the parish church, with its great elm-tree that is said to mark the grave of a Templar, there is a strange and rambling pile of buildings with a forsaken and dilapidated air.

The place is a curious medley of the present and the past. Its main feature is a large and lofty hall, built of grey flint, buttressed with stone, and roofed with red tiles. But between the mouldering buttresses of this ecclesiastical edifice, the new chimney stalk of an engine-boiler shoots into the sky. A low range of ancient galleries of red-brick adjoining the hall have been turned into a residence, and fitted with an American verandah and its Virginia creeper. On the west end it abuts against a churchyard; on the east it is hard pressed by the playgrounds of the Board School and the trim little villas of the modern builder. But for the rest it lies between a grassy paddock, with a few scattered trees, and an old, deserted garden.

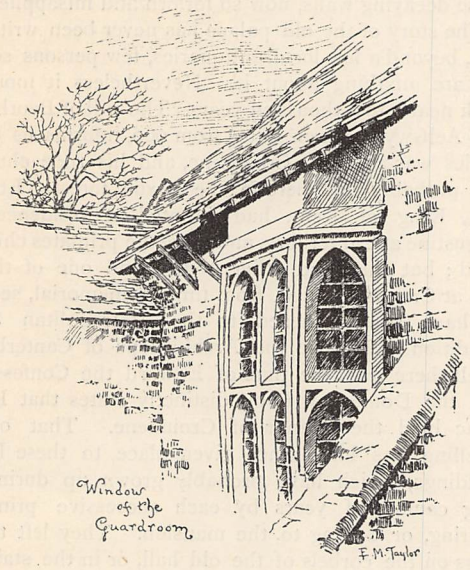
There is an appearance of neglect about the whole structure, which has evidently seen better days. The shutters are closed on the oriel windows, which still retain the traces of their former grandeur. The shrubs are broken down and drooping in the angles of the walls. The grass of the garden is thick and matted; the walls and borders are overgrown with weeds. That old Gothic archway, with its groined ceiling, once the principal entrance to the mansion, harbours now a brood of withered leaves and refuse. A lusty plant of ivy springs from the portal and battens on the crumbling stone. A desolate and leafless elder-tree, which grows beside it, moans in the wintry blast. The ivy, indeed, is everywhere. It overruns the plots of the garden, climbs into the laburnums, and creeps over the buttresses to the very top of the highest chimney. If it had its own will it would soon make a grave of the old place.

One would say that these abandoned tenements were part of an estate in Chancery; the buttressed hall, a ruin of some former priory or country church. It is not easy to believe them the remains of a famous residence, haunted with the memory of kings and mighty prelates, whose very names lead the imagination far back into the long vista of English history. Yet so it is. A line of archbishops, from Lanfranc to Laud and Cranmer, dwelt in this place, entertaining princes, ambassadors, and even monarchs within these decaying walls, now so forlorn and misapplied.

The story of the old palace has never been written, and, beyond a few local antiquaries, few persons seem to care anything about it. Nevertheless it mounts back nearly to a thousand years. The will of Beorhtric and Aelfswyth, which dates from 960, informs us that Elflies was priest of Crogdœne, and his rude church was probably built here in the Saxon forest. Ethelbert, King of Kent, had granted a residence to Augustine at Canterbury, and there the primates chiefly lived; but they had other homes, and one of them was at Croydon, which, from time immemorial, seems to have been annexed to the Metropolitan See. Tradition tells that the Archbishops of Canterbury dwelt there from the time of Edward the Confessor; and the Domesday Book distinctly states that Lanfranc held the Manor of Croindene. That older dwelling has long since given place to these later buildings, which have probably grown up during a long course of years by each successive primate altering, or adding to, the mansion. They left their arms on the corbels of the old hall, or in the stained glass of the chambers, which has all been removed. Otherwise there is little to instruct us in the history of the building. Archbishop Arundel, whose reign dates from 1397 to 1414, was one of those who resided here; and it was in his time that the unfortunate James I. of Scotland, captured by the English on his way to France, was kept a prisoner in the palace for many years. James was a poet, and probably beguiled his



durance by meditating couplets in the alleys of the garden, or by the banks of the trout-streams which meandered round the seat. For the springs of the Wandle flowed through the grounds, and one of them still flows under a culvert beneath the neighbouring street. There were fish-ponds, too, for the primate's



table, orchards and vineries, groves and pleasaunces, about the old mansion, which must have rendered it a sweet retirement to a man of literary tastes, even though he was a prisoner.

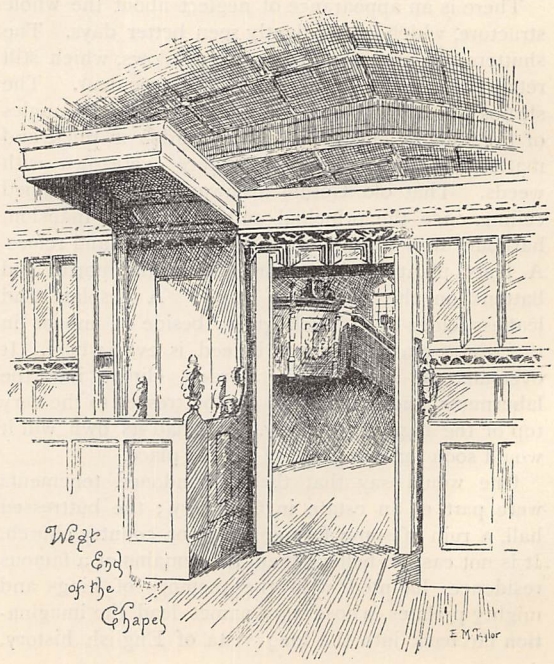
The learned John Fryth, afterwards burned at Smithfield, was brought here before Archbishop Cranmer, on July 4th, 1533, and, as we read, was "well entertained in the porter's lodge" the night of his arrival. That lodge has disappeared, and with it the old gateway, which a few years ago still spanned the avenue leading from Church Street to the palace. Queen Elizabeth paid two visits to the place as the guest of Archbishop Parker, and her bedroom, as well as the pew she occupied in the chapel, are still pointed out to visitors. The chamberlain of the day seems to have had a difficulty in bestowing her numerous and distinguished retinue, if we may trust to an old document, which appears to be a report of his arrangement: "Lodgins at Croyden, the Busshope of Canterburye's house bestoweth as followeth, the 19th of Maye, 1574. The Lord Chamberlayne his old lodginge. The Lord Treasurer [William Cecil, Lord Burleigh] where he was. The La Marquess at ye nether end of the great chamber. The La Warwick where she was. The Erle of Lecester [Robert Dudley] where he was. The Lord Admyrall [Earl of Lincoln] at ye nether end of ye great chamber. . . . I cannot there tell wher to place Mr. Hutton; and for my La Carewe here is no place with a chymney for her, but that she must ley abrode by Mrs. Aparry, and ye rest of ye Pryvy Chambers."

Archbishop Grundall did not find the place wholesome, but convenient, being so near London, whither he often went on business, or "to seek some help of physic." Whitgift, however, was of a different mind, and loved "the sweetness of the place, especially in summer," as a retreat from business, and loved it all the more after he had "builded his hospital and school" at Croydon.

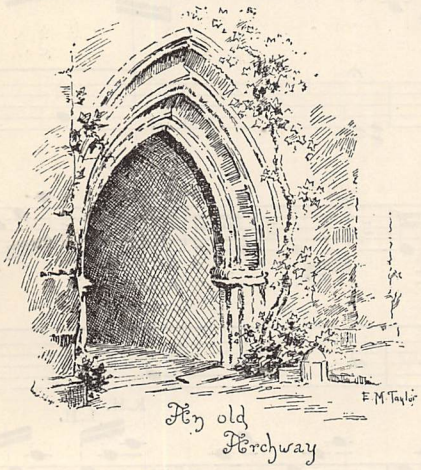
The house was then embosomed with trees, which were so thinned out by Archbishop Abbot that Lord Chancellor Bacon, riding by one day, failed to recognise it. He demanded of his servant "whose faire house" was that. The man replied it was "the house of Canterburie." Bacon said it was not possible, for his house was environed with wood. The servant told him the trees had been cut down. "By my troth," rejoined Bacon, "he has done very judiciously, for before methought it was a very obscure and dark place, but now he has expounded and cleared it wonderfully well."

During the period of anarchy after Laud's death the Cheshire forces turned the chapel into a kitchen; but after the Restoration several archbishops lived in the palace, the last being Archbishop Hutton, who died in 1758. His two successors neglected the place, and it was sold, in 1780, to a private gentleman. Later on it became a laundry and bleaching ground, with a steam engine in the hall; and the chapel was turned into a day school. But, fortunately, for its preservation, the Duke of Newcastle has bought and presented it to the Church Extension Association, who, we understand, propose to restore it if the necessary funds are obtained. The Archbishops of Canterbury now live at Addington, a pretty village on the bounds of Kent, about three miles east of Croydon.

Our artist has pictured some of the most interesting bits of what still remains of the old palace. Besides the numerous bedrooms, which have nearly all been

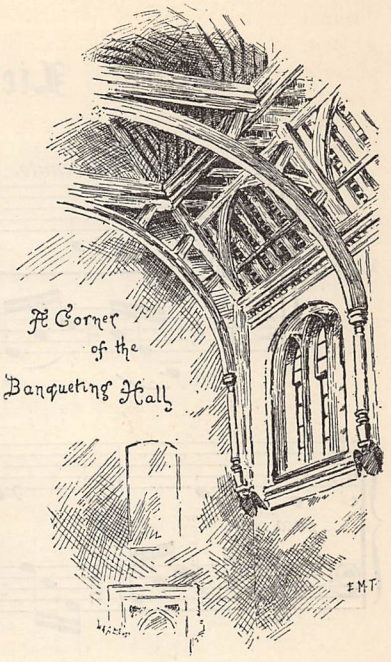


stripped of their oaken wainscoting, and the "long gallery," now occupied as a dwelling-house by the caretaker, but believed to have been a picture gallery, there are still standing the banquet-hall, the so-called "guard-room," a music gallery, and the private chapel. They are all more or less empty and dismantled, for the place has been in the hands of persons whose only thought seems to have been to turn its woodwork into cash, and the shelter it afforded to industrial purposes. Happily, the fine roof of the banquet-hall is yet in excellent preservation, as may be seen from the corner sketch, and the cleanness of the timbers, whether of oak or chestnut, seems to disprove the



theory that it was once heated by a log-fire in the middle of the floor. Under the beams of the roof may be seen the stone corbels from which it springs, with the painted shields of the various archbishops, borne by the carved effigies of angels. A quaint old monument, which formerly stood in the eastern end of the hall, is now built into the western gable. The scutcheon shown under the crown bears the arms of Edward the Confessor, with its "cross fleury" and "five martlets" impaled with the fleur-de-lys of France and the three lions of England. It is believed to be the shield of Henry VI.

The door shown in the corner of the hall leads by an oaken staircase towards the western parts of the building, where are situated the "guard-room" and the chapel. Certainly the so-called "guard-room" has been a fine apartment, and much more like a "withdrawing-room" than a place for soldiers. The antique window opens from its south wall into the grassy paddock, where, as we look out, a poor broken-down horse is slowly munching some wheaten straw. Through the music gallery, we enter into the old chapel, whose sacred character has preserved it from the hands of the spoiler. The wainscoting and the carved oak benches are still entire, and a little trouble would restore it to a useful place of worship. Luckily it was a girls' school which was kept here. Had the seats been occupied by boys it is more than probable the carvings, in the course of nature, would have disappeared. The stall with the canopy, shown in our illustration, is the reading-desk, but the sound-board is more modern than the rest of the screen. The Communion-table stood on a raised daïs at the other or eastern end of the chapel; and behind the screen, through the doorway, the eye catches a glimpse of "Queen Elizabeth's pew," with an oaken staircase leading up to it. The occupant of this pew, which has certainly been reserved for persons of distinction, could overlook the screen and see the other end of the chapel.



VERSES FOR A BIRTHDAY.

FROM the fields that lie a-waving with the wheat a fathom deep
In its golden raiment, heavy with the scarlet flowers of sleep,
Through a lattice of wild roses comes the song of those that reap.

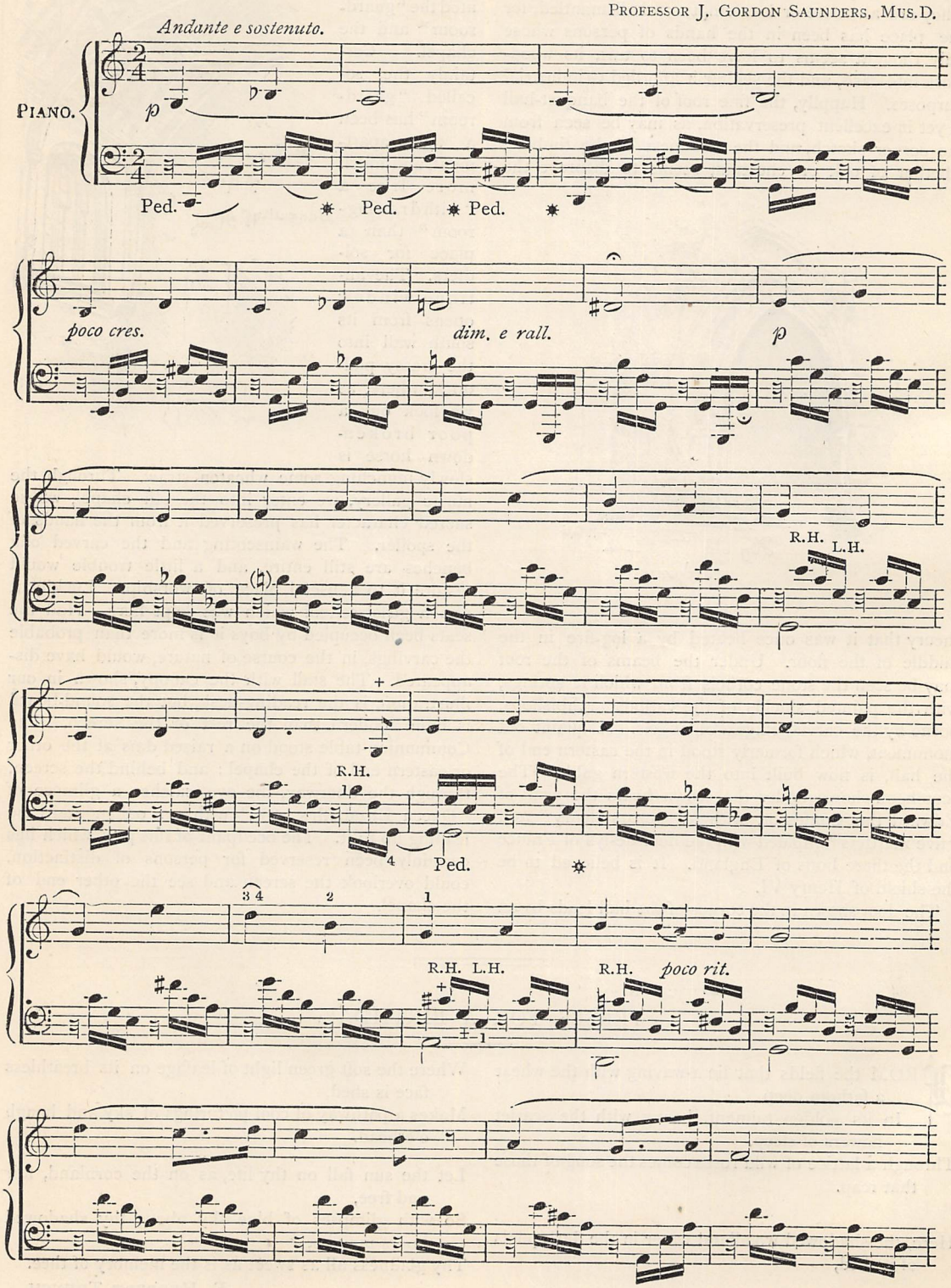
Here, the shadowed woodland water in the dark pools of its bed,
Where the soft green light of leafage on its breathless face is shed,
Makes a pathway of cool picturings of sky and bough o'erhead.

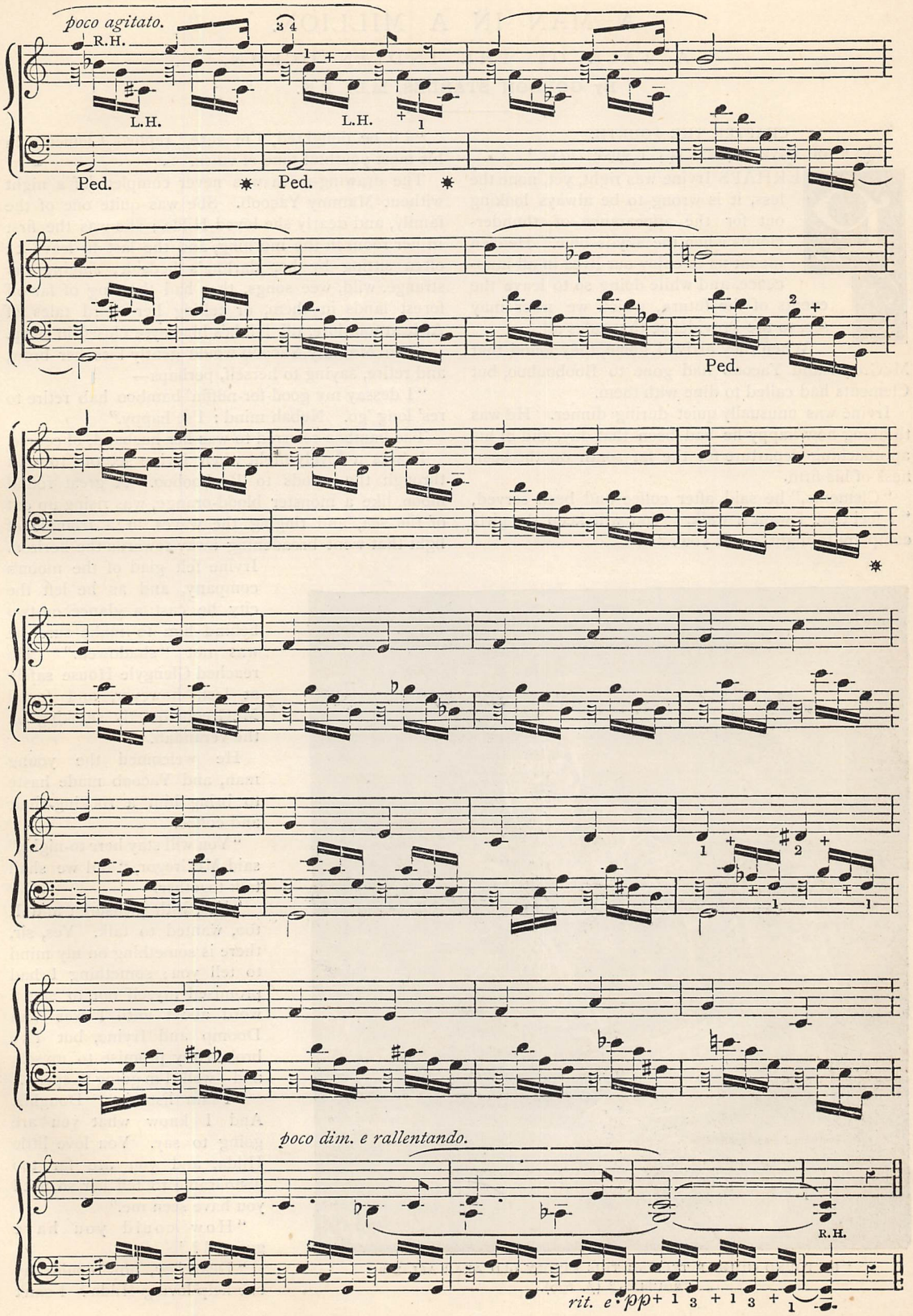
Let the sun fall on thy life, as on the cornland, fair and free,
So with glimpses of blue sky above thy shadowed hours may be,
Thy gladness all as sweet as is the memory of thee.

F. HERBERT TRENCH.

Lied, for the Pianoforte.

PROFESSOR J. GORDON SAUNDERS, MUS.D.




poco agitato.
R.H.
L.H.
L.H.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
poco dim. e rallentando.
R.H.
rit. e pp

A MAN IN A MILLION.

A TALE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

"YOU HAVE SPOKEN, BUT I MUST *THINK*."

PERHAPS Irvine was right, yet, none the less, it is wrong to be always looking out for the appearance of thunder-clouds when the sky is blue. Heaven meant us to enjoy our lives in all innocence, and while doing so to leave the events of the future, which we ne'er may see, to the Providence that rules all.

When they arrived home, they found that McGregor and Yacoob had gone to Boobooboo, but Clements had called to dine with them.

Irvine was unusually quiet during dinner. He was thinking how happy he had been that day, and of his approaching departure for the far south on the business of his firm.

"Clements," he said, after coffee had been served, "I feel that I want a walk. You will keep the girls company to-night, won't you?"

"I'll be delighted, I'm sure," replied Clements, in his most youthful tone of voice.

The drawing-room was never complete of a night without Mammy Yacoob. She was quite one of the family, and dearly she loved Hilda; she was the first in her room in the morning, and the last to leave it; often sitting by her darling's bedside, singing her strange, wild, wee songs, that had the ring of far-off forest lands in them, or telling her weird tales of African folk-lore, till Hilda's blue eyes closed in sleep.

Then Mammy Yacoob would gently kiss her brow, and retire, saying to herself, perhaps—

"I dessay my good-for-nuffin' bamboo hab retire to res' long 'go. Nebah mind: I'se happy."

The bamboo referred to was her husband, of course.

It was a lovely night when Irvine set out to walk through the woods to Boobooboo. A great round moon, like a monster blood-orange, was rising up out of the sea, and tinging the waves in a triangle of light that went broadening away towards the horizon. Irvine felt glad of the moon's company, and as he left the city he cast a glance or two behind him to make sure he was not "shadowed." He reached Glengyle House safely at last, however, and found McGregor quietly smoking on the verandah.

"HE FOUND HIMSELF TELLING THIS KINDLY OLD ARAB ALL HIS TROUBLES" (*p.* 626).

He welcomed the young man, and Yacoob made haste to bring him a rocking-chair and coffee.

"You will stay here to-night," said McGregor, "and we shall talk together."

"Yes, with pleasure; and I, too, wanted to talk. Yes, sir, there is something on my mind to tell you; something I had promised myself not to say a word about until I was Van Doomp and Irvine, but I've broken my promise to myself, and—well, I'm going to speak."

"I am listening, Douglas. And I know what you are going to say. You love little Hilda, and you are far too honourable to tell her so until you have seen me."

"How could you have guessed?"

"Dear boy, how could any one help loving Hilda? I can't

live for ever, and I should like to see her settled before long."

"You rejoice my heart, sir!"

"Stay. Pray don't say that; for what I have to tell you I had rather left unsaid. Irvine, much as I regard you, Hilda, I fear, can never be yours."

"Oh! sir——"

"Yacoob, go to the kitchen and make more coffee. Now, Douglas, we are alone, and I can speak freely. I am all but a broken and a bankrupt man. Clements, my kindly partner, has stretched out a hand to help me to tide over the evil day, and I have promised that Hilda shall be his wife; though I would sooner far lie down to die than force her inclinations." Irvine had sprung to his feet, almost kicking away the rocker on which he had sat. He took several rapid turns up and down the balcony before he spoke again, and what he did say now was cruel in the extreme.

"Why did you not take your daughter to the slave-market and sell her to the highest bidder, sir?"

"Spoken like a young man and a fiery Scot," replied McGregor very quietly. "I will not retaliate by answering you angrily; but I'll answer honestly. Does my daughter reciprocate your attachment?"

"I have not asked her."

"I know, I know; but you are not a fool, you must have found out whether or not she loves you."

"I do most sincerely believe she does."

"And I tell you now, Douglas Irvine, that I would a hundred times sooner have you for a son-in-law than Clements, long though I have known him."

"Then, oh! dear sir, forgive me for talking so impetuously, so cruelly."

McGregor held out his hand and the young man grasped it.

"Are things really so bad as you imagine?" said Irvine.

The next sentence of McGregor's seemed spoken more *en rêverie* than directly to his companion.

"Your going to Comoro and Mozambique is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. Your going prevents the arrival of the *Niagara*. My commercial life depended on her arrival. Van Doomp has an interest in my downfall: he has played his best card now and all is lost, or would be—except for Clements."

Irvine was silent for some minutes, then he got up and buttoned his light coat across his breast, as if the night breeze that swept over the sea had suddenly chilled him.

"UNEASILY SCANNING THE HAZY HORIZON" (*p.* 628).

"Good night," he said; "good night—father."

"But, my dear boy, you are not going? You will not go and expose yourself to the dangers of the forest to-night? Think of those death-laden dews, Douglas."

"Dear sir, do not try to detain me. I must get away. You have spoken, but I have to *think!* And I must walk, too. To sit still now would kill me. Good night, good night." He tore himself away.

McGregor watched his retreating figure hastening away forestwards, till the gloom of the trees swallowed it up. Then the merchant went sadly and silently indoors.

Instead of returning Irvine struck off at right angles into the forest. He feared nothing at present. What were night dews to him, now that he was to lose Hilda? Why, death itself would be a happy release to him. So he thought.

Lose Hilda! He spoke the words aloud, and it seemed some one else's voice that said them.

Lose Hilda! He never knew till this moment how

dearly he loved her. What a terrible awakening this was from what was surely the happiest dream ever vouchsafed to man below!

Lose Hilda! Could she love Clements? What *could* a man like him ever be to a girl like his Hilda? His Hilda? Nay, his no more; the very words had a mocking ring in them as he repeated them over and over again in the silence of the woods.

But stay, why could she not be his? *Need* he go to meet the *Niagara?* *Need* he stretch out a hand to pull his house of cards around his faithful old friend McGregor? Need he wantonly ruin his own happiness, and absolutely give his love away?

Need he? Oh! none can tell the struggle with love and conscience this poor Douglas Irvine maintained for hours and hours that night in the forest.

Utterly worn out at last he reached a little wooden platform among some cocoanut-trees, and, clambering up, threw himself at full length and fell fast asleep.

Slowly through the trees, from his grass hut, came at sunrise, Om del Rona, to pray. He carried in his hand his little carpet, on which, every morning for forty years and over, he had been wont to prostrate himself before Allah. He started to find his platform occupied, and that, too, by an unbeliever. But Om was a kindly-hearted old man; his beard had been whitened by many sorrows, but his life was one of peace now with all mankind. He gently touched Irvine on the shoulder, simply saying, "It is day."

The young man sat up shivering, and stared wildly round him; but when his eyes rested on the old Arab, he smiled.

"I fear I have been trespassing," he said; "forgive me."

"But wait," said Om; "wait until I have prayed, then come into my hut and drink coffee. I will mix with it some fine herbs which shall banish the fever I see in your eye."

A few minutes after this, somewhat to his own surprise, he found himself telling this kindly old Arab all his troubles, and seeking for advice as youth need never be ashamed to do from the aged.

"Your struggle has been hard," he said, "'twixt love and duty, but you have the victory—you have rest. And rest is life. Be it yours, my son, to live blamelessly and conquer self. True happiness and peace consist not in ministering to one's own wants and cravings, nor in worshipping pleasure, wealth, ambition, fame, or *love*, but in striving to help all living creatures or things around us, in checking passion till it fades and dies, and in bearing, in meekness and humility, the sufferings inseparable from human nature, for sorrow follows us through life as a shadow in the sunlight, nor leaves us until we are laid beneath the sod. And he who lives but to die, dying, shall live again through a blissful eternity."

Words such as these, and much more to the same effect, spoke the aged and saintly Arab to Douglas Irvine. I have made no attempt to give his advice in his own diction, however; it was full of metaphor and beautiful imagery, but just as full of truth—truth that brought peace to Irvine's sorrowing heart, and sent him away at last really and truly the victor.

That same forenoon he presented himself at Van Doomp's. What a difference between the wise old hermit and this thin-lipped, active-eyed man of the world and business!

Von Doomp met him, however, with a smile.

"Ah, goot morning, my friendt. But how vhas it dot you look so tired? Maybe you not haf some sleeps las' night?"

"Thanks; no, I walked the woods all last night or nearly. I was thinking. Fact is, I'm in love, and as I don't see a chance of ever being able to marry whom I should like to, I want now to get away to sea—to-day. The dhow is ready and loaded up with your ivory and gum and gold dust."

"Shust so. Vhell, I vhas glad. Dis speculation vhill be goot for me and for you. You buys oop all der sugar and all der tings, eafery wheres; ha! ha! We vhill be dot rich, we shall not know vot to do. Ha! ha! I dink I dies mit laughing."

And old Van Doomp was obliged to throw himself into the rocker, straighten his legs out, and give vent to his feelings.

"I shall go now and get ready," said Irvine.

"Dot's so? Good-bye, den, and Got bless you, my boy. I see you mit joy, vhen you comes back. Good-bye, dear boy."

Away went Irvine, to bid adieu to his sister. He inwardly hoped that Hilda might not be about, for he could not quite trust himself yet.

Flora was alone, and bade him such a tearful farewell, that he felt quite unmanned.

"Say 'good-bye' to Hilda for me. Don't look at me so, dear sister. I love her, there! you know the truth; but she is to be the bride of another, and I dare not see her now. Give her that kiss—no, on second thoughts, don't. Tell her, though — tell her — no, Flora, tell her nothing. Good-bye, good-bye; pray for me, and—Oh, yes, Hilda can pray for me, too."

"Dood-bye, Missie Irvine." It was 'Tinka who spoke.

He lifted the child in both arms high above his head, and kissed her in the air.

"Good-bye, charming fairy," he said. "Take care of Miss Hilda, for me." And away he ran.

That same forenoon, a six-pounder gun was fired from a huge dhow leaving harbour and bearing up for the south. At the same moment the Dutch flag was run up to the peak. It fluttered there awhile, then was lowered to half-mast, and hung drooping there.

This was Irvine's sorrowful farewell.

* * * * * *

A whole month went by, but as yet Clements had made no attempt to press his suit with Hilda. He was too wise, or thought he was, to say anything to startle her, while her mind was still fresh with the grief of having lost a brother, if not a lover.

And he had gone away, too, without saying one word of farewell.

Hilda could neither understand this, nor could she at first credit it. She had not been about when he

called ; but surely, oh, surely ! he would return before the dhow sailed. But the dhow did sail, and although she and Flora stood on the house-top waving their handkerchiefs, except for the gun fired and the flag flying sorrowfully at half-mast, Irvine made no sign.

Flora was pained to see her pupil so downcast, and did all she could to cheer her.

"He dared not see you before he left," she said.

"Dared not, dear Flora? What do you mean?"

"His feelings would have overpowered him."

"You think, then, he lo—— he cares for me just a little?"

"He cares for you very much. Too much, I fear, for his own peace of mind."

"I cannot understand it, nor you, Flora. But I will live and hope in the words you have spoken."

No one can be unhappy very long in Zanzibar, the air is far too pure, and sorrow is a plant that thrives but badly in the sunshine.

Hope whispered to Hilda a flattering tale, and she was all heart and ears to listen to it.

So the time went on. Little Katinka had been very careful to inform her mistress that "de biggee hansome gem'lan" had left orders that *she* should watch over Hilda's safety. And she meant to do so, she intimated.

In the long, dark forenights—the sun always sets about six in Zanzibar—when tired of singing, reading, and playing, Hilda, Katinka, and Mrs. Yacoob used to get Flora in a corner, and make her tell them story after story about that far-off foreign land—Scotland. They never tired listening to these, and even preferred Flora's simple tales to Walter Scott's novels, because they went more directly to the heart.

* * * * * *

Henry Arthur Clements rose one morning with a firm resolve uppermost in his mind. He meant that very forenoon to begin to make himself agreeable to Hilda. So he took an abnormally long time with his toilet.

And after he had arrayed himself in his neatest and most juvenile attire, he critically examined his face in the glass. He found more crow's-feet there, and more tell-tale wrinkles, than he had been previously aware of ; so he soon got tired of the scrutiny, and sat down to rest and think.

"I'll be kind, *so* kind to her," he said to himself. "She shall never want for anything. Her slightest wish shall be gratified, even anticipated. And why not? I am well off. I'm rich. So would McGregor himself have been, had he not burned his fingers with private speculation—happily for me, though in one way I'm sorry for my partner. We shall go to England on our honeymoon. Poor little dear, how delighted she will be with everything she sees in London. As for Irvine, why, the idea is preposterous! But an appointment at Seychelles will make him happy."

* * * * *

Weeks went by, and though Clements visited Hilda almost every day, and, as far as dress went, looked younger every day, he certainly made no impression on the girl. Well, for that matter, Hilda had no heart to give, and even if she had had, she would hardly have bestowed it on her father's partner.

The most ridiculous part of Clements' wooing was his assumption of the dress, gayness, and even frivolities of youth. He forgot, intentionally, that he was fifty-five, or if he remembered it at all it was only to compare himself with far older men, to his own advantage, of course. He forgot, or he would not remember, that he was grey-haired, stiff-jointed, hollow-eyed, and—whisper it—a trifle podgy.

Clements commenced wooing now on a different system.

For one thing, he became quite "horsey" all of a sudden. He had a fresh steed from the Sultan's stables every day—the Sultan is very kind to Europeans—and used to take Hilda on delightful, long rides round the island. He took also to bragging mildly about the benefits of wealth, and gave her presents which would have dazzled the eyes of a Turk. He even hinted mysteriously about his own intention to marry soon—upon his forty-ninth birthday, he said! —and poor Hilda at once thought of the widow Webber.

So, on the whole, Clements' wooing did not prosper. Meanwhile, all unexpectedly, back one morning came Hilda's Prince in the *Niagara*.

Both Flora and Hilda were in a great state of excitement, and Mrs. Yacoob and little 'Tinka seemed to go daft when they found that the great three-masted ship that had dropped anchor in the bay, contained no less a personage than Douglas Irvine himself.

Things went on for a time now very much as they had done before Irvine had gone away. Van Doomp's bills had been met by McGregor, with Clements' kind assistance, and so far he could breathe more freely.

But McGregor was not a happy man. The words that Irvine had used that evening at the bungalow, about selling his daughter in the slave-market, kept rankling in his mind : he had felt their force at the time, and had felt their truth since.

"She will grow to love Clements *after* marriage ;" that is what he had to tell himself fifty times a day.

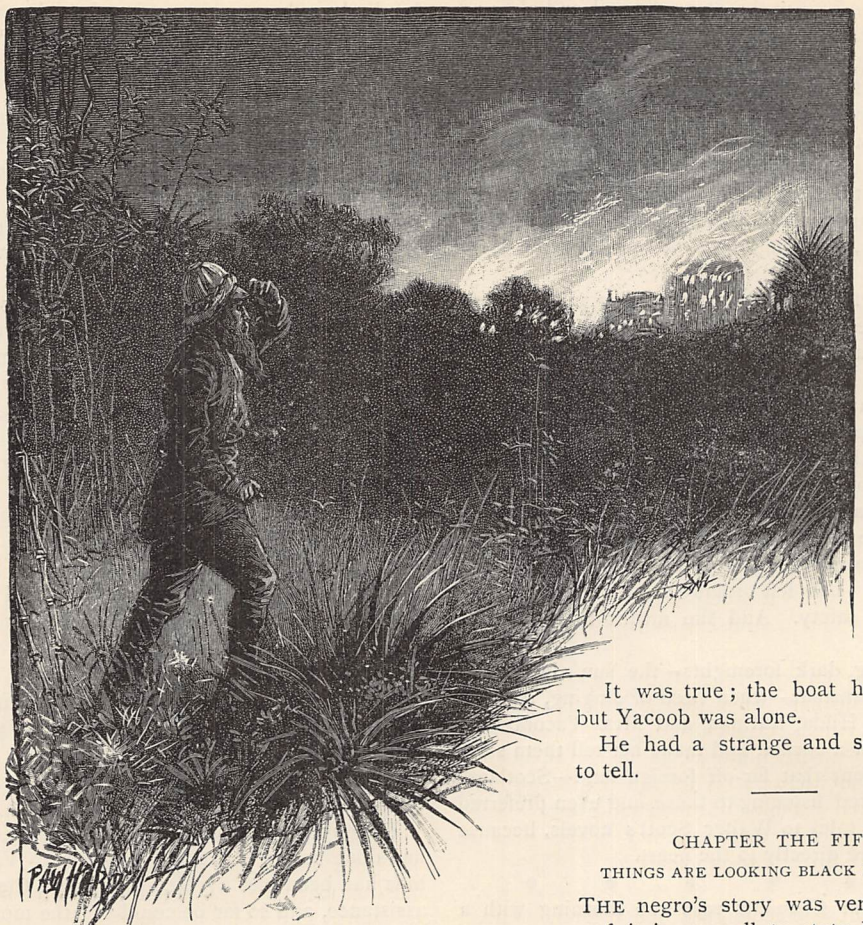
Irvine, however, did not come quite so often to McGregor's house now, nor were the dear old rambles in the forest nor the boat-cruises on the sea resumed. So Clements continued to be Hilda's escort as before.

"We have a new branch starting at Seychelles," McGregor told poor Irvine one day, "and if you care to better yourself and leave Van Doomp, Clements is willing to make you our junior partner. What say you?"

"Heigho!" sighed Irvine. "I know right well what it all means. Yes, I think I shall be better away. But if Van Doomp himself starts a house at Seychelles, I shall take his offer rather than yours, or rather, I should say, than Clements'."

* * * * *

Though Irvine did no more rowing with Hilda and Flora, he went frequently by himself in McGregor's badane ; and Yacoob, whose duties were not onerous on shore, often accompanied him.



"DASHES THROUGH THE BUSH IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CITY" (*p.* 631)

One day they sailed away to a distant island. It was in the monsoon season, and the sea was somewhat rough, the sky frequently overcast with rain-squalls.

They were to have been back by four o'clock, and Irvine was coming to dine at McGregor's; but as the afternoon wore away, no signs of the returning boat could be seen from the house-top, where Flora and Hilda were uneasily scanning the hazy horizon.

At last the sun gave a saturnine gleam across the sea and so sank behind the waves. The girls' uneasiness changed now to positive fear. They were in tears. The one could not comfort the other, and both dreaded even to tell what was uppermost in their minds.

No one could eat any dinner that day, and the girls were silent but kept listening to every unusual sound, as one does who expects evil tidings.

Towards ten o'clock, Mrs. Yacoob came in. Her face showed her fears.

"Oh, Master McGregor," she cried, "my good-for-nuffin' bamboo hab return, but no Missa Irvine!"

It was true; the boat had returned, but Yacoob was alone.

He had a strange and sorrowful tale to tell.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

THINGS ARE LOOKING BLACK FOR YACOOB.

THE negro's story was very soon told, and it is as well to state here at once, that from this evening to the bitter end he never once deviated from it, or gave any other version thereof. What he told McGregor then, he repeated before Clements and Van Doomp with several other witnesses on the beach next day, and before the door of the little hut in which the badane was kept.

He looked his questioners straight in the face as he spoke. It was eye to eye and soul to soul.

They had spent the day shooting, he said, in a far-off island, and were detained longer than they expected to be. They sighted the town about two hours after sunset. It was then very dark, and presently it became darker, for a thick squall came on, and they had to lower the sail and trust to oars to keep her head to the wind. It was just then that the accident happened. They heard a shout, and almost at the same moment a huge black dhow bore down on them, and both were thrown into the water, although the well-ballasted badane with her false keel, which was down at the time, righted almost immediately again.

Yacoob was a powerful swimmer, and he easily managed to reach the boat and scramble on board. "But," he said, "po' Master Irvine nebber come to de surface, and I not see him no more."

Both oars were lost and the rudder was unshipped, so it was only with the greatest exertions that Yacoob had succeeded at last in reaching the shore.

This was all that Yacoob had to say, and McGregor was about to open the door of the hut to look at the badane, when a richly dressed gentleman Arab stepped up.

His English was exceptionally good, and his manner quiet and even sad.

"I have a word to say, master," he said to McGregor. "I believe this man lies, and that your son met with foul play. I was out fishing last night," he continued. "I saw the badane, and both this slave and the English gentleman in it. I saw no dhow. There was a slight squall, true, and during it I heard shouts and cries for help. When I next saw the badane there was but one man in her. That man was Yacoob."

"Pull out the badane," said McGregor quickly.

There was not the slightest sign that she had been run down or run into, but there was blood on the seats, and a cloth, also stained, was found in one of the lockers.

"Yacoob," said McGregor, sternly now, "how came that there?"

"I dun no nuffin, sah, I shuah; it not there las' night."

Things were looking black for Yacoob.

"Turn his pockets out," suggested the Arab.

This was done, and in his jacket was found Irvine's cigar-case.

The Arab nodded to McGregor. Then two of the Sultan's soldiers walked up and at once made Yacoob prisoner, and marched him off.

His last words, and they were accompanied by a look that McGregor never forgot, were these—

"I go now to prison, sah. Dat is goin' to def. Nobody eber leave de Sultan's prison alive. Bet befo' Hebben, dis day, sah, I sware I'ze innocent."

The tears were rolling down his black cheeks as he was marched away.

"Dot vhas one innocent man, Mister Gregor," said Van Doomp, looking sorrowfully after the prisoner.

"*I* think so," said McGregor. "Clements, what is your opinion?"

"That it is all a mystery," answered Clements.

The house of McGregor and Clements had influence enough, however, to obtain an interview with the Sultan, and that potentate promised faithfully that "by-and-by" Yacoob should have a fair and impartial trial. Meanwhile the prisoner was locked up in a dark and fœtid dungeon, where, until his being brought out for trial, or execution without trial, he would have an allowance of cassava-root, rice, and half-putrid water, just enough to sustain life after a fashion.

No more could be done. McGregor and Clements went home to comfort the girls as best they could.

They told the Arab's story; they told everything, in fact, wisely believing that it was better the truth should come from them than second-hand from some one else.

All joy seemed quite gone from the hearts of every one in McGregor's house now. Both Flora and Hilda mourned for Douglas Irvine as one mourns for the dead, Mrs. Yacoob was cheerless enough, and even little 'Tinka was frequently found weeping for "de biggee hansome gen'lam" that always spoke so kindly to her.

"I must not let you girls mope so much," said McGregor one morning many months after the events above described. "To sorrow to a certain extent is right enough, but to sorrow too much is sinful. Flora, I am getting a pony for you, so that you can join Hilda in her *daily* rides. Mind, I say *daily*, and Clements will look after you both."

So riding in the forest was resumed, and both girls benefited much thereby.

Clements was still doing his best to curry favour with Hilda, and, indeed, she thought him very kind, and often accused herself of being ungrateful to him. He had as yet, however, made no attempt to press his suit. But the time came before very long.

"I really don't want to press you about those bills, partner," said Clements one day to McGregor, as they sat together in their dark office. "But business is business, even if you were my brother."

"Well," replied McGregor, "of course I know business is business, so had I not better make over to you my large store of gum copal and ivory?"

"No, because you will do better with that when you get an opportunity of shipping it, doubly better. And it is safe enough, the white ants will hardly eat the gum, nor the elephants' tusks either. But I want Hilda. Come, now, on the day we are married I burn all the bills, and you will be a free man once again. Can't you get your influence to bear just a little on the matter?"

"Have you hinted about marriage to her?"

"No, that would be in vain as yet. But you do as I propose, then, if you will permit, I shall take Miss Irvine and Hilda for a voyage to Seychelles. Mrs. Yacoob can come, too, as maid. I want to establish that branch there, which poor Irvine should have had The voyage will do the girls a world of good, and there is no saying what may happen."

A night or two after this McGregor took his daughter into a private room. What conversation passed between them may never be known, but that night, do as she would, Mammy Yacoob could not get her darling to go to sleep. Her fits of crying were many and frequent, though she would not tell Mrs. Yacoob the nature of her grief.

Next day at breakfast, McGregor himself looked ten years older, and no wonder, for he had paced the floor all the livelong night.

But the little paddle steamer *Mahé* left Zanzibar a week after this for the distant islands of Seychelles, and Clements and his party were the only passengers.

The lovely weather, the sparkling sea, blue and pearly sky, the glorious sunrises and sunsets all combined, would have made the voyage seem idyllic, under happier auspices. As it was, it was just something less than a weariness.

One bright starry night, while Flora was below in the cabin, Clements seated himself near to Hilda, and gently took her hand.

He had determined at last to plead his own cause, and it must be confessed he did so most eloquently. His tones were deep, true, and impassioned. He threw himself more on the girl's sympathy than anything else. He did not even ask for her love, but he pleaded for her pity. He knew, he said, she had loved another, and that other was worthy of all the love and respect a woman's heart could yield. But then that other was gone long ago. He would be seen or heard no more till the sea gave up its dead. And he—Clements—was a lonely man; his very wealth was a burden to him because he had no one to share it with him. Would she not share it? He was tired of Zanzibar, and so was his partner. But he had riches enough for all. They should sell out and go to England, nay, to Scotland itself, the land of poetry and romance, that she had so often read about and dreamt about. Then quiet, and peace, and joy would be assured to them all, especially to the old man her father, whom sorrow was bending fast towards the ground and towards the grave.

"Oh!" she cried through her tears; "indeed, indeed, dear Mr. Clements, I am not ungrateful, but don't press me to-night."

"I will not press you to answer to-night, my precious," he answered. "I will not ask you to answer for one month, or for five months. Meanwhile, let me be near you sometimes, and do not scorn my little attentions."

"Oh, thank you, dear Mr. Clements! you are, indeed, kind. Nay, more, you are noble. I will pray for you, I——"

The sentence ended in a flood of tears. Clements soothed her as well as he could, and, like a wise man, made haste to change the subject.

He was content and happy now. The thin edge of the wedge was in, and he never doubted that he was capable of driving it home.

Strange to say, there was from this very evening a change in Clements' demeanour. He seemed much more at ease. He was henceforward himself at his best, making no more attempts at youthful flippancy, but making himself most agreeable and unselfish. He was even mirthful at times, and the mirth now appeared to come straight away from the heart; it was genuine.

The islands of Seychelles at last! They are very beautiful, mountainous, and, in many cases, green-wooded to the water's edge. The young ladies made many pleasant friends here.

The *Wasp*, man-o'-war, lay at anchor off Port Victoria, and Clements accepted an invitation to a party given on board. True, neither Hilda nor Flora said much, but for the first time since that sad night of grief they began to feel a little quiet happiness. Picnics on shore and long rambles among the hills followed, and on the whole their three weeks' stay passed very quickly by.

Poor Hilda made more than one conquest among the officers of the *Wasp*, and when the steamer went paddling away seawards again, not only was the quarter-deck of the war-ship crowded with officers, but the rigging with cheering men. Then the music of the band came trembling over the waves, as it played that sweet sad old song, so dear to every sailor's heart, "Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye." Hilda wept though, because this had been Irvine's favourite.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

"DER VHAS SOME SLIPS BETWEEN DE CUP AND DE LIP."

McGREGOR had felt very lonely all the time his people were absent. Business was "slack" at the counting-house, although any day a ship might arrive, and when it did, he determined to sell off all his ivory and gums and spices, and thus clear off his debt to his partner. But there was no occasion for uneasiness.

One morning when McGregor went to the roof as usual to scan the horizon, his heart gave a joyful bound to notice, far away across the water, a long trail of smoke, and presently he could descry the steamer itself. He ran down below for his best telescope, and, balancing it on the edge of the parapet, scanned her long and earnestly.

It was not the *Mahé*, neither was it the *Wasp*, or any other expected man-o'-war. It must be a merchant ship, and now was his chance. How delightful it would be if he could sell his ivory and gums, and have them all shipped off before Clements returned!

He looked at his watch. It was barely seven o'clock. Van Doomp would not be up yet for hours. Happy thought! He would steal a march on the thin-lipped old Dutchman.

"Everything is fair in business," he said to himself, as he swallowed his cup of coffee.

In another quarter of an hour he was on the beach, and had hired an Arab boat to take him away to meet the stranger.

In an hour more he was walking the decks of the screw-ship *Loch Awe*, and bargaining with her captain for the disposal of his stores. The *Loch Awe* was in ballast and willing to load up at once.

"In fact, sir, the sooner the better," said the master mariner; "so if your stuff is in good trim, and you can give us coolies to help us, we shall get it on board to-morrow, stow it, and pay for it."

"There, now!" said McGregor, rubbing his hands with delight, "that sounds like business."

"Well, it is a business that is settled. So shake hands. I called at Comoro on my way from the Cape, and the English consul there gave me the address of Van Doomp, but I'm glad I've met a brother Scot. However," he added, "if he has anything we have room for, I can take that also."

"My dear sir, you won't have room for me alone."

"Well, well, well; but come down below and breakfast, and see the English papers. They're only two months old. Are you hungry?"

"As a hunter. I was not hungry when I started, but I am now."

They had a deal to talk about, those two Scotchmen, and before they had finished breakfast they heard the rattle of the cable as the anchor was being let go. On deck they went now, and the first man they saw spring over the gangway was Van Doomp himself. He was smiling and anxious, and looked full of intended business.

His face fell considerably, however, when he noticed McGregor, and he bit his thin lips with vexation.

McGregor could not resist the temptation to give him "a quiet dig," as he called it.

"Ah! Good morning, Van Doomp. I see you don't go in for early rising. Ha, ha! Well, Van, the early bird picks up the worm."

Van Doomp looked at McGregor for a moment over his glasses, then he answered slowly and pointedly—

"You haf been oop mit der lark dis morning, my friendt, but maype der vhas some slips between de cup and de lip. You remember dot?"

McGregor did remember it. He had bitter cause to do so.

It was his custom, when he wished to think, to walk out to Boobooboo to dine and sleep.

This evening he went there early, and after dinner seated himself, as was his wont, in a rocker in the verandah, and lit his cigar, to smoke while he leisurely sipped his coffee.

His thoughts to-night, however, were far from unpleasant. Indeed, he indulged himself in what might have been called castle-building had he been a younger man.

He was calm enough, nevertheless, to take a review of his whole position and his doings for the past dozen years.

There was no doubt about it, his grave fault in business had been a species of sanguineness which had amounted to rashness. Speculation is a fine thing if a man looks before he leaps: when he does not do so it is on a par with the lowest species of gambling. McGregor had gambled and—lost!

Well, he had suffered for it; but the bitterest part of all his sufferings centred in Hilda. Again and again to-night the words of Irvine rose to his lips: "Why not take your daughter to the slave-market and sell her to the highest bidder?"

And he loved this daughter so, too. But what should he gain by marrying her to Clements, kind-hearted fellow though he was? For himself, freedom from debt and care. For Hilda—misery. Ah, put it as he would, he could not get over that awful thought. And now it seemed to get closer hold of his heart, and he strove in vain to banish it.

But what was he to do? Why, the answer came as if an angel had whispered to him. Pay his debts with the money he should possess to-morrow, then sell his share in the business and go to England. Poor he would be, perhaps, to the end of his days, but he should be happy. Poor, because a large portion of his share in the firm of McGregor and Clements was already heavily mortgaged to his partner, but happy because Hilda would be happy.

"I will do it," he cried exultingly, at last. "I will purchase peace for myself and happiness for my child at any price. But—what is that glare above the trees? Is it fire?"

He ran to a little winding stair that led to the roof, and gazed away citywards.

The night was dark, still, and cloudy.

"Heaven help us all!" he exclaimed, "there cannot be a doubt about it. That is fire! See how the glare mounts up and illuminates the clouds of rolling smoke!"

A light breeze blew towards him from the city, and the flames burst higher and higher, and now he could distinctly hear the hum of the shouting and frightened populace.

It was the native town that was on fire.

Then he suddenly remembers that his stores stand almost in the centre of Zanzibar.

Half-frantic, he descends, seizes his hat, and dashes away out and through the bush in the direction of the city.

Except for the loss of life, which is ever a sad feature in a fire like this, the burning of the native and slave buildings would be a small matter indeed, for the houses are mostly grass and mud, and therefore easily repaired.

They burn quickly, too. There was comfort in this thought for McGregor.

The walls of his store were three feet thick, and it was possible for the fire to sweep round and past it without doing it injury.

Long before he reaches the city he can hear the yelling and the shrieking of the multitude, with the weird-like beating of war-tomtoms, and the occasional firing of shots.

"Surely," he thinks, "there is not going to be bloodshed as well as fire!"

And now he is out of the bush, and on a little eminence from which he can see far ahead.

What a scene! The fire has generated wind of its own, and the flames are bending before it in one long yellow-red, crackling line: tongues of fire leaping high into the air, or darting ahead through the smoke and sparks to lick up fresh fuel for their vengeance. But it is on a particular portion of this fearful scene that the merchant's eyes are riveted—a huge, square building that the main line of fire has already left, but from each little narrow window of which the flames are streaming in jets, while high over its roof hovers a pall of the darkest smoke. It is the store where McGregor has housed his ivory and copal.

He remembered then, if he had not before, the words of Van Doomp—

"Der vhas some slips between de cup and de lip."

END OF CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

WHAT TO WEAR IN SEPTEMBER.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS: FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

THE child's dress in our initial illustration is exactly the sort of useful frock which may be seen worn by little people at the Exhibition and in the country. The model from which it was taken was a plain soft woollen of a pinky-red tone, trimmed round the hem with a triple row of zig-zag braid of a slightly darker shade. The skirt was full and gathered to the pointed bodice, which was arranged to resemble a couple of square pleated pieces coming to the bust over the perpendicularly tucked bodice, with its row of braid on each tuck, just the same as the hem trimming. The sleeves are new; the upper portion is set full into the shoulder, and gathered beneath the elbow, where it is met by a straight close-fitting piece set in a band and trimmed with perpendicular rows of braid. A rather narrow ribbon is carried round the waist and falls in bows and ends in front, a bow formed of three loops terminating the streamers. There is a turn-down collar; and the hat made of straw, trimmed with bows and ends of ribbon, has a broad brim.

Children's fashions are fanciful as far as the cut of the dress is concerned, and the colourings are often vivid. There is an evident preference for the blotting-paper red and the various tones of green, some of them of the yellowish grass tones, if dark navy blue and dust shades are not selected, and on the latter a great deal of black is introduced.

In this particular month, in France, there is a demand for dressy outdoor toilettes, which in England could be usefully introduced for the innumerable garden parties and unostentatious dinners where a subsequent adjournment is often made to the garden. In our illustration, the standing figure shows the favourite mixture of grass-green and cream with Pompadour sprays in soft silk or mousseline de laine. The green portion of the skirt is cut in very simple fashion, gathered on to the pointed bodice and allowed to hang plain except on one side, where it is caught up curtain fashion; on the other side there is a looped sash of moire ribbon not over-wide, and pinned to the waist. The bodice is pointed, and has moire braces parted in front with a couple of bows, the open front filled in with a frilled and crossing fichu of mousseline de laine or soft silk; the frills are simply pinked out and sewn on with a heading. These frillings might be replaced by lace, which would be softer and, perhaps, more generally adapted to English tastes. The front of the skirt is entirely composed of the sprigged material in two distinct pieces, both pinked at the edge, the upper portion carried across diagonally. The sleeve is very pretty and very novel. Bands of ribbon velvet of a darker green are carried up either side of the opening and in the centre, with slashings of the sprigged stuff between, a frill of the same turning upwards from the arm with a bow of velvet. The large green velvet hat, with ostrich-feathers in two shades, mixed with bows of velvet, has a close-set wreath of roses beneath the brim. The long gloves are of French kid with no buttons; these are now far more fashionable than Suède or undressed kid.

EXPLANATIONS.

The dress worn by the seated figure is of quite a different type. It is a skilful mixture of plain and printed foulard, which has sparse floral sprays all over it in white. The model was the new flame-pink, the exact tone seen in a clear fire when it burns its brightest, not in the flame, but in a red-hot coal. Blue, green, or violet—heliotrope as it is now called—would be equally fashionable, more generally useful, and better suited to our English country life. The skirt is full and plain. On the left side there are a couple of drawings about six inches apart, the upper one with a heading. This is flanked with ribbons and ends, which start from beneath a knot at the waist. Over this the printed foulard is gracefully draped in the rounded form conveyed by the picture. The bodice is all of the printed foulard, ending in points at the waist, back and front. One side is full, arranged in irregular pleats apparently crossing over a half-bodice of white muslin guipure, introduced also on the tight sleeve to the elbow. The upper portion of the sleeve is full, made of the printed foulard as though it were swathed round the arm. A silk band, straight and firm, encircles the throat. English women incline more to high neck-bands than do French women, and home dressmakers would do well to provide themselves with some of the holland stiffening used by tailors. It is to be bought at shops where tailors' oddments are sold. It does not become limp with heat, and is really the only form of collar-stiffening that can be depended on. Silk has gone down a great deal in price in Paris, and consequently foulard is much cheaper, and is perhaps at the present moment the material that is most generally worn, even for underclothing, for in white and cream it certainly washes well; indeed, it wears better for under-clothing than for dresses—where in hot weather it soon becomes creased and shabby. Printed foulards have been and are now very well worn, especially black, grey, and green. Japanese designs are the newest and most acceptable. Flower bonnets and flower hats accord well with them. They can be easily made, provided the right shapes are procured, and on to these the blooms are just lightly tacked.

"SIGHTED."

Note the parasol in the hand of the seated figure in the illustration on the opposite page, for parasols are a very important part of the toilette. Many of the handles are Japanese ivory, quaintly worked—with gold and silver introduced, and the cover is made in most gossamer materials, little calculated to ward off the sun. White silk and black moire are the two most useful kinds, for they accord with almost any style of dress.

There are on sale in Paris now some most useful jerseys with black watered silk revers of large size, black sashes coming from beneath the arm, and full fronts. They are not costly, but they look extremely dressy, with no trouble of a dressmaker's bill.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

This is certainly the dullest month in the year in London. The wholesale houses are stocked with autumn and winter goods, which the country traders journey to the metropolis to buy; but no fashionable women appear to be in London, and if they are, they do not wear smart clothes or new ones. But all over England a number of pretty gowns are to be seen, and I have chosen for illustration two such as might appear any afternoon at Scarborough, Dover, Folkestone, and other gay seaside places. The figure on the left has a class of dress which could

be worn on a variety of occasions. Though not too loose-fitting for day wear and walking, it is quite well suited to a tea-gown. It is a combination of terra-cotta pink bengaline, and soft white crêpe de Chine. The front is made entirely of the latter, the waist pointed, and outlined with a gimp band on the bodice. The material is folded diagonally; on the skirt it is gathered and caught up on one side beneath a bow about half a yard from the hem. The dress is cut *en Princesse*, with lace revers, the same continued down either side. The sleeve is full to the elbow, where the fulness is met by a narrow cuff covered with the lace. The bodice is low and close-fitting, made of a piece of the dress, and trimmed with flowers.

The accompanying gown is a combination of plain and striped silk. As much of the under-skirt as shows is of the striped fabric with a ruche at the hem; the front of the bodice also, but an over-bodice of the plain material crosses it. The close-fitting sleeves are striped, the upper sleeves loose and cut up on the outside of the arm, where an ornament comes from the shoulder. The neck-band is of plain silk, and the outside belt is richly embroidered. A large white chip hat trimmed with green is worn with it, the brim turning upwards. With this the hair is worn in a catogan tied with green ribbon.

Grey, trimmed with silver, is still one of the most generally worn combinations, and a great deal of reseda for garden-party gowns.

Young matrons, as well as older ones, have had many of the black grenadines with Empire wreaths brocaded on them in greens and other colours, and they make stylish gowns. The best-dressed women have, during the London season, patronised these Empire styles largely; but as time goes by they will, without doubt, be the universal fashion.

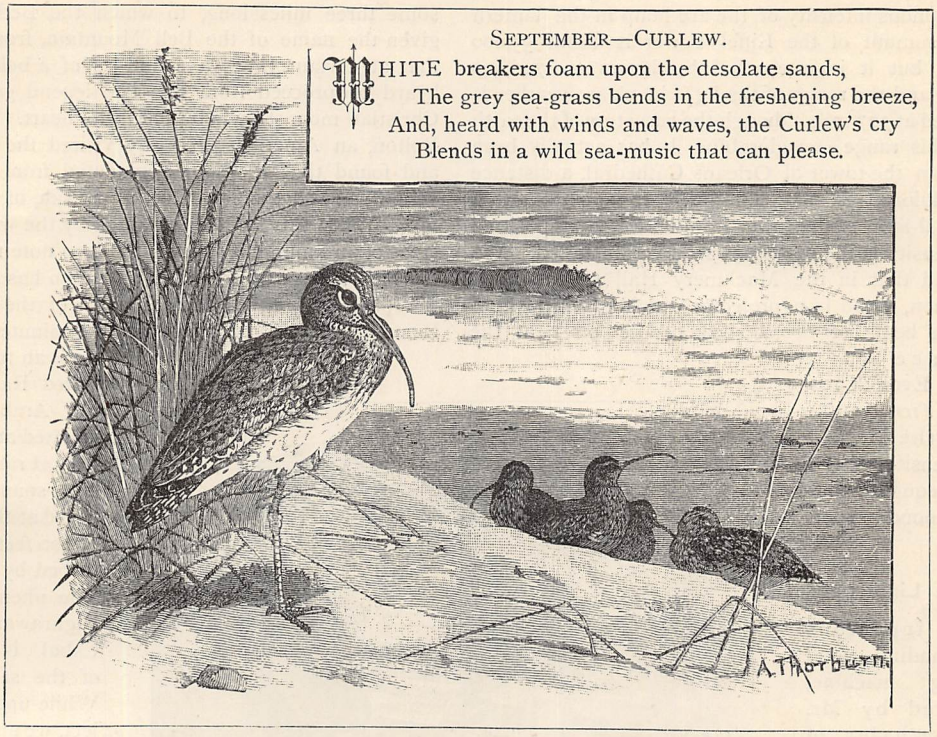
Cycling is an art which women adopt more and more each year, and a capital new arrangement of a skirt has just been brought out for the exercise. The costume is made in any good texture of cloth tweed, light, strong, and, if necessary, warm. The bodice is cut as a Norfolk jacket, open at the back just sufficiently for a soft silk handkerchief to be knotted inside. The skirt, if a walking-length, is plain and full at the back and pleated towards the middle in front. It is made up on a foundation with a deep bordering of the material. When upon the machine this is sufficiently long to cover the feet; but by means of two buttons attached to a cord round the waist, it can be drawn up in a second and not be seen at all below. This is a most comfortable arrangement. Those who journey on a cycle do not want to take much luggage, nor do they, wherever they may be, desire to be identified as cyclists, and this costume meets all such considerations.

Great efforts have been made to introduce scarves. Some of the leading drapers brought out again the lace scarves of our grandmothers, and tried to establish the wearing of them for day and evening, but the mode has not found general acceptance. Nor have the two or three yards of material trimmed at the ends like the costume, which some dressmakers send home as a part of the toilette, found many disciples: they require too careful putting on, and, in good truth, are more ornamental than useful. They only cover the blade-bones, leaving the chest and the arms exposed. Much more serviceable and very dressy are the beaded yoke-pieces, to which oblong lace sleeves are attached, reaching to the hem of the skirt. Hoods are introduced upon the more fashionable make of scarf-mantle, and are a stylish addition.

So infinitesimal are some of the bonnets that the hair is dressed to suit them. A fringe is cut, not only in the front but all round, like a monk's tonsure, the whole of the top of the head being covered with curls, a few loose twists below. The small bonnet is placed very much at the back, so that a great deal of the curl shows. This has been a favourite style with some of the smartest people in London, and even the smaller toque hats have been arranged with a view, it would seem, of showing the fringe. Greek net, which came out as Egyptian net, has made and is making one of the most useful every-day evening dresses. The skirts are often plain and full, with eight or nine rows of narrow ribbon run through the hem. Evening and day dresses, as far as the bodices are concerned, have the appearance of being just draped about the figure, with no dart-seams, the folds falling where they will. The apparent carelessness conceals art, but is graceful nevertheless; and this large-meshed net drapes capitally, as do most of the soft silks and woollens now in vogue.

With the present styles, it is really quite easy to re-arrange an old bodice by simply undoing the shoulder and under-arm seams, and then draping the new fabric. With a fashion plate an inexperienced dressmaker might hope for success. The sleeves continue very full on the shoulder; indeed, the upper arm is often covered with diagonal ruffling to the elbow. The padded epaulettes are adopted for velvet and thicker materials. For tea-gowns, two sleeves are deemed necessary, one coat-shaped and one pendent.

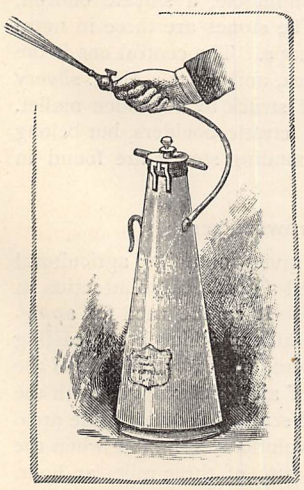
BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.



THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.



The Leona Extincteur.

The "Leona" Extincteur, which is shown in the figure, is recommended by the insurance companies instead of water-buckets. The fluid it contains does not freeze in cold weather, and has a special power of extinguishing fire by the gases it develops. It is stated to be much stronger than that in the earlier extincteurs and hand-grenades, and is simply squirted on the fire. A fresh supply can very easily be added to the holder when the charge has been exhausted.

A Pad for Violinists.

A handy pad for violinists has recently been patented, and affords a ready means of keeping the instrument in position. The pad is backed with velvet, which is continued to form a flap that is tucked under the collar or lappel of the waistcoat, so as to keep the pad in its place. The front of the pad is covered with a material—apparently of the nature of india-rubber—on which the end of the violin will not slip. The new pad has been tried by several eminent violinists, who concur in commending it to their fellow-musicians.

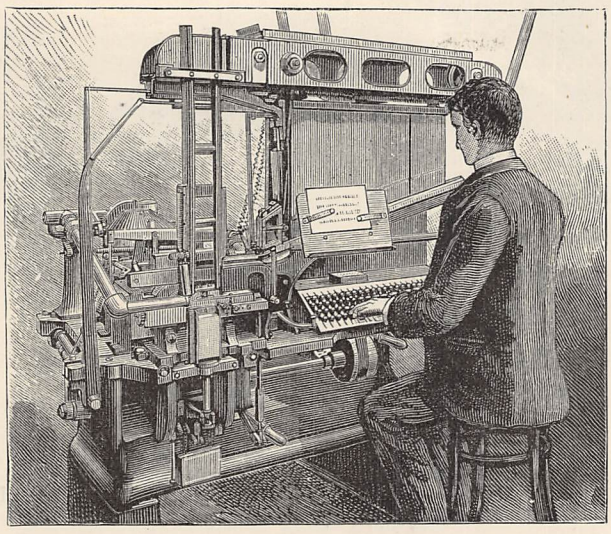
The Eiffel Tower in Science.

M. Jannsen, the well-known French astronomer, has examined the spectrum of the great electric light on the Eiffel Tower, from his observatory at Meudon, in order to find whether the oxygen rays in the solar spectrum are due to oxygen in the sun itself or to the action of the earth's atmosphere. So far as his

experiments go, these rays appear to be exclusively of terrestrial origin ; but M. Jannsen hopes to make some further observations of a more rigorous kind. The luminous intensity of the arc lamp in the lantern on the summit of the Eiffel Tower is about 55,000 candles, but it is intensified by lenses to 700,000 candles, and the range of the light in clear weather is estimated at 127 miles, though the curvature of the earth limits this range considerably. It has actually been seen from the tower of Orleans Cathedral, a distance of 112 kilometres, or 70 miles. It is certain that the signal-light of the tower from its elevated position and intensity is the most powerful yet installed. We may add that in the Machinery Hall of the Paris Exhibition, there is a projector with an electric light giving a beam of 600,000,000 candle-power at the distance of a metre. Even at 100 metres (109 yards) from the lamp, the intensity of the light is equal to that of the noonday sun.

The Linotype.

An ingenious type-founding and setting machine, invented by Mr. Mergenthaler, of Baltimore, U.S., has been introduced into London. As will be seen from our illustration, which represents one in operation, there is a key-board on which the compositor plays, having the "copy" in front of him. In this way a series of female type, or matrices, are liberated from their holders, and composed in a line on the left of the operator. This line, on his touching a special key, is carried into a mould, into which molten metal is pumped, and a bar is cast, having in relief the characters of the matrices. The bar is then automatically ejected into a galley, where it is put in position for immediate use, while the matrices are redistributed. A novel feature of the machine is its ability to cast the same line over and over again. Moreover, the column can be easily changed to any desired width, and spaced out, adjusted, and leaded automatically. As nothing but liquid metal comes against the edges of the matrices, these last a long time. The linotype is in use in some newspaper offices in America. Forty-two machines are engaged in printing the *New York Tribune*, and it appears from the tests there made that the linotype effects a saving of about 70 per cent. on the older process of composing, but the work produced is not yet technically so perfect.



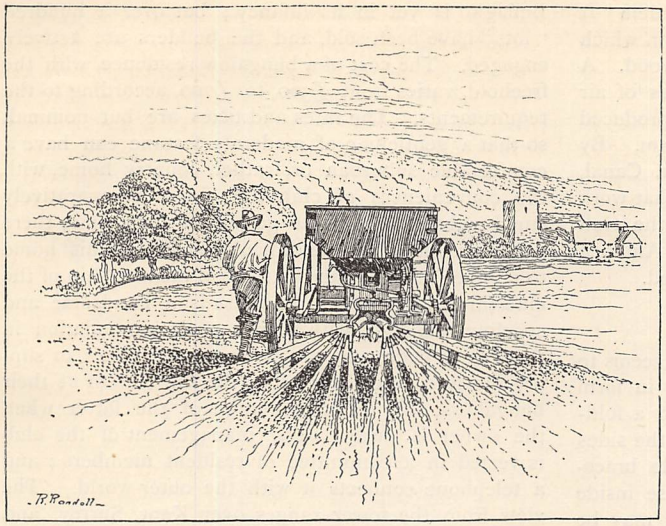
THE LINOTYPE.

The Bell Mountain.

On the Gulf of Suez, about four hours and a half from Tor, there is an eminence 1,200 feet high and some three miles long, to which the Bedouin have given the name of the Bell Mountain, from the fact that at certain times a sound as of a bell tolling is heard to proceed from it. The legend goes that a Christian monastery is buried in its heart. Mr. H. C. Bolton, an American, recently visited the mountain, and found that the sound emanated from a slope of yellow sand covering the north-west side of the mountain. When this sand is disturbed by the wind, or the steps of an animal, it gives out a deep note resembling the bass tone of an organ. Mr. Bolton has discovered the phenomenon in another part of the Desert of Sinai, at Wadi Werdan, about five minutes from the caravan track. It is called Ramadan by the Arabs, and is situated at the end of a short range of hills. The sound could be heard at the distance of 100 feet when disturbed by the hands. The phenomenon at Riglirawan, north of Cabul, is probably of the same order. While upon this subject, we may mention that not far from Dinan, on the banks of the Arguenon in Brittany, there is a heap of stones which emit musical notes when struck, and they are called by the peasants the "Sounding Stones of Guildo." The rock is amphibole, a silicate of iron, manganese, and lime. The stones are three in number, and of a prismatic shape. The central one is the most sonorous when struck, and emits a clear, silvery tone, like that from a bell struck by a wooden mallet. They do not appear to be erratic boulders, but belong to the place, and other sounding stones are found in their vicinity.

The Strawsoniser.

Our illustration gives a view of a new agricultural implement, which attracted a good deal of attention at the recent Windsor Show. It can be used for applying liquid or solid insect-killers, or for broad-casting seeds and fertilisers. A fan, driven by the axle of the machine, creates a blast of air which mingles with the falling grain or liquid and scatters it over a wide area. The fan makes 3,250 revolutions a minute when the machine is moving at the rate of three miles an hour. The strawsoniser will distribute nitrates, lime, phosphates, soot, and so forth, down to ¼ cwt. per acre,



THE STRAWSONISER.

and liquids in a spray down to one gallon per acre. During recent trials at the Queen's Flemish Farm, Windsor, one machine distributed a liquid insecticide at the rate of two gallons per acre, every square inch being sprinkled. Barley was sown from another machine, at the rate of three bushels per acre, over a width of eighteen feet. At this rate some thirty or forty acres can be sown in a day.

Flowers and Health.

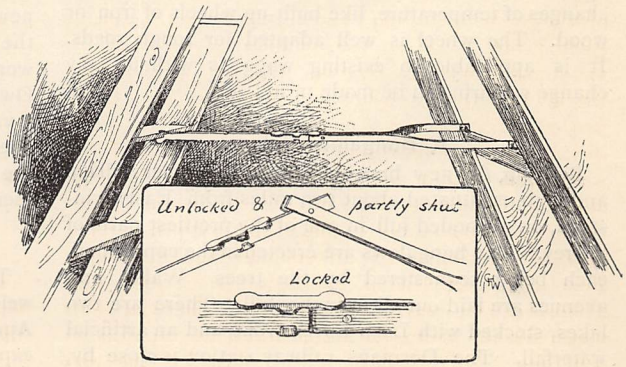
A recent writer, M. Ungerer, expresses his belief that the perfumes of flowers, and their essences, have a healthy effect on the constitution, and that residence in a perfumed atmosphere tends to prevent pulmonary affections. He mentions that in the town of La Grasse, where perfumes are manufactured, chest disease is very rare, owing to the scents of the distilleries. In a recent GATHERER we mentioned that a well-known firm of druggists in London now scent the air which ventilates their offices with piñol, or essence of pine, and eucalyptia, or essence of eucalyptus. The smoke of burning peat is also believed by some to have a therapeutic value in preventing chest complaints.

A Safety Step-Ladder.

A new step-ladder has recently been patented by Mr. William Glazier, in which the place of the old-fashioned cord is taken by the jointed metal stay shown in our illustration. The stay is fitted with a knee-joint, on the single arm of which is fitted a sliding clip which is passed over the joint, thus rendering it perfectly firm and safe. There are probably few households wherein at least one accident from the use of the old-fashioned collapsible step-ladder has not taken place; and we have every confidence in drawing the attention of housewives to this latest improvement, which, with ordinary care, frees the use of the necessary step-ladder from all danger.

The Great Terella.

At the Paris Exhibition, near the foot of the Eiffel Tower, there is a model of the earth, placed under a dome, between the Palais des Arts Libéraux and the Palais des Enfants, which is one of the most remarkable attractions. This terella is constructed on a scale of one millimetre to a kilometre, and is therefore one-millionth of the size of the earth itself. The surface is laid with pasteboard covered with a hard plaster, and all the details of the earth's surface are painted on it. The diameter of the globe is about forty-two feet, the skeleton being of wrought iron, and the skin of wood, with the painted panels of millboard fitted over it. There is a platform with several stairs for enabling people to examine the North Pole; and the globe itself turns easily on its axis by means of a simple gearing, so that every part of it can be seen. The surface comprises 525 square feet, and admits of the general contour of the different countries, and the outlines of their cities, being shown. Paris, for example, is nearly a centimetre long, and the Exhibition is marked within it. This great globe has an educational value far in excess of the best atlases, for it shows us the relative positions, the sizes, and characteristics of the different continents, oceans, and their divisions. It puts before us, in fact, a view of the whole earth in miniature, and thus achieves what has only been done hitherto in a fragmentary and imperfect manner by means of profile maps and the imagination. The mountains are properly shaded, the depths of the oceans indicated by depth of colouring, the marine routes are shown in different colours and the telegraph cables by gilt lines. Various accessories are also found in the building, tables of population, sections of the earth's crust, the heights of mountains, the limits of vegetation, and many other geographical facts. The model is portable, and will probably find a permanent home in Paris. We may also mention here that at the annual soirée of the Royal Society there was an ingenious model of the

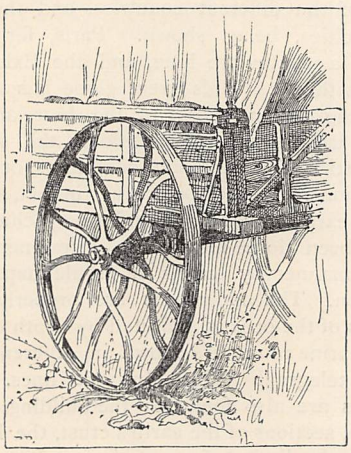


A SAFETY STEP-LADDER.

ocean currents exhibited by Mr. A. W. Clayden. It consisted of a shallow tank containing water, in which were placed models of the continents cut in wood. A bellows, worked by the foot, set up a series of air currents representing the trade winds, and produced the ocean currents, including the Gulf Stream. By taking out a block representing the Panama Canal, Mr. Clayden showed how the completion of that work could not sensibly influence the course of the Gulf Stream ; but if a considerable part of Central America were to disappear the stream would be diverted.

A Safety Purse.

A purse has just been brought out which seems to offer many advantages for travellers. It is in form like an ordinary Portsea purse, fastening with a folding flap on a stud, but there are stitched to the sides two frogs which are to be buttoned to the side brace-buttons of the trousers, so as to hold the purse inside the waist-band. In this position the purse may be readily opened by the wearer, but it would certainly be difficult, if not impossible, for any pickpocket to open it without the wearer perceiving it.



Steel Wheels.

The wheel which we illustrate has been introduced for use on Colonial transport waggons. It is made of the best cast steel, in one piece, without any fastenings, and hence it is not rendered troublesome under changes of temperature, like built-up wheels of iron or wood. The wheel is well adapted for rough roads. It is applicable to existing waggons without any change requiring to be made in it.

A Bungalow Village.

Bellagio, the new bungalow town, or rather village and club, is situated about two miles from East Grinstead, on a wooded hill in one of the prettiest parts of Surrey. The bungalows are erected in the copsewood, each being sequestered by the trees. Walks and avenues are laid out all over the hill. There are two lakes, stocked with Loch Leven trout, and an artificial waterfall. The Dormans railway station is close by, and there are many fine drives in the neighbourhood. Bellagio is yet in its infancy ; but over a hundred "lots" have been sold, and the builders are actively engaged. The cost of a bungalow residence, with the freehold, varies from £300 to £700, according to the requirements. The rates and taxes are but nominal, so that a gentleman of moderate fortune can have a comfortable suburban or, rather, country home, with the conveniences of club life, for a comparatively small outlay. Should he go abroad for a time, there would probably be little difficulty in letting his home to another tenant, with the right of membership of the club thrown in. The club-house is a handsome and spacious building, with plenty of accommodation in the way of beds, and the steward undertakes to supply meals to members either in the club or at their bungalows, and to take charge of the latter when the owner is away. The management of the club is vested in a committee of resident members ; and a telephone connects it with the outer world. The view from the tower ranges over Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. The grounds behind are laid out in gardens and tennis-lawns ; while polo, cricket, and recreation fields have been provided, as well as fruit-gardens and forcing-houses. There is an unfailing supply of spring-water on the hill ; and it is proposed to erect swimming-baths next year. The woodland lakes cover twenty acres, and will be open for fishing during the present season. Enough, we think, has been said to show that Bellagio, if only beginning its career, promises to have a prosperous one, and bids fair to become a very pleasant residence in course of time. Doubtless, if successful, the example it offers will be followed in other parts of the country.

Poisonous Tin-Plates.

Tin-plates are so much used for preserving foods, that it is well to point out that if the tin be adulterated with lead (as is done when the price of tin is high) the acids of fruits produce a lead poison. So serious is the matter considered in America, that the attention of the Government has been called to it. As tin is now very dear, the necessity of caution is all the greater.

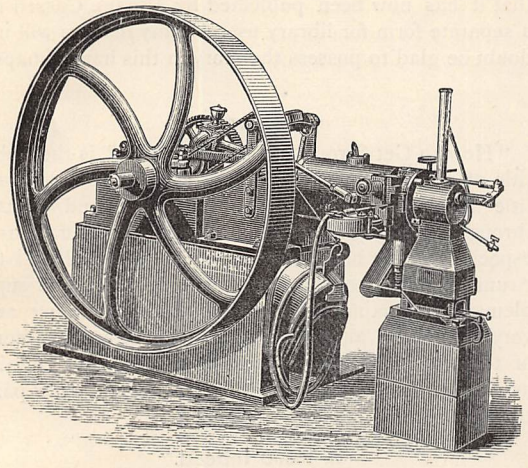
A Steam-Lifeboat.

Prizes offered by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution have brought forth a steam-lifeboat. The new vessel is to be built 50 feet long and 12 feet in the beam. She will be propelled by a turbine wheel worked by an engine developing 170 horse-power. Owing to the cost, it will not be possible to have such a vessel at many stations ; but the step appears to be one in the right direction, and it is to be hoped that the new craft will prove as successful as the model seems to represent.

Expanding Hoops by Electricity.

The electric current has recently been employed in welding metals and tempering steel springs. An American electrician has also devised a method of expanding hoops and wheel-tires by heating them with the current. It is claimed for the new process

that the heat is more uniformly distributed than with gas-furnaces or piles of embers. The current is brought by wires connected to opposite points on the tire, and divides equally through each half of the ring.



A PARAFFIN-OIL ENGINE.—FIG. 1.

Curing Damp Walls.

According to a German architectural paper, a wash of paraffin wax dissolved in heavy coal-tar oil in the proportion of one part of paraffin to two and a half or three parts of oil is an excellent preventive of damp in walls. The wax is melted by the application of a little heat, and kept fluid during use by dipping the vessel of wash in warm water. We may add that two parts of paraffin wax melted up with one part of vaseline makes a good pomade for preventing solutions from creeping over the lips of glass vessels, such as accumulators and voltaic cells.

The Brighton Exhibition.

An International Exhibition of arts, sciences, and manufactures will be open from October to December in Brighton. The usual gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded to exhibitors. The exhibits will range over a wide field of industry, from machinery and construction, sanitation and ventilation, horticulture and foods, to decoration, domestic appliances, sports and pastimes, electricity, carriages, and musical instruments. Special attractions will be added to the Exhibition in the form of concerts and illuminated fountains.

Electricity of the Heart.

Dr. Augustus Waller, of the Hospital Schools, has recently made a number of experiments, showing that it is possible to detect, by existing electrical instruments, the electric currents generated at each beat of the heart. Two people holding each other by the hand, and connected with a capillary electrometer, give evidence of electrical shocks through each other. The hands of a single subject, dipped into two basins of water in connection with the electrometer, give a deflection of the instrument at every beat of the pulse.

Frozen Milk.

At a recent meeting of the Agricultural Society of France, M. Guerin, of Grandvilles in the Vosges, described a method of preserving and transporting milk by simply freezing it and thawing it again when required for use. The freezing can be done with ordinary ice machines. The advantage of the method is that the milk does not suffer in taste or quality. It yields fresh cream like new milk, while butter and cheese can be prepared from it. There is, therefore, a probability that we may, ere long, import milk from Australia or America.

A Paraffin-Oil Engine.

The engine which we illustrate in Fig. 1 has been designed to burn kerosene or paraffin in the cylinder, just as a gas-engine burns coal-gas. The paraffin is first converted into vapour, and then exploded in the cylinder by the flame of a paraffin lamp. The oil is also vaporised by heating its reservoir with a paraffin lamp. The engine is said to run without attention for several hours, and to require very little cleaning. It can be started in fifteen minutes, and there is no danger in its use. The cost of working is given as 1d. to 1¼d. per horse-power per hour.

We may add that portable engines, working with common mineral oils, have also been introduced, and are found useful by farmers for thrashing and such-like purposes. Fig. 2 represents one of 6 horse-power nominal, but various sizes can be obtained, according to the work to be done. A 10 horse-power engine of this kind has been employed for some time

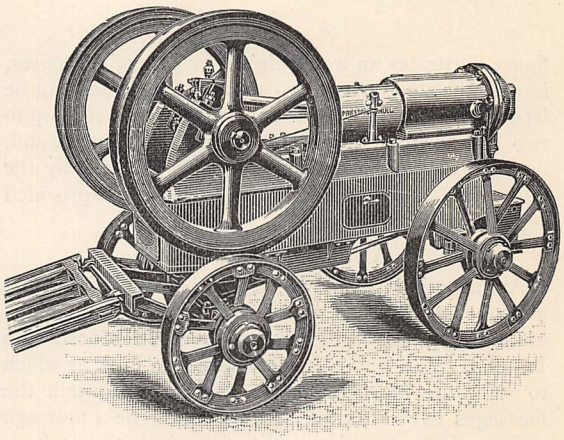


FIG. 2.

past in pumping a Welsh mine. The oil is ignited by means of the electric spark if desired. Such an engine has the advantages of a gas-engine without being dependent on a gas supply.

The Humming-Bird and Mantis.

Mr. G. W. Alexander, of Charleston, South Carolina, has reported a curious struggle between a humming-bird and an insect known as the "Johnny-cock-horse," a species of mantis common in those parts. Hearing a cry of pain proceeding from a vine in his

garden, he found a humming-bird struggling violently in the clutches of the mantis. It was wounded under the wing by the mandibles of the insect, and though tenderly cared for, it unfortunately perished during the night.

A Cattle Weigher.

It is becoming the practice of breeders to sell their cattle by weight, and hence some special weighing machines for the purpose have been designed. Hitherto these machines have been fixtures, but they are now made to run on wheels and be moved about. The

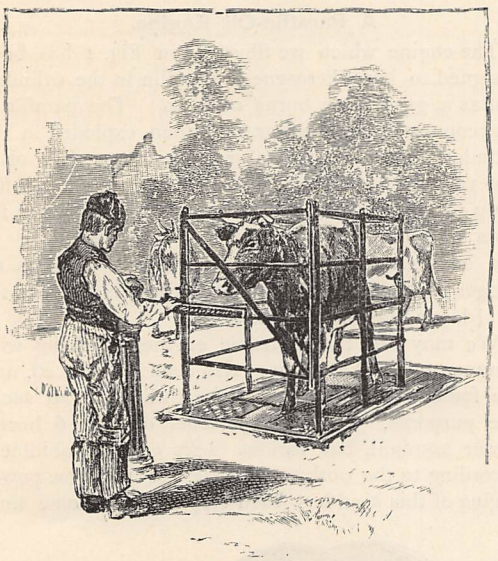


figure illustrates an iron weigher for general purposes, having the steelyard in a cast-iron box which can be let into the ground. It is constructed to weigh up to two tons. Other machines are made of timber, and, in cases where the carpentry can be supplied by the purchaser, the necessary metal work is provided separately.

A Message Cabinet.

An ingenious machine for writing and delivering messages to persons at railway stations, or in clubs and other public buildings, has been introduced into London. The apparatus consists of a desk at which to write the message, and a cabinet to contain the messages left in charge. In order to write a message a penny is dropped into a slit of the desk, thus releasing a locked handle, which, on being pulled out, discloses a paper on the desk. The message is written on this by a pencil provided, and the initials of the sender, or other sign, are written on a second slip of paper always exposed to view. On turning the handle back, the message disappears into the cabinet above. The person who expects the message, on examining the machine, sees the initials or sign of the sender, and on dropping a penny into a slit in the cabinet, is enabled to read through a window by turning a handle. The machine while in working order does not forget to reveal its secrets.

"Under a Strange Mask."

Readers of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE who remember Mr. Frank Barrett's serial story in our pages a few months ago—and who does not?—will be glad to hear that it has now been published by Messrs. Cassell in a separate form for library use. Many readers will no doubt be glad to possess the story in this handy shape.

"Strength."

"How to Get Strong and Keep Strong" is the subtitle of a little work by the late R. A. Proctor, whose title heads this paragraph. Practical and chatty throughout, it well deserves careful consideration—especially at the hands of those who are addicted to "running down" or "over-doing things." Some supplementary chapters on rowing and swimming are very interesting and instructive. There are chapters of the work specially addressed to ladies on certain aspects of dress reform, to which we would draw particular attention.

A Hero Indeed.

The world is poorer by the death of Father Damien, the devoted missionary to the lepers in Molokai; but it is the richer by the example he has left of heroic self-sacrifice on behalf of the suffering and helpless. Mr. Edward Clifford has told in "Father Damien" (Macmillan) the story of his journey to visit the missionary, and of the time he spent with him on the island, where for fifteen years Damien had laboured among the lepers. If only that he has shown us something more of a remarkable and heroic man, we must feel grateful to Mr. Clifford for his work.

A Picture of Central Africa.

One of Bishop Hannington's companions, the Rev. R. P. Ashe, has told in "Two Kings of Uganda" (Sampson Low and Co.) the story of his six years' residence among the little-known Baganda. The two kings under whom he lived there, were the famous Mutesa and his bloodthirsty son, Mwanga, the latter of whom was responsible for Bishop Hannington's death. The account which Mr. Ashe gives of the constitution of Uganda is very interesting. Something very nearly approaching the feudal system is in full operation. Orders pass, in turn, to Great Chief, Lesser Chief, and so on down to the slaves, who are unfortunately very numerous. The king's chief adviser seems to be the Katikiro, or Lord Chancellor, who is actually head of the Justiciary. The people seem to be intelligent and capable of great advances in civilisation; but, unfortunately, at present the Arabs from the east coast are much more popular than Europeans, and, as it is in the interest of these Arabs to perpetuate the slave trade, their influence is necessarily for evil. Mr. Ashe explains in his prologue that his book has been written under great pressure of business. We hope that it will not be long before either he or one of his brave comrades finds an opportunity of giving us a fuller account of the country and customs of this little-known people.

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

WHEN Emmy went away, Dorothea fully intended to act the proper and correct young lady to perfection. She was struck by Emmy's anxiety about her: a little touched by it, a little irritated by it. What a fuss Emmy did make! It was so nice of her to care, but so prudish and old-maidish of her to see anything remarkable or to be alarmed about in a girl like Dorothea Channing becoming engaged.

Well, Emmy was gone, and she was left alone; there was not a girl in all London more absolutely independent; she could go where she liked, and do what she liked; no one could reproach her, and now that Emmy was away, there was no one even to be sorry for her if she did something which was not quite right.

Not that she would; oh dear, no! she would remember that she was alone, and be twice as particular as those girls who had mothers and chaperons to care for them at every turn. After she had seen Emmy off she went to Mr. Anstruther's studio, and did a long day's work. She put one or two finishing touches to the picture of the Red Cross Sister, and then she boldly asked for new canvas and certain accessories of an unusual kind. Mr. Anstruther favoured her with a quick glance from under his bushy eyebrows, but it was his way never to ask a talented pupil why she wanted this or that.

"It is late in the season," he said, "to commence a second subject picture, and this will not be simple, like the Sister of the Red Cross; but if you feel that you can undertake it, and get it done before we break up, you shall find your models and all else that you require here to-morrow."

Dorothea promised. "I will commence the picture, and finish it," she said. "I am in a mood for work."

She threw back her head with a proud gesture, and Anstruther, observing the softened new light in her eyes, went away murmuring something unintelligible under his breath.

When Dorothea got home she was somewhat tired, and the excitement of the last twenty-four hours began to tell. The little sitting-room looked dreary. It happened to be a dull evening, without any sunshine, and Dolly realised again quite painfully the fact of Emmy's absence. Emmy had a way of making that little sitting-room look bright with a few deft touches. She always kept flowers in the vase which decked the centre of the table. She always provided something tempting and appetising for supper. Since Helen had gone Emmy had constituted herself housekeeper, and Dorothea, who hated the work, had only too gladly resigned it to her.

This evening there was nothing in the house to form a substantial meal. Dolly felt far too lazy to go out again; she made herself a cup of tea, and sank down by the open window to drink it, feeling fagged and almost depressed. How she wished Edgar Marston would come; how she longed for the exalted condition of mind and body which she had felt twenty-four hours ago! Now she felt flat and tired; all the sparkle and exhilaration had departed. She sipped her tea, which was by no means invigorating, for she had neglected to make it with water which quite boiled; and remembered, with a throbbing head, that she had promised Emmy to write to Helen by that night's post. How silly she had been to make an unconditional promise of that sort! She knew she should write the worst possible letter to-night, while she was feeling so flat and tired. Well, she must keep her word somehow, and, rising wearily, she drew her writing materials forward, laid a sheet of foreign note-paper on her blotting-pad, dipped her pen in the ink, and then resting her chin on one hand, gazed blankly down on the white surface of the paper as if waiting for inspiration.

How could she possibly tell her story? how could she transfer the glory and glow of it to this cold, irresponsive paper? how could she get Helen's heart to throb, and Helen's eyes to moisten with unselfish tears of happiness over her fate?

"DEAREST HELEN,—I have met a hero. I have met my counterpart, my complete and perfect self. I adore him—I breathe his breath—I feel his life. I never knew what real living meant before; he has glorified everything to me—he has made the sky so blue that I can see its colour through the thickest clouds. He has made the sun so bright that some of its rays have got into my heart, and will stay there for ever. I don't know much about him, except that he and I live and breathe for one another. I don't know anything about his worldly wealth; but I—I—I——"

Oh, yes, she could write nonsense of that kind, and Helen would put the letter in the fire, and take passage to England by the next steamer, being quite sure that her darling Dolly was affected by brain fever or by temporary lunacy.

Well, suppose she did not even try to transfer the beauty and the glow of it all to her paper; suppose she stated a plain fact in unvarnished language.

"DEAREST HELEN,—I engaged myself yesterday evening, after three weeks' acquaintance, to Edgar Marston. He is a painter by profession, and has attained some small success. I do not know if he has any private means, but I suppose he has, as he owns a small house in Bayswater, and has his sister to live with him. I propose to marry him at an early date, as I cannot live without him. Your blessing would complete our happiness," &c. &c.

Folly! Helen would think this letter even madder than the former; how could she convey the news, how tell the wonderful story, so that Helen should read it aright?

She was beginning to compose a third epistle, which was likely to become even a more disastrous failure than its predecessors, when a sudden thought caused her to spring hastily to her feet.

"I have forgotten Miss Phillimore; what a girl I am! Well, that is another promise—a binding promise. I can put off writing my letter for a little."

She ran hastily upstairs, and knocked at the invalid lady's door.

"Oh, I am so sorry! Have you had your tea?" she said, coming forward with a shy look on her pretty face, which brought out a new aspect of her beauty. "You know I promised Emmy Thorn to attend to you; let me make you some tea; do, please, let me do something."

This was not at all Emmy's way, who knew better than to ply her sick friend with questions. Emmy made the tea, or cooked the little dainty, and brought it tempting and all ready to Miss Phillimore's side. Dolly, in her white dress, with her hair dishevelled, her face somewhat pale, and a great bunch of glowing red roses in her belt, flitted restlessly about the room, and asked numerous questions. Miss Phillimore had managed to make her own tea, however, and wanted nothing to be done for her. She wished this radiant and provoking-looking creature would sit down. She had an idea that it would rest her tired eyes to look at so much beauty. She wanted the gay, spirited voice to chatter any nonsense—the tone and the words would beguile her *ennui*. Dolly, however, was too restless to sit still. There came a ring to the front door, and the colour flamed suddenly all over her face.

"If you don't want anything, I will go," she said. "I will be sure to look in, in the morning. Good night." She nodded her bright head and vanished.

She flew downstairs, and opening the front door, admitted Marston.

"I thought you were not coming," she panted, and now all traces of fatigue had vanished, and her eyes shone like stars.

"Little truant!" said the man. He caught both her hands, but she held him slightly at bay. "I waited for you at our usual corner," he went on. "I waited for an hour and a half, and you never came."

"No," replied Dorothea. "Emmy Thorn is away, and I had to hurry home—I have to take care of Miss Phillimore—and—and—I promised Emmy that I would write to Helen."

"To your sister?"

"Yes."

"About us?"

"Yes—Edgar, it is so difficult."

Edgar Marston drew her to his side.

"You cannot write to-night," he said. "Nelly is waiting for you. Put on your hat and come to her."

"But I promised Emmy Thorn—I promised that the letter must be written somehow."

"And I promised Nelly that you would sit with her for an hour and a half, and have supper with her. Whose promise is to be kept?"

"Yours," said Dorothea, with a sudden bright glance, which she instantly lowered. "Oh, how lonely this room was a minute ago!"

"And now?" said Marston.

"You are here," she said, giving him the sweetest glance.

She fastened on her hat, and taking his hand, they went out together into the summer evening. It had been dull and cloudy when Dorothea came home. It was dull and cloudy still, but metaphorically no sky was ever bluer than that under which Dorothea walked with her lover. She forgot Helen, she forgot Emmy. All the rest of the world became shadowy and indistinct beside the all-pervading presence of the man who walked by her side.

"What are you thinking of?" he asked her, as he put the latch-key into his own hall door.

"Of you," she said. "I was thinking, Edgar, of how you are filling my life."

"My darling!" he answered her. "Dorothea, you must come to me very soon. I cannot live long without you."

"There is Helen," she said, and a shadow just touched her face, but did not linger there, for she was so surrounded by the golden light of this new atmosphere that all objects not immediately under its influence had lost their just proportions.

Nelly, who was better now, and who had a certain piquant prettiness of her own, sat up on her sofa, stretched out both her arms, and folded them round Dorothea's neck.

"Dolly, Edgar tells me that you are going to be my sister."

"I am, Nelly—some day."

"How funny!—I am Helen, too. You will have two sisters of the same name. I shall be quite jealous if you do not love me best."

Dorothea drew herself up, as if something had stung her.

"Don't talk nonsense," she was about to say, but she checked the words on her lips, and walking to the window, looked out.

Marston began to talk to her, and the sore feeling which Nelly's words had produced was soothed as if by magic. The three made merry over their supper, and at ten o'clock Dorothea rose to go home.

"I shall see you sometimes, Nelly," she said, as she stooped over the girl and kissed her, and returned her worshipful glance with a kind little pressure of the hand—"I shall see you sometimes, but I expect to be very busy until my term with Mr. Anstruther is over, for Edgar's ideal picture has got to be painted."

"Oh, tell me about it," said Nelly, with rapturous enthusiasm.

Marston came hastily up.

"Not a word," he said, just touching Dorothea's lips with his hand. "It would break the spell."

Nelly sank back on her sofa with a discontented pout, and Marston and Dorothea went out together.

As they parted at Dorothea's door he again said to her—

"I cannot wait for you long. I am unsettled, I am good for nothing without you. You must come to me to bless my life--to fill it with blessing."

Dolly smiled, put her trembling hand into his for an instant, and then slowly and regretfully shut the door between them.

"I, too, am empty and lost without him," she murmured, and she went upstairs to bed dreaming and smiling, having quite forgotten all about her letter to Helen.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

SIR PERCIVAL REDFERN was at this time a much-changed man. He was a man who was at all times more or less possessed of a fixed idea. This idea he simply worried to death—he beat it out to its thinnest consistency, and allowed it gradually to fill his whole horizon.

For years he had worked the miser's craze to perfection; he had either imagined himself poor, or he had grudged to spend gold. At any rate, he had saved, and hoarded, and dismissed servants, and let his fine old place go almost to ruin, and disgusted his sons and alienated his friends. He had done this for the very small gratification of adding pound to pound. This craze of his carried him huge lengths, even to the length of suppressing trust-money which might have made Mrs. Thorn a happy and contented woman. He had done Mrs. Thorn an injury, and therefore, as was most natural, he particularly detested her. No girl in all the world could be more objectionable as a daughter-in-law than the child of this distant cousin of his. Had nothing else made Captain Redfern's engagement unsuitable in his eyes, this fact would have done so. But apart from this, there was in Sir Percival's mind another great and insurmountable obstacle to his son marrying Emmie Thorn. He was now possessed by a second craze—the result of the first, but almost swallowing it up in its greater magnitude. He was nearly sure that his son Percival, his heir, would die. Percival Redfern was in bad health—due in great measure to the insufficient feeding which his miserly father gave him as a child. He was extremely unlikely to live to inherit the property, and if he died, Frank would be the heir. Frank at his father's death would inherit both the baronetcy and Corcastle. That being the case, he must marry an heiress—he must marry a girl so wealthy, and so high up in worldly position, that it would never again be necessary to stint and to save.

This was Sir Percival's present fixed idea. No wonder that he left no stone unturned to crush so insignificant a person as little Emmy Thorn.

Sir Percival found it necessary to spend money on the furtherance of his idea. He paid a hurried visit to London, saw his solicitor, Mr. Dodd, gave him certain instructions, which included Emmy's name, among others. Then he hurried back to Corcastle, but he no longer shut himself up. He bustled about, and gave brisk orders, and almost took poor old Hepsibah's breath away. New gardeners were hired, and paperers, painters, and decorators took possession of the more modern part of the Castle. Every day Sir Percival drove into the village, and became quite sociable, particularly at the post-office, where he was fond of calling.

One day an awkward-looking, over-grown girl, in an untidy brown holland frock, encountered him as he was turning in at the well-known door to ask for letters.

"Ha, ha, Miss Bertha, how do you do?" he said. "Want another ten-pound note, eh?"

Bertha coloured and stepped back, with a look of consternation on her face. Her bright, wide-open eyes filled with tears, and she pushed rudely past Sir Percival into the shop. He waited, filling up the doorway, until she had executed her commission, then he followed her out.

"Why won't you speak to me, Miss Bertha? It is a very bad system indeed when a young lady like you refuses to be polite to an old gentleman."

"I don't want to be rude," said Bertha, who was almost driven to bay, "only I've nothing to talk about."

"Nothing to talk about? You must be very different from other girls at your time of life! So you don't want another ten-pound note?"

"I do not, Sir Percival, and—and—I almost hate you for deceiving me as you did that time!"

"My good little girl, I fail to understand you. I do not know of the deception to which you allude. I offered you money for a ring. You brought me the ring, and I gave you the money. It was only exchange and barter, perfectly fair—what goes on every day with all of us."

"No, it was not fair," said Bertha. "You did not tell me it was Emmy's engagement ring, and that her heart would be broken if it were sold. She did not wish to sell it, and she took you back the money the next day, so you should have given her back her ring. You are a thief to keep it!"

Bertha was indeed at bay. She shook her long mane of hair back from her eyes, and looked defiantly at Sir Percival, who winced slightly at her last words.

"Highty-tighty! young lady, your mother should teach you manners," he said. "Well, I am sorry to have offended Miss Emmy, but the fact is I wanted the ring, and it was mine before ever it was hers. I know she returned me the money—more fool she! —See here, Miss Bertha, would you like a new frock?"

"Of course I should like it," said Bertha; "but not from you."

"Here are three sovereigns. Go over to Jones the draper, and choose something."

Bertha put her hands behind her back, and set her teeth firmly.

There was a sky-blue cashmere dress in Jones's window which she would have adored, but she must put the temptation from her. She thought of all the heroes who had ever conquered, and felt herself greater than the greatest when she saw Sir Percival not unwillingly replace the glittering coins in his pocket-book.

"As you please," he said. "Remember me to Miss Emmy. By the way, how is your mother?"

"She is better," said Bertha shortly. "Good-bye. I am never likely to see you again."

"Why do you utter such a lugubrious remark? Are you never again going to favour the village street with your presence?"

"Not after to-day. We are all going away the first thing in the morning."

"Indeed?" Sir Percival had simply lingered to talk with Bertha, hoping she would favour him with this very piece of information. "You are a very lucky young lady to get change when you want it," he continued.

"Yes, we are all going away," continued Bertha. "Emmy is not so poor as you think her. She has had a house left to her. We are never coming back to this horrid place again."

"My congratulations to Miss Emmy. I will not detain you any longer, Miss Bertha."

Bertha bounded with long awkward strides out of sight, and Sir Percival entered the post-office.

"A word with you, Miss Rice," he said to a pale and nervous-looking woman who served behind the counter.

"Certainly, Sir Percival," she replied, trembling and blushing. "Will you honour me by stepping into my little parlour?"

"I have just been informed," he said, as she shut the door behind him, "that the Thorns are about to leave Salford."

"Yes, Sir Percival," said Miss Rice, dropping a curtsey, and motioning the old baronet to a chair.

"They have doubtless acquainted you with the address to which they are about to remove?"

"That is the case, Sir Percival. Miss Bertha has just been in to give me their new address, and to ask me to forward any letters that come to it. I can let you see the address with pleasure, Sir Percival."

Sir Percival waved his hand with some scorn.

"Pray don't disturb yourself, my good Miss Rice. I am really not interested in the Thorns' locality, only hark you"—here he slipped a five-pound note into Miss Rice's thin moist palm—"if any one should come inquiring—any one belonging to me, for instance, you understand—mum's the word. You quite understand?"

"I perfectly understand, Sir Percival. I'm very much obliged indeed. No one shall ever get anything out of Alicia Rice, Sir Percival, that isn't beseeming for her to tell."

Sir Percival bowed very slightly, and standing up to signify that their interview was at an end, Miss Rice opened the door to re-admit him into the shop.

The next day the Thorns, accompanied by their one servant, left Salford for good. The cottage was locked, and the key given to the landlord. Miss Rice at the village post-office had their address, but as they were all being whirled away to a fresh and a brighter life Emmy suddenly made a remark.

"I might have told your schoolmistress, Bertha dear, where we were going. It seems almost unfriendly to the Pearsons not to let them know."

"I gave Miss Rice our address at the post-office," said Bertha. "It's all right; she can tell Miss Pearson if she wants to write, but I don't suppose she does, for she's always too busy."

On that very same afternoon Sir Percival, having given many directions with regard to the further improvement of Corcastle, went to London without mentioning any date for his return. He took up his quarters in a select private hotel in a street off Piccadilly, and there waited restlessly for the turn of events.

One afternoon in the beginning of the month of October there arrived at this hotel a young, slight-looking man, with a quantity of luggage. His face was bronzed, his eyes were of a very bright and vivid blue, and his curling light brown hair was cut close to a well-shaped head. Immediately on his arrival he asked for Sir Percival Redfern, and on being asked his name, in return presented his card, after which he was instantly shown into the old baronet's presence.

"Well, my boy, and so here you really are at last?" said old Sir Percival, hobbling forward eagerly to receive the clasp of a firm, vigorous hand.

Sir Percival's voice was broken, and a slight moisture for a moment dimmed his hard old eyes. If there were any one in the world who held a soft corner of his heart it was his son, Frank Redfern.

"Yes, here I am at last, and very glad to see you, sir," said the young man. "I've been invalided home, as I've told you in my letters, and have a year's leave at least, but really I cannot pretend to the privileges of invalidism, for the voyage has put me quite straight. I had a nasty touch of fever after that last campaign, but I never was more fit in my life than I am at the present moment. Well, father, it was uncommonly good of you to come up to meet me like this. And how are they all at home?—the Thorns, for instance, and every one else in the village?"

"Taken as a body, my boy, the villagers are well. Yes, Frank, you are about right. You need not mention your indisposition? 'Pon my word, I never saw you look better, and you're as tall as I was at your age. I stoop a bit now. I'm into my seventies, you know."

"You look well yourself, father. As to stooping, I suppose all fellows get the habit when they pass thirty. Well, I got your telegram all right. It was taken to me on board. Do we go down to Corcastle to-night, or in the morning?"

"What say you to spending a week or two in

London, Frank? I fancy I'd like it in your society, boy."

"Thanks, sir."

A perplexed look knit Captain Redfern's brows for a moment—then it passed away.

"I can run down and take a look round the old place to-morrow, whatever happens," he said. "The fact is, I have a kind of hunger for a breath of the old air, but I can return the next day."

"Rosamond?" he said. "She's as splendid a girl as you'd see anywhere—very handsome, very frank, and good all round, I fancy. Sir Harry always says she's the image of what her mother was."

Sir Percival came up, and gave Captain Redfern a slap on the shoulder.

"You need tell me no more," he said. "I remember Lady Hotspur, one of the most beautiful women of her time—ay, and a good woman, too. If her daughter takes after her, he'll be a very fortunate fellow who gets her for his wife."

BERTHA AT BAY (*p.* 643).

Sir Percival made no response to this suggestion. He rang the bell, and gave some very particular directions with regard to dinner. Then he turned to Captain Redfern, who was staring with a somewhat blank expression out of the window.

"You came home with Sir Harry Hotspur and his daughter, eh, Frank?"

"Yes. Sir Harry talks of retiring—he's not the man he was."

"He's not the age he was either, my boy. I remember him well—younger than me, but still a man of my day. What kind of girl is his daughter?"

A look of hearty pleasure beamed over Captain Redfern's face.

Frank laughed. "I expect he'll consider himself so," he said; "for Rosamond, in addition to her beauty, inherits an enormous fortune."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

AS Captain Redfern late that evening held out his hand to wish his father good night, he said quite abruptly—

"I am going to catch an early train to Salford in the morning. I shall just run up to the Castle, and say a word or two to dear old Hepsibah, and then

call on the Thorns and one or two other special friends, but I'll be back in town in time to dine with you, sir, in case you feel inclined to make the hour not earlier than seven."

Sir Percival fidgeted, and even some slight increase of colour was perceptible in his wrinkled old cheek.

"Very good, Frank, very good," he said; "only would it greatly put you out to postpone your visit to the following day? The fact is, I have taken a fancy to call on my old friend Sir Harry Hotspur to-morrow, and should like you to come with me."

The bright good-humoured expression left Captain Redfern's face for a moment. He knit his brows once again, and for an instant his eyes sought the ground. Then he looked up with a genial smile.

"I did particularly want to go to Salford," he said, "but a day does not matter. Let it be as you wish, father."

When, a moment later, he stood in his bedroom, he pushed one hand through his thick curling hair, clenched the other, and stamped his foot impatiently.

"It's plain to be seen the old man is not violently and hopelessly in love, and I am," he said to himself. "I am anxious, too—I must confess to myself that I am anxious—for why is it that I have not had a line from Emmy for so many months? This delay is more than aggravating; but I suppose the longest day passes somehow, and I shall see my little darling in a few hours at the latest."

In the course of the next afternoon Sir Percival and his son called upon the Hotspurs at the hotel where they were staying. Sir Percival, who had got himself up for the occasion regardless of expense, looked a totally different being from the uncouth and almost repulsive old man whom Emmy had seen not many months ago at Corcastle. He was dressed now in the most approved style, and not only intended to make himself agreeable to Rosamond Hotspur, but succeeded in doing so. She was a bright, frank, handsome girl, with a great deal to say and a ringing laugh. She treated Captain Redfern with the easy familiarity of an old friend, and Sir Percival, as he watched the two, could scarcely keep under the exhilaration which filled him. Sir Harry, too, was pleased to see his old friend—in short, the visit was in all respects a success.

That evening, after dining together, Sir Percival broached for the first time the subject which lay so near his heart.

"Frank, that's a splendid girl. I've never been so taken with any one for years."

Frank Redfern, whose thoughts were that moment with Emmy, raised his eyes with an almost dreamy expression.

"What girl?" he said. "Oh, Rosamond. Yes—she's as jolly a companion as any fellow need wish to have."

"So I should say, my boy—so I should undoubtedly say. A handsome girl, and a good one—I'll say anything. Plenty of money, and good looks, and youth—what more can any fellow desire? She's a wife worth winning, eh, Frank?"

"Yes, father, I've no doubt of it."

"Pass me the grapes, my boy. Frank, you have heard, of course, the last poor accounts of Percy."

"I have, poor fellow," replied Captain Redfern. "I'm afraid he's not long for this world."

"He is not, Frank. He will not live many years, and undoubtedly he will never marry. Corcastle will come to you some day."

"Time enough to think of that, sir."

Captain Redfern again bent his head, and his thoughts flew to Emmy. He should see her soon now—he had done his duty to his father, and to-morrow he would be rewarded. A thousand pleasant fancies were chasing each other through his mind, when Sir Percival's voice, a little harsh from agitation, broke the spell.

"That's a good girl," he said. "She's just the girl for me—money, good looks, position, youth, all combined. Why, she'd wake up the old place. With her, and with what her money can bring, Corcastle would soon put on a different appearance."

Captain Redfern stared at his father in amazement, then he burst out laughing.

"Good gracious, father!" he said. "What are you talking about? You don't surely mean to propose for Rosamond Hotspur?"

"*I?* Not I, my boy. But I mean *you* to propose for her, Frank—I mean *you* to marry her, and to bring her to Corcastle as your wife, and the future Lady Redfern. Why, you're both head over ears in love with each other already—any simpleton can see that. So take your father's blessing with her, my son; you have chosen a wife after my own heart."

Captain Redfern's face had grown pale.

"I am sorry to disappoint you," he said. "I did not know you had got any mad scheme like this in your head. It is utterly impossible as far as I am concerned, for I am engaged already."

"*You* engaged already!—what do you mean, sir?"

"You know it as well as I do, father—I made no secret of it when I went away. Miss Thorn—little Emmy, you know her—has promised to be my wife."

Sir Percival laughed disagreeably.

"Oh, is that all?" he said, in a tone of would-be relief. "That boy and girl affair? Upon my word, you frightened me, Frank. I was afraid you had gone and entangled yourself with some one. But Emmy Thorn—pooh! that's not worth considering."

"You have no right to speak in that contemptuous way of the girl I intend to marry, father. Rosamond and I care nothing for each other—nothing, at least, in that way. She knows all about my engagement to Emmy, and gives it no end of sympathy. Now, if you've no objection, I'll say good night, for I am off to Salford early in the morning."

Sir Percival had now a fixed burning red on each of his cheeks.

"You can go to Salford if you like," he said; "I make no objection. I wash my hands of you, as I did long ago of Percy and of Dick. You were my favourite; but if you oppose me in this I never care to

see your face again. I'll go back to Corcastle, and forget you ever existed. Sons are the worst comfort in the world to an old man—they are sent into the world for no other purpose than to worry him into his grave. Yes, yes, go down to Salford by all means, and see your Emmy Thorn. Don't make too sure, however, that a pretty little thing like that may not have got tired of waiting, and taken up with a likely fellow nearer home."

"I believe in Emmy," said Frank.

But then the knowledge of her long silence came over him, and his face grew very white.

"For instance," said Sir Percival, speaking with slow and deliberate cruelty, his eyes fixed on his son, while he fumbled in his pocket, "she sent me that back the other day. You know it, of course?"

Frank Redfern sprang forward. His father dropped Emmy's engagement ring with a careless gesture into his open palm.

"A boy and girl affair!" the old man repeated, as with a very sardonic smile he walked to the window.

"Emmy gave you *that?*" said Captain Redfern, when he could find his voice. "Emmy returned you my ring?"

"You can see for yourself," replied Sir Percival. "How else would it get into my possession?"

"I shall certainly see for myself, sir. I shall go down to Salford to-morrow, and get Emmy to explain."

"More fool you, sir! but go your own way, it's no affair of mine."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

AFTER a sleepless night Frank Redfern rose, left the hotel where his father still peacefully slumbered, and made his way to the railway station. He had the ring in his waistcoat pocket, and it not only seemed to burn a hole there, but right through to his heart as well. What *did* Emmy mean by giving it back?—Emmy, whose eyes were as clear and as true as the heavens above him: Emmy, who had assured him with such a look and such an accent that she would be his for ever and ever. Oh! the whole thing was a horrible mistake; a few words from her lips would clear up the mystery, and make him a happy man once more.

Salford was a three hours' ride from London, and Frank got there when it was still quite early in the day. He hesitated when he found himself quite alone in the old place. There were thousands of memories to greet him at every turn. His nature was affectionate—he would have liked to have gone into each of the cottages, and shaken hands with all the old folks, and patted the children on the heads—he would have liked to have received a joyful welcome, for his nature was bright and sunny—he was in all respects a total contrast to his father.

He resolved, however, not to go to the village just yet, he felt he could not see any one before he had his interview with Emmy. He turned his steps, therefore, up the steep hill which led to the Castle.

Corcastle had never been a cheerful abode—it had always been neglected and over-grown; and although Sir Percival had lately set gardeners to work, and had really effected several improvements, the place still looked wild and dreary to Captain Redfern, and he sighed as he approached the familiar oak doors.

It was dreary work coming home without any mother or sisters to greet him. Old Hepsibah, however, was better than nothing. He would give her a hasty greeting, say a few kind words to her, and then go down to the village.

Had Hepsibah been at home that morning, a great deal of future pain and anxiety might have been spared to Captain Redfern, for she could certainly have answered some questions with regard to Emmy Thorn, which would have dispelled his worst forebodings. Hepsibah, however, had taken advantage of Sir Percival's very unusual absence to take a holiday on her own account. She had gone to visit her only son, who was settled in Manchester, and would not be home until the end of the week.

On hearing this information, Captain Redfern, with an increasing feeling of anxiety, made his way to the village. There disappointment upon disappointment awaited him. With his heart beating fast, he walked quickly to the pretty little cottage where the Thorns used to live. Beneath that rose-covered porch he and Emmy had kissed each other when he went to say "Good-bye." Surely she was there now, surely her bright face would peep at him through the casement, and with a delighted cry she would run into his arms. His anticipations were high; all the greater, therefore, was his dismay.

The cottage door was locked, there was a padlock on the small gate, the window-blinds were drawn down. He had never in his wildest dreams imagined that the Thorns had left Salford. He turned on his heel, and spent the rest of a long morning in making fruitless inquiries. On all hands he was met with negative replies—the Thorns had certainly gone away, but no one knew where. He inquired at the post-office, but Miss Alicia Rice, who turned very pale and fled into her inner sanctuary at the sight of him, sent out such dubious and confused messages in reply to his anxious questions, that he learned less than nothing from her. Emmy Thorn had gone away; her mother had been very, very ill, and the whole family had gone away and did not mean to return. This was the gist and substance of the information he received. He went back to London, feeling depressed and downcast. His naturally bright and sunny nature underwent a complete reaction, but there was something dogged about Captain Redfern; and if his father expected him to say on his return to the hotel that evening that he intended to give up Emmy Thorn, to put her out of his head and think no more about her, he was vastly mistaken.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

WHITE ROSE COTTAGE was all that a snug, bowery, old-fashioned residence could possibly be. There was a large garden stocked with fruit-trees, there were old-fashioned flowers of all descriptions, and the wain-

scotted rooms within the house were as bright as any heart could desire. The house stood alone, and was about five minutes' walk from the sea. "Oh, what a contrast to dull, uninteresting Salford!" thought Bertha and her brothers. It was impossible for Mrs. Thorn not to get better here; and even Emmy, notwithstanding her anxious and troubled heart, got back the old soft bloom on her pretty cheeks, and some of the old sparkle and brightness to her eyes. Admirable schools were found quite close for the boys and Bertha, and early in October Mrs. Thorn proposed that Emmy should return to her interrupted work in London.

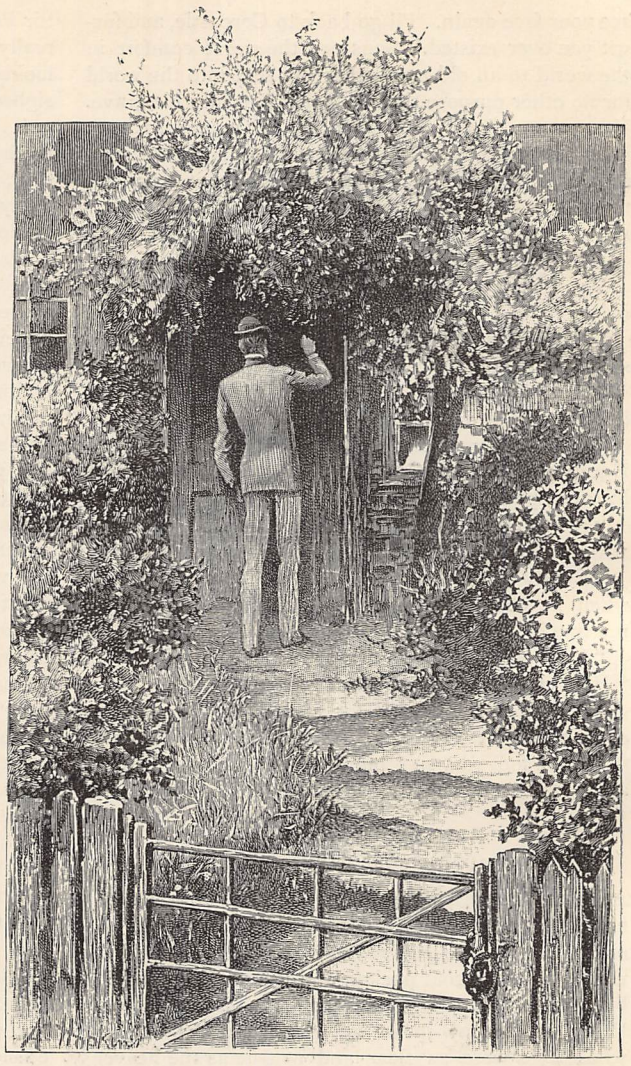
"I know, my darling, how you have crushed down all your hopes and longings, for me," said her mother. "But it is not necessary to do so any longer. I feel better and more comfortable than I have done for years—the children are getting on as well as possible, and there is a little money put by in the bank for us, in case another rainy day should come. I don't really want you now, Emmy—I mean in the sense of its being an absolute necessity—so you had better go, dear."

"If you can really do without me, I will, mother," answered Emmy; "for I am interested in my book, and I believe in it. I also want to get back to Dolly. She has written so seldom lately, that I am getting quite anxious about her."

A week after this conversation found Emmy back at the modest little flat on Campden Hill. She had written to Dorothea to announce her arrival, but had not received any reply. She was surprised when she reached the house to see the blinds down in the pretty bright sitting-room; and this, and the fact of her letter not having been answered, gave her a feeling of uneasiness. She ran up the stone stairs, and opened the door with her latch-key. The rooms instantly struck her as dismal and cold. She drew up the blinds, and looked round for some trace of Dorothea. There was not any—the cupboards which Emmy opened had no provisions in them—the little range in the tiny kitchen was cold and fireless.

"Dolly has gone away," thought Emmy.

She was not seriously frightened, only she wished that Dorothea had told her. The letter-box in the door contained not only Emmy's letter unopened, but another directed to Dorothea in Helen's well-known hand. Emmy started and changed colour when she saw it, for she instantly perceived that it bore an English postmark. Helen had then returned—how very, very strange that Dorothea should be away! Pushed under the letters in the box was also an unopened telegram. This also was directed to Dolly, and Emmy, after a good deal of hesitation, resolved to open it.



"THE COTTAGE DOOR WAS LOCKED" (*p.* 647).

It was from Helen, and was sent from Liverpool. She hoped to be with her sister and Emmy at nine o'clock that evening.

"Oh, how vexed Dolly will be!" exclaimed Emmy; "how annoying that she should be away just now, and how queer of her not to have left word! Well, perhaps Miss Phillimore knows something. I will run up and ask her presently, but just now I must do what I can to get things in order for dear Helen."

Emmy flew out, bought meat, groceries, bread and butter, and milk, and, bustling about, soon contrived to give the deserted rooms a fresh and homelike appearance. She had brought some flowers up from the country, and these she arranged in all the vases. Long before nine o'clock the supper-table was spread, the window curtains were drawn, the lamp lit, and a bright fire blazed merrily in the little grate.

Emmy put fruit and flowers on the table, and then stood ready, her cheeks flushed, her eyes bright, and

her arms a little tired from the eager way she had worked in Helen's behalf.

"What a good thing I came up to-day!" she said to herself. "Poor Helen, what a dreary home-coming she would have had!"

The words had scarcely passed her lips before a cab stopped at the door, and a moment later Helen, bright and energetic-looking as ever, stepped into the room.

"Oh, you are here, Emmy! How are you, my dear? How bright and fresh everything looks! Did Dolly get my telegram? Where is she? Yes, I think I have succeeded—and I *am* glad to be home again! It is quite dreadful, when there are only two like Dorothea and me, for us ever to be parted! Where is the child? Why does she not come to give me a kiss?"

"She is sure to be in presently," said Emmy.

She spoke in a constrained voice, for a thousand nameless alarms were beginning to fill her breast, and she did not want Helen to be frightened until she had rested a little and had something to eat.

"Take your hat off, Helen," she said. "I have put some hot water in your room in case you like to wash your hands. While you are tidying, I will bring in supper. It is all ready, and nice and hot. Dolly will be sure to be in presently."

Emmy flew into the kitchen, and Helen, in a meditative way, went into her bedroom, removed her hat and travelling-cloak, and smoothing her straight bright hair and washing her hands, came back to the little sitting-room.

Emmy's supper was quite ready, and the two girls, both of them very hungry, ate almost in silence. Now and then Helen raised her head and seemed to listen attentively—a light hurrying footstep in the street caused her to pause as she raised her cup of tea to her lips, but she made no comment until Emmy began to clear away the remains of the meal. Then, going suddenly to the young girl, she put a hand on each of her shoulders, turned her to the light, and spoke abruptly—

"Now, Emmy, tell me what you know about Dorothea?"

"I don't know more than you do, Helen. I've been away for months; my mother was very ill, almost dying, and I had to go to her. I only came back this evening."

"You have been away for months?" repeated Helen. "And I never knew it! Dolly has been alone for months — and no one mentioned it to me!"

"It has not been my fault, Helen. It was necessary for me to go to my mother, who was so very ill. I wanted Dolly to come with me, but she would not. I thought she would have written to you. Did you not know of this?"

Helen sat down on the nearest chair.

"She wrote, but never mentioned the fact," she remarked. "Had I known, I should have returned home; nothing would have kept me. Dorothea is not the girl to be left altogether by herself—her temperament cannot stand it; it is bad for her, it is terribly bad for her! Had I known, of course I would have come home."

Emmy remained silent.

"You have something more to tell me, Emmy," repeated Helen; "I know this by your face. If you have bad news, let me know at once. I never break down under bad news, but I cannot live through suspense. Tell me quickly, Emmy. Is Dolly ill? Is there anything the matter with her? Oh, tell me, is she in danger?"

"No, no, dear Helen; I am sure she is in no danger. The fact is, I know as little about her as you do. I came back here to-night, expecting to find her here, but the place was shut up and deserted. I found two letters—one of yours and one of mine—unopened in the letter-box, also a telegram from you to her. I opened the telegram, and I made haste to get the place ready for you; but I know nothing about Dolly. She has probably gone away on a visit; she has made some friends, and they have probably asked her to go to them for a few days. As you say, she is not suited for solitude, and she was probably glad to accept the invitation."

Helen clasped her hands in front of her—some haggard lines had come out in her face, her mouth took a weary droop, her large fine eyes glowed with suppressed feeling.

"It may be that you are right," she said; "but this is a dreary home-coming. Dorothea was the last person who should ever have been left alone."

"I will go up and ask Miss Phillimore if she knows anything about her," said Emmy. "That is a good thought: she is sure to know something. I asked Dolly to look after her. I will bring you down some news about Dolly in a few minutes, Helen."

Helen did not make any answer—she was looking dreadfully tired, and the disappointed feeling at her heart caused her lips to droop more and more. Emmy ran hastily out of the room. Half-way up the stairs to the next flat she stopped, and clasped her hands to her own beating heart.

"I know—I know—I am certain," she said half-aloud, "that Dorothea has broken her word to me, and has not told Helen about her engagement. Helen would never speak as she does, if she knew. Oh, what has happened? Oh, poor, poor Dolly!"

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

SOME VEGETABLE COOKING.

BY A CERTIFIED TEACHER OF COOKERY.

BEFORE doing anything else, I would advise the reader to get a list of good products from a large dealer in vegetarian specialities, and give a trial order, thus insuring the best quality and—what is very important—freshness: pulse, especially, deteriorating considerably with age. Under the heading "pulse" I include dried peas, lentils, and haricots: of the latter, the white kind are usually seen at the table of the flesh-eater; but the vegetarian indulges in other varieties, and as these constitute what I may term the meat of the non-flesh-eater, it may be well to lay down a few rules for cooking pulse, as, when once the initial process is understood, they may be made available to an unlimited extent:—

(1) All require thorough washing, and soaking in cold water for at least twenty-four hours.

(2) The softer the water the better; if *very hard*, a pinch of carbonate of soda may be added.

(3) All which float should be thrown away, as they are grub-eaten.

(4) Put them on to boil in cold water with a little fat—any kind free from salt—it softens them, and assists the cooking considerably.

(5) Let them boil slowly until quite tender, but unbroken if for the table; if for soups, let them boil to a mash, that they may be the more readily passed through a sieve.

(6) Add no salt until they are soft: it increases the hardness of the skins, and thus retards the cooking.

(7) No fixed time can be given for the cooking, it varies according to the age and quality of the pulse. Of beans, the smallest, as a rule, cook in the least time. Of lentils, the German; next come Egyptian split; whole Egyptian take longest. Of peas, grey or blue, the very best qualities will be found the cheapest.

To enjoy haricots as a vegetable, they should be served with a sauce, such as celery, onion, or parsley; or if some of the latter, finely chopped, and a good lump of butter be stirred into them, with a seasoning of salt and pepper, they are delicious. Fennel, or other herbs, can be utilised in the same way; indeed, in vegetarian cookery every edible herb is brought into requisition: an example which may well be followed, for, unfortunately, many people entertain a very fixed idea that herbs are simply flavourers, and may easily be dispensed with, whereas they possess anti-scorbutic properties, and benefit almost every organ of the body. Indeed, it has been said with truth that the salads and herbs which are relegated to the British pigs might save their owners fifty per cent. of their doctors' bills.

To return for a moment to pulse, I would remind the reader that, of the whole tribe, lentils will agree best with the majority of people unaccustomed to this form of diet, and that, in many cases, pea-meal and lentil-flour may with advantage be substituted for the whole seed.

Of Vegetable Pies there is literally no end to the variety which form standing and favourite dishes at many vegetarian tables, and to quote an authority, they come "as an agreeable surprise to those who make their acquaintance, with a nice crust, covering vegetables skilfully combined and seasoned." As a rule, pies are best made of vegetables cooked, or, at least, parboiled, and this is true of onions especially. To give what I may term "body" to the pie, tapioca, rice, pearl-barley, &c., first cooked in a little water, are valuable additions, the water being put in also; macaroni, cheese, and hard-boiled eggs, too, are often introduced. I offer the following suggestions, strictly *as suggestions*, and not *recipes*, for very palatable and nourishing combinations:—

(1) Alternate layers of cooked macaroni, celery, and green peas, and some sliced raw tomatoes, or preserved ones will answer, and some of the juice added. Flavour with salt, pepper, herbs, and curry-powder, or, instead of the latter, some grated cheese.

(2) Substantial, suitable for hard workers:—Alternate layers of cooked haricots and mushrooms with barley or tapioca and a couple of hard-boiled eggs, the whole nicely seasoned. A potato crust may be substituted for ordinary pastry, if preferred. Potatoes and onions form the basis of the very plainest varieties, though either may be used with any of them. By way of seasoning for these pies, and also for vegetable stews, tomato sauce, or ketchup, as well as those of walnut and mushroom, are largely employed, so are flavoured vinegars, curry paste and powder, capers, and many other appetisers.

A form of forcemeat, similar to veal stuffing—but with some cooked cereal, as rice and tapioca, instead of suet—is used in many ways. It is fried as "bread steaks"; cucumbers and vegetable marrows are stuffed with it, and tomatoes are cut in two and spread with the mixture, then cooked in any of the well-known ways. Sometimes it is made soft by the addition of milk, and served "fritter" fashion. Omelettes, containing cooked vegetables of all kinds, are very good; asparagus points, green peas, kidney beans, or cauliflowers, broken small, are as good and tasty as any for the purpose, especially if a dash of curry powder be added.

With regard to fresh vegetables served as separate courses, few words are necessary by way of recommendation, and it has been truly remarked that the taste for them develops with culture, a dish of well-cooked vegetables being really as complete in itself as a plate of fruit. I wish to give due emphasis to one item regarding the cooking of celery: viz., that

under no circumstances should the liquor in which it has been cooked be thrown away, though again and again recipes have fallen into my hands in which the reader was advised to drain off the liquor. It would be just as sensible to make some good beef-tea, strain it off, and give the meat (?) to the patient. A good plan, in the case of stewed celery, is as soon as it is tender to keep it hot while the water is thickened with flour and butter in the usual way. Milk improves it, and it should be seasoned with salt and pepper and a dash of nutmeg. This, either alone or with onions, will make a nice toast; the onions should be scalded, or the first water, after a minute's boiling, poured off, to get rid of the oil, which disagrees with many people, and causes the pain that follows the consumption of raw onions by those whose digestive powers are not of the strongest. Carrots require well brushing and scraping, but whenever possible, peeling should be avoided, the best part being nearest the surface; when young, it is wise to cook them in their skins, which can afterwards be removed with a clean cloth. They are delicious if finally tossed in hot butter, with a sprinkling of sugar, parsley, chopped capers, salt, and pepper. For soups, it is quite worth while to grate carrots: they cook better, and are more digestible; and we may with advantage follow the French *chefs* example in adding sugar to most vegetables during cooking.

Concerning carrots, I heard a story lately which serves to illustrate the part played by the imagination in the enjoyment of food. A gentleman who has travelled far and wide, and has the reputation of being a *gourmand, especially prejudiced against vegetable cookery*, came across a dish at a French restaurant which pleased him so much that he determined, if possible, to obtain the recipe, which he did after some trouble, only to find that its foundation consisted of grated carrots, with which herbs and spices, Oriental pickles, curry, raisins, and rice were cunningly mingled! I remember, too, at a food exhibition in London a few years ago, a well-known lecturer on cookery delighting her audience with a dish of curried lentils, and their surprise upon hearing how much, or rather how little, it cost.

While speaking of *Vegetable Curries*, I would suggest the addition of grated cocoa-nut, when obtainable, also lemon-juice or flavoured vinegar, to give piquancy. Cream is a valuable adjunct if a dish is of the white variety, consisting of such vegetables as potatoes, celery, onions, marrows, haricots, turnips, artichokes, &c. For brown curries, the vegetables and curry powder or paste should be fried in hot fat, and the whole seasoned with sauce, ketchup, or chutney; and among other accessories for heightening the colour of brown dishes generally, browning salt or liquid browning, burnt onions, *pastilles des legumes*, and soy are harmless and useful.

Of *Vegetable Salads*, the name is legion, and they afford every facility to the careful housekeeper who wishes to use up previously cooked edibles. The ordinary salad dressings are well known, and any are suitable; but I would just say, for the benefit of those who do not care for oil, and are, perhaps, unable to obtain its usual substitute—cream—that a little good milk, mixed with enough condensed milk to make it as thick as cream, is not to be despised; and a floury potato, first roasted in its skin, is a good foundation for the dressing. Speaking of potatoes, all who would derive full benefit from this much-abused vegetable will do well to pin their faith to this last-named method of cooking them, chief among many reasons being:—(1) That in this way only are the starch grains completely ruptured. (2) All the mineral matter is thus preserved. (3) Solanine, the poisonous substance found in potatoes, is only thoroughly destroyed by *dry* heat. (4) Potatoes contain seventy-five per cent. of water, so it is well to prevent their absorption of any more, and this is not easy when they are peeled and boiled in the ordinary way.

In adding milk to *Vegetable Soups* care should be taken to boil it separately, and add it just before serving, otherwise a curdly soup may be the result; and when eggs are put in for the sake of increasing the colour and richness, they should be well beaten up with a little cool soup, then put into the tureen, and the hot soup added by degrees, the beating being continued for several minutes. All vegetable *purées* are improved by being passed through a sieve. An excellent thickening medium for purées generally is a French preparation known as crushed tapioca—especially if time is an object, as it is cooked in about twenty minutes.

As to porridge, an adult, on making trial of it, very often finds it disagree, and throws it up in disgust. This is especially true of oatmeal porridge, and where that cannot be digested, a trial should certainly be made of hominy or crushed wheat. No words can over-rate the good properties of hominy, while wheat is a gentle laxative, and not heating to the system; but let no one believe in the efficacy of the twenty minutes' cooking sometimes recommended.

No list of dishes *minus* meat would be complete without reference to macaroni, which, being rich in nitrogenous matter, is valuable; and although perhaps best known in England in combination with cheese, it will be found delicious with a purée of tomatoes, or, if cooked in any other way, these serve the same purpose: viz., the counteraction of the constipating properties of macaroni.

A last word about cheese: not as a superfluous adjunct to a good meal, but *as* a meal. It is very palatable, and rendered more digestible if mixed with any well-cooked farinaceous food; and many people, with whom it disagrees in its natural state, find that, when combined with starchy matter, it causes no discomfort; and although, for the sake of their flavour, Parmesan and other varieties are largely employed in the concoction of such dishes, the softer kinds, whether English or foreign, are to be recommended.

The space at my command necessarily limits much which I would fain mention, but I trust that this brief outline of dishes *maigre* may induce a trial of at least some of them.

OUR FRIENDS THE HORSES.

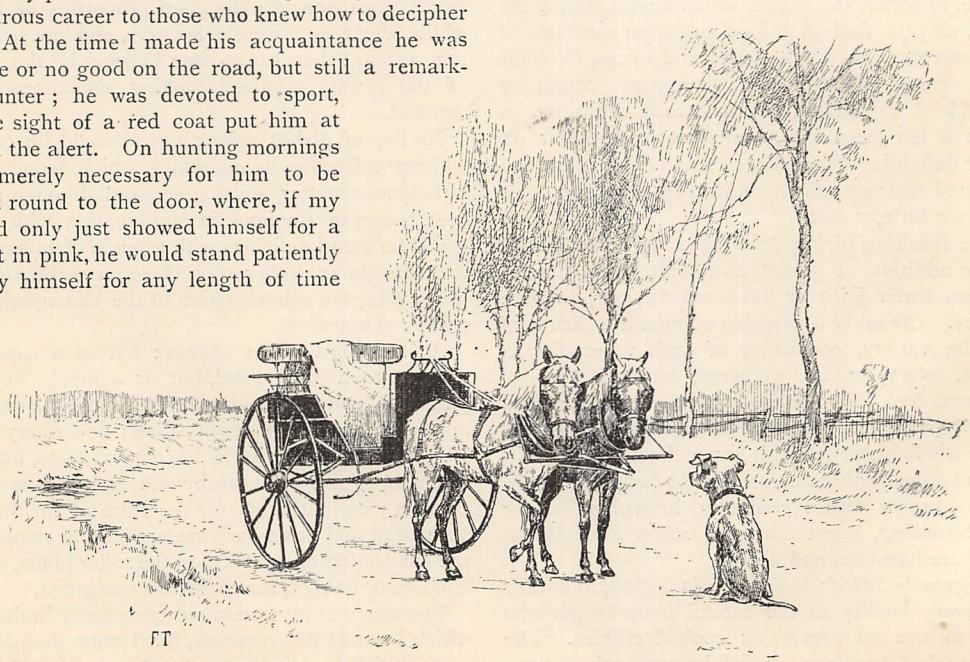
IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

"'TO THINK OF LOVING 'EE!'"

A HORSE of quite a different stamp was my husband's hunter, old "Axeine." When I first made his acquaintance he was quite a veteran, for he had been my husband's first real hunter, acquired at a time when a boyish enthusiasm for "Guy Livingstone" had suggested his rather foolish name. He was a remarkably plain horse, and, moreover, carried enough scars upon him to establish his reputation for audacity and a good constitution to the end of time. One of his nostrils was curiously deformed from an accident over some wire fencing, and this gave him an odd roguish expression; his hind-legs were ornamented with fluted spiral lines from too close acquaintance with the same wire; his fore-legs were covered with singular nobs and bosses, which, however, never prevented his going; and odd scars and marks on his whole body presented an interesting synopsis of his adventurous career to those who knew how to decipher them. At the time I made his acquaintance he was but little or no good on the road, but still a remarkable hunter; he was devoted to sport, and the sight of a red coat put him at once on the alert. On hunting mornings it was merely necessary for him to be brought round to the door, where, if my husband only just showed himself for a moment in pink, he would stand patiently quite by himself for any length of time until we were ready to start, in a state of animated expectancy very amusing to watch. On these occasions nothing could disturb him; other horses might trot up, carriages stop under his nose, dogs bark at him, it was all the same: his whole mind was set upon his rider, whom he fully depended on to give him what he most enjoyed—a good day's sport with the hounds.

Lubin, a young bull-dog, was our constant companion on many a pleasant driving tour; sometimes he trotted behind the carriage, but he liked best to sit up between us, comfortably ensconced in rugs. He had a remarkable, and, in the opinion of connoisseurs, a very beautiful face. In the towns we passed through on our journeys he was always admired, butchers invariably appreciated his points, and innkeepers made us substantial offers for him; but in the country a more stunted sense of beauty prevailed, and he was generally looked upon with contempt, mingled with fear and aversion. I shall not forget the consternation with which he was regarded by an old turnpike-woman in the wilds of Dorsetshire. The dog was sitting up, as usual, comfortably between us when we stopped at the gate, and the good lady forgot for a moment to take the toll or ask for a ticket, or do anything, in her amazement at his strange appearance. "To think of loving 'ee!" she said at last, with a snort of contempt, and as we drove off she stood watching us with a



JESSIE, RAMSAY, AND THE HOUND.

grin of mingled surprise and pity at "some folks' taste."

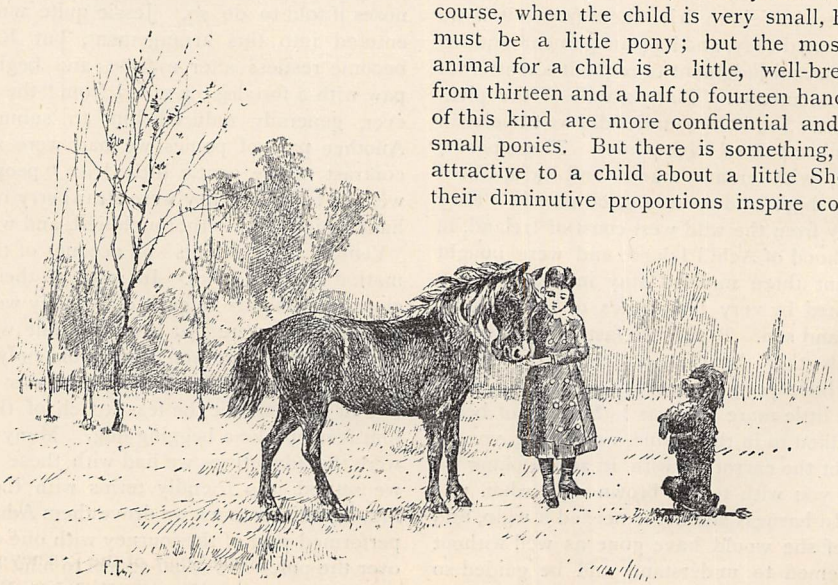
The mention of driving tours reminds me of several friends among ponies, for our journeys were generally made with these "little people" of the horse world. Next to riding, there is no more delightful pursuit than driving a pair of fast, spirited ponies, and a curricle is certainly the best vehicle to drive them from: it is so admirably light and easy, and its management requires just enough care and judgment to make it a matter of interest to the occupants. Many a mile of the pleasant country of our Southern counties did we traverse in this fashion with a pair of Irish ponies. These ponies were chestnut, with cream manes and tails, about thirteen hands high, and a very good match. They came originally from the wild west coast of Ireland, in the neighbourhood of Achill Island, and were bought after a pleasant three months' stay in that district. They were united by very tender ties of relationship. being mother and son. Both were fast and gentle and devoted to each other; but Jessie, the mother, was the most perfect little pony I ever knew. Such a confiding, lovable little mare she was! So fond of being coaxed and talked to in the stable, welcoming you as warmly without the carrot as with it, and looking so wistfully after you with tender brown eyes when you went away. In harness she never needed a whip, and it is my belief she would have gone as well without reins—she seemed to understand and be guided so completely by the voice. She would stand, too, unattended for any length of time; but her son, Ramsay, was not so dependable. We used sometimes to leave them in charge of a clever half-bred dog we had, distantly related to the mastiff breed, who hailed from the Dogs' Home, and was always known as "the hound." "The hound" was very obedient, and would sit patiently for an hour or more in front of the ponies' noses if told to do so. Jessie quite understood and entered into this arrangement, but Ramsay would become restless after a time, and begin furtively to paw with a fore-leg; a growl from "the hound," however, generally reduced him to submission again. Another pair of ponies we had were as complete a contrast to the gentle little Irish "people" as could well be found. They were strawberry roans, fourteen hands high, nearly thoroughbred, and we called them "Venus" and "Adonis" on account of their really remarkable good looks. In spite of their beauty and close resemblance to each other, they were not a good match; both were fast and free, but whereas Venus had a mouth like iron, and could only be driven in safety with the sharpest of bits, Adonis was so sensitive in the jaw that the least touch of the curb made him rear up like a begging dog. Many and startling were the adventures we had with these ponies before we settled into friendly terms with them. For the first half-dozen times we drove them Adonis invariably performed part of the journey with one of his fore-legs over the pole—the usual sequel to a little fit of rearing—and Venus generally contrived that they should both

"GOING FOR A *REAL* RIDE WITH MOTHER."

bolt as soon as he was freed from the obstacle. They jibbed up-hill, they galloped down, they shied at the most homely objects at the most inopportune moments, and under their erratic guidance we formed intimate acquaintance with the bottoms of many a hitherto unexplored duck-pond and muddy ditch. Nevertheless, no serious casualty luckily ever befell us when driving them, and the only occasion on which Adonis' peculiar disposition threatened a serious catastrophe was when he was being ridden. We understood when we first bought them that Adonis did not, as the dealer expressed it, "ride well," and it so happened that during the two years we had them no special necessity presented itself for putting a saddle on him. A sojourn abroad obliging us to part with the little pair, it was thought they would more readily find a good home, as well as fetch a fair price, if they could both be described as "quiet to ride and drive." Venus we knew was a tolerable hack, so it only remained to make Adonis the same. A groom mounted him first. A sharp rear, followed by some practised pig-jumping, soon disposed of this rider, who professed himself too bruised to care to continue the pony's education for the saddle—for that day, at all events. An experienced rider amongst our friends then took him in hand. Adonis repeated his previous attempts to unseat his rider, but this time without success. Our friend had had experience of real buck-jumpers in far lands, and the pony's vagaries only amused him. After a tedious round of rearing, plunging, and kicking, Adonis at last settled down, and consented to trot quietly round the exercising field. Our friend then thought it well to take him into a larger field adjoining, where the ground sloped considerably, so as to try him up and down hill. In the centre of this field was a deep stone quarry. The pony made his first circuit of the field well enough, but when it came to going round the second time, his obstinacy was roused again. He stopped short, gave vent to his ruffled feelings in a fresh bout of rearing and plunging, and then suddenly, without any warning, made a violent bolt forwards down the hill, his head between his legs, making straight for the edge of the stone quarry. His rider made every effort to turn or stop him, but in vain—the pony seemed maddened, and only increased his pace. The next few moments were a horrible experience to the spectators, and I frankly confess to not knowing quite what happened. Only after what seemed an interminable interval I saw Adonis on his back rolling on the ground, a few yards from the edge of the quarry, and our friend standing up with very torn clothes, and laughing. What had he done? What had happened? "Why, I upset him, of course," he said gaily. "Got his head up, pulled it round to the near side, and swung all my weight over to the off. Bound to tumble him over that way, you know; and he don't seem a bit damaged either, I am glad to say—only a trifle startled. Still, I suppose you can hardly call him quiet to ride."

Venus and Adonis shortly after found their way into a dealer's hands, and though he set forth their qualities in a glowing advertisement, we took care that Adonis' qualifications as a hack should be confined to the single statement "has been ridden by a gentleman."

How far ponies are suitable mounts for children is a vexed question—as vexed as the question whether little children should ride at all. The dangers incident to "infants in the saddle" are constantly being brought forward, and many good riders contend that boys and girls should not be put on horseback until they are at least fifteen or sixteen years old. As far as my own experience goes, I think if the child is healthy and plucky he or she may begin to ride when he likes. Those who learn to ride early are able to enjoy the exercise into quite advanced life; those who only take it up when fully grown-up are apt to find riding a trouble, rather than a pleasure, when youth has passed. Of course, when the child is very small, his first mount must be a little pony; but the most satisfactory animal for a child is a little, well-bred, quiet cob, from thirteen and a half to fourteen hands high. Cobs of this kind are more confidential and reliable than small ponies. But there is something, I admit, very attractive to a child about a little Shetland pony—their diminutive proportions inspire confidence, and



TOPSY AND HER MISTRESS.

they seem to belong naturally to the child's world. One of these fascinating creatures was the first mount of a little girl, a friend of mine. "Topsy," as they called her, had the sweetest and most engaging manners in the stable or the field, would allow herself to be coaxed and fondled like a doll, and would wander all over the enclosure for a piece of sugar from her little mistress, who devoted herself to her entirely, thereby arousing the lasting jealousy of her poodle dog, who begged in vain for notice on these occasions. But when it came to riding her, Topsy did not prove by any means such a treasure. She played a hundred mischievous little tricks with the child, shying, twisting, and jumping in all directions, and giving her in all nine tumbles, happily none of them the least serious, but enough to prove that the pony had too keen a spirit for practical joking to be suitable for so young a rider. Topsy accordingly was wisely relegated to a little two-wheeled cart, which she conducted with gravity and decorum, and my young friend became possessed of one of those charming confidential little cobs which seem to me so suitable for children. I made a sketch of her on this pretty little animal as she said good-bye to us one day, starting on her first "*real* ride with mother," as she called it. The ride was a *real* one, she explained, because the leading rein had been finally and entirely abolished.

As my little friend said good-bye to me, so must I now say good-bye to my readers, whom I have already detained too long with these every-day reminiscences of our friends the horses. Still, those who are riders themselves will, I hope, pardon my prolixity. They will know how gladly one lingers over the happy memories of days spent in the hunting-field, or of wanderings through pleasant lanes with two little ponies showing us the way, or of solitary rides through forest glades and over wide downs and moors —especially when these days belong to a past beyond recall: memories of "glimpses which have made us less forlorn," memories of days when the complexity, the weariness, the worry of life still seemed strange and far away, when existence was simple and comprehensible, and enjoyment centred itself in a free bounding gallop over grassy slopes under sunny skies.

A LUXURIOUS SNUGGERY.

A COSY CORNER.

A LIBRARY such as would be considered worthy of the name by scientific and literary men, and by noblemen who possess collections of volumes handed down from father to son for generations, is probably far out of the reach of many of my readers. The morning-room or breakfast-room, whichever name it may go by, usually answers for library as well in moderate-sized houses —and, somehow, it often becomes the favourite retreat of the family. We are apt to be disturbed by callers if we set to work in the drawing-room, and when we have our papers about in glorious confusion on the dining-table, Jane is certain to enter with the paraphernalia for luncheon or dinner; then away through empty space goes careering the supremely fascinating idea which has been a veritable will-o'-the-wisp all the morning, but was just taking shape, and would have gone far towards winning us fame—so we flatter ourselves—if that unlucky domestic had not recalled us to every-day life, and caused us to scramble up our written pages into a heap and ignominiously retire. In spite of its usefulness, I find that the morning-room is often extremely ugly. A discarded suite of furniture from some other apartment "does well enough," the table-cloth is far from innocent of ink-stains, the sewing-machine, never a lovely object, stands in the bay window, and the ornaments are second-rate. By far the best of the bunch is the book-case, with its rows of dear old friends, any one of which we could lay hands on in the dark. Sometimes, though, even these are kept in disorder.

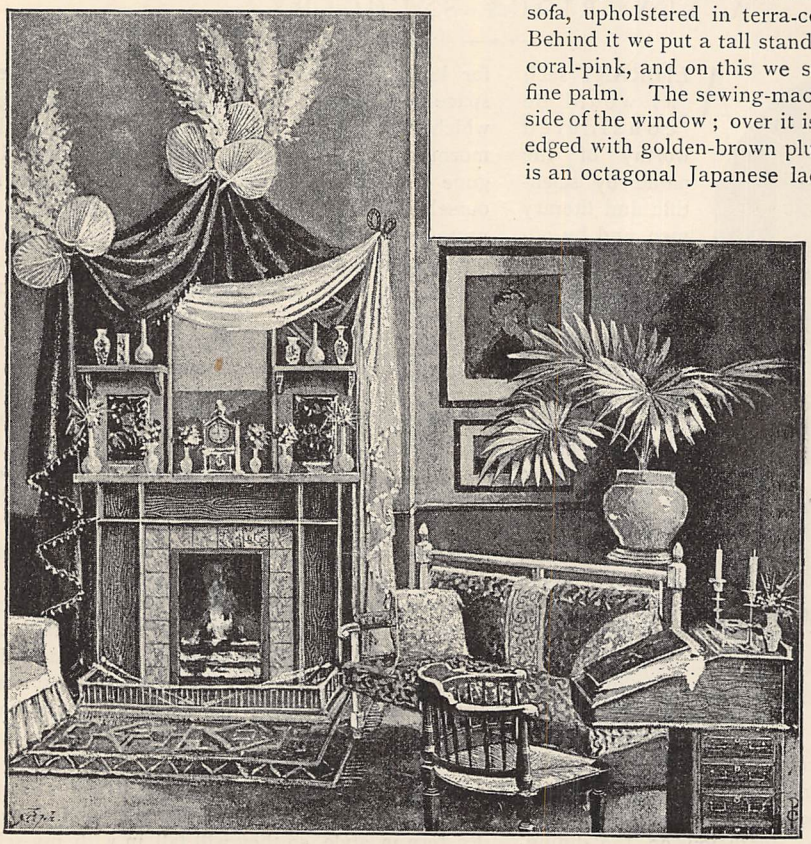
Now I am going to describe a room I am modernising. Why any one should have things ugly about when he could with no trouble but only pleasure have them pretty, I never could understand. Taking a look round, I feel a thorough aversion rising towards that horrible round table; it encroaches on space, and is the stamp of formality: therefore I issue an ukase for its immediate banishment anywhere out of my sight.

Now that Man of the Mountains is no more seen, we set to work with a will. The Brussels carpet is in good condition, and the colouring and design are Eastern in style, so they will fall in with my scheme. The walls are neither good nor bad, they are simply

neutral in tone, and the woodwork is not assertive, being a mixture of cream and buff tints. Our limit as to expenditure will not allow of our touching these.

The mantel-piece will never do as it is, and we tackle that first. Fortunately, it is a wooden construction. A carpenter is called in, who fixes a dark oak beading as a kind of frame for the lincrusta panels—"wood effect," as it is termed—which we have bought to ornament the jambs. Over the mantel-piece he sets up a narrow mirror. In the course of our peregrinations in our search after the beautiful, we have come across a pair of embossed metal panels really valuable and old; these, framed in lincrusta, which harmonises splendidly with their deep bronzy tones, the man places one on each side of the glass, fixing small shelves above to hold a few pieces of china.

Now for the drapery. I have invested in some yards of golden-brown plush — wool brocade would have answered the purpose, but I must own to a leaning towards plush, the folds are so rich and the reflected tints so charming—and some golden Nagpore silk. Climbing up a pair of steps, with hammer and nails in my apron pocket—for I will delegate the draping of these fabrics to none—I take the end of plush, which we have edged with a silk ball fringe, and throw it over the right-hand shelf, letting it fall a little way below the mantel-shelf. Drawing it along in folds to serve as a background to the ornaments that will be placed there, I raise it high above the centre of the glass and fasten it firmly. Three palm-leaf fans and some feathery pampas appear to keep it in place. Then I loop it so that it falls in a festoon, catching it up over and beyond the corner of the left-hand shelf, introducing here some pampas and dried palm-leaves, from whence it drops in cascade folds to the floor. At the same corner (the left-hand) I insert a fulness of gold Nagpore silk, having left an end to fall down like a second curtain beneath the plush, only it is not so long; this I draw above the shelf and over the top of the glass, partially veiling the latter, and carry it up to a point above the right corner to correspond with the festooned plush on the left; knotting it there, I allow it to fall to the floor.



HOW TO TREAT THE MANTEL-PIECE.

The book-case stands opposite the mantel-piece.

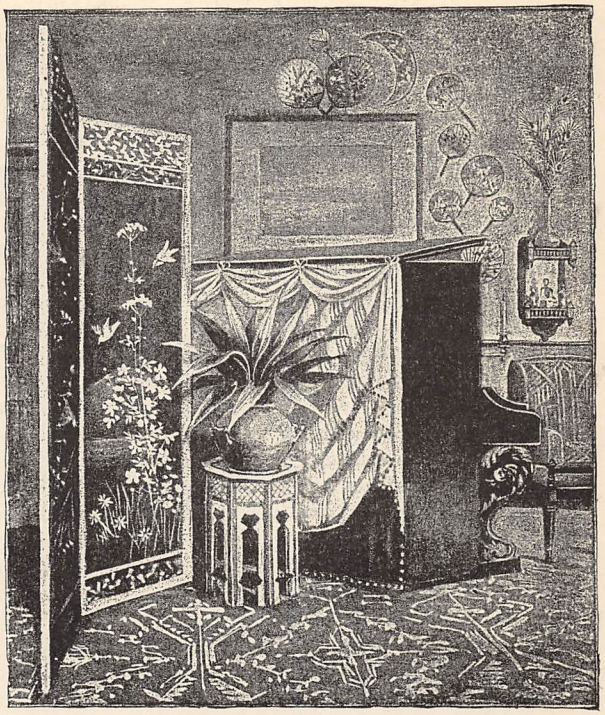
Comfortable seats have been fixed in the bay window, for which we have made cushions of terra-cotta and cream brocade; a frill of the same hanging to the floor takes off any hardness of effect. Curtains of brown and gold brocaded silk sheeting hang on either side, with Madras muslin frilled beneath; these muslin curtains are repeated in the partitions; they are all short so as not to interfere with the seats, and are caught back with Liberty silk scarves of a true shrimp-pink shade. On one side is the writing-table with its chair, and across the corner, between it and the fireplace, is the fashionable, straight, high-backed sofa, upholstered in terra-cotta and cream brocade. Behind it we put a tall stand which we have enamelled coral-pink, and on this we set a brown pot, holding a fine palm. The sewing-machine stands on the other side of the window; over it is thrown a strip of brocade edged with golden-brown plush. Near the left curtain is an octagonal Japanese lacquer and bamboo jardinière, which is filled with half-a-dozen pots of hardy ferns.

An arm-chair is placed by the book-case, with a small table enamelled coral-pink beside it. I always like a little table in close proximity when lounging in an easy-chair; it is convenient when laying down one's work or book. These occasional tables should never be overcrowded; a china bowl with a small fern in it, or a quaintly shaped glass with flowers, is quite sufficient in the way of ornament, so that a cup of tea can be set

down without fear of accident. A corner bracket of coral-pink shows off some good specimens of china.

Standing crosswise to the wall at the end of the room opposite the window is the piano. The back we drape with gold Nagpore silk and Eastern striped crêpe, looped, so as to discover an under corner piece of brown plush. The front has been modernised with red monochrome paintings on wooden panels, in imitation of Bartolozzi. An inlaid mother-of-pearl coffee-table stands against the back of the piano, and here we place a brass pot with a fine aspidistra. A Japanese three-fold screen of black satin, gold embroidered, keeps off the draught from the door. Between piano and fireplace is a coral-pink corner cupboard. Before it are an arm-chair and a pretty ivory-white table with real Japanese lattice panel. The chairs, enamelled ivory-white, are covered with various brocades. We have taken great care, however, that the colouring of these should all harmonise with the general effect.

A rich, warmly toned interior is the result at which we aimed in evolving our scheme, and our efforts are crowned with success; for it would be difficult to find a more cosy, comfortable snuggery anywhere.



HOW TO TREAT THE PIANO.

THE REST CURE, AND WHEN IT IS INDICATED.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

MR. FEATHERSTONHAUGH opened the breakfast parlour door and shouted to his housekeeper. He shouted in tones so stentorian that no one, except a medical man, could have believed him to be either an invalid or ailing in any way.

"Mary," he cried, "is there no possibility of your going about your work a trifle, just the merest trifle, less boisterously? And there goes that dreadful door-bell again. Oh, dear! Ring, ding! Ring, ding! all day long; first the baker, then the butcher, then somebody else. Heigho! it is provoking, for if I didn't happen to be a trifle nervous and out of sorts, no house in the world would be quieter than——There it goes again!"

I leant back in Mr. F.'s easy chair, and kept the morning paper before me. Silence is golden with patients like this.

"And nothing I touch seems to go right either. I placed that knife on the edge of the plate straight enough. Look at it now. Lying on the carpet as if to spite me. And there goes the coffee next all over the new white cloth!"

"Depend upon it, my friend," I said quietly, "that things go on just the same whether we are well or ill, only in the latter case we are more sensitive. If you have a cut finger, for instance, everything appears to go against it."

"Now," continued Mr. F., "if I weren't sleepless at night, all the country-side would be as still as the bottom of the sea; but simply because I am in need of rest, and could sleep if I got a chance, every living thing must keep awake to annoy me. Last night, for instance, Simpson's cow must keep moaning constantly as if she had something on her mind. Boulger's beast of a dog must bark and howl intermittently, and his horses must neigh, and no sooner have they somewhat settled, and I am dropping off, than all the cocks in the parish wake up and begin holloing. You needn't laugh behind your newspaper. You *are* laughing, I can see the paper shaking. I'm losing my memory, too. If I want such a simple thing as a pen, even, d'ye think I can find one? Not for the life of me."

"Am I getting old, I wonder?" He turned on me almost fiercely as he spoke the last words, and I put down the paper, got up, stretched myself, and walked leisurely to the window. It was a lovely morning in early summer; the grass was very green and trim on Mr. F.'s pretty lawn; there was abundance of foliage

on the rose-bushes, on which buds were already appearing, and a gush of bird melody came swelling from the silken-leaved linden-trees.

"You must excuse me, doctor"—Mr. F. was at my elbow now—"if I seem fretful and peevish. I really am out of sorts. What a lovely day, too, and I can't enjoy it a bit!"

"Ah!" I said, "you begin to think, then, there are other enjoyments in life than ledger work and making a pile as you call it."

Featherstonhaugh only sighed.

"You need rest," I added.

"I haven't had rest—a holiday—for years. I was going on so well in business till that bit of extra worry came, that I thought it a pity to spoil my year by going away."

"No doubt. Well, a month's holiday every summer, or say six weeks, would, taking it even from a business point of view, have been the best investment in time that ever you made. Now, you'll have to take all these months in the aggregate, and rest for half a year at least."

"But think what that will cost me!"

"Bah! life is cheap at any price."

Dear reader, Mr. F.'s case would not be mentioned were it not one of every-day occurrence. For greed of gain, as often as not, men and women will go on working long after symptoms tell them that the state of their health is not what it once was. Instead of taking rest, they fly to medicine or stimulants or both, and as with Mr. F., so with them, the last state is worse than the first.

The best cure is a slow but very sure one. And here, again, a lesson may be learned from Mr. F.'s case. He went to a bracing watering-place, but tried to "rush" his cure, if I may use a somewhat slangy verb. He felt convinced on starting that a few days, or a fortnight at most, would set him up. It is needless to say it did not. So he fretted and fumed impatiently; but finding at last that Nature would not alter her laws on his account, he surrendered, and from that moment his cure began. Little things do not now worry Mr. F. There is a halo of repose around his brow; Mary can go about her work singing, and no amount of cock-crowing is likely to arouse him from his peaceful slumbers.

When people become peevish, nervous, and restless from over-work, the class of medicine they generally seek relief from consists of such drugs as quinine, phosphorus, iron, and the vegetable bitter tonics. These they expect to pull them together, and there is no doubt they are valuable medicines, but the error made by the sufferers is this—they do not first remove the cause.

"Oh, I can't stop working to rest," a man said to me once, "I can go on as I am: I can suffer."

This might be all very well if he *could* go on as he was, that is, get no worse. One might suffer even the inconvenience of ill-health in order to support one's family, but the thin end of the wedge of indisposition having once effected an entrance, there is no staying its advance except by using radical means.

The indisposition caused by over-much brain-work or a too prolonged attention to business is very insidious in its advance. When once fairly established, its symptoms are patent enough to the invalid, and rest then becomes imperative. In fact, he is "knocked out of time," so to speak, and wishes then he had noted his failing powers before, and laid down his pen or closed his ledger.

When, then, is the rest cure indicated? Probably one of the earliest signs is slight dyspepsia, which cannot be attributed to errors in diet, want of fresh air, &c. It is a nervous kind of atonic dyspepsia, sometimes combined with acidity from liver sympathy. There is not the same relish for food, and so relief from this state is sought for in piquant relishes, wine, or tea.

Another symptom is an uneasy or tired feeling about the head, fulness it may be, or sleeplessness and stupidity, especially after eating. The brow is often hot, so is the top of the head, and the hand is pressed wearily across the eyes. Life begins to lose its brightness, then things begin to go a trifle wrong, and there are moments of peevishness and irritability. Lowness of spirits is succeeded by want of sleep. There is danger ahead, if not indeed close at hand, and happy is he who sees the signal *in time*. I say most emphatically *in time*, for, effective though the rest cure may be, there is a point of divergence from the path of health, beyond which no one can go with the slightest hopes of return or recovery. I pray none of my readers may ever reach this point.

But it is not for cases of over-work and brain weariness alone that the rest cure may be prescribed with success. Many cases of dyspepsia, especially that of an irritative kind, are benefited thereby; and regulation of diet will do far more good if carried out at some well-chosen watering-place than at home, where there is nothing new to divert the thoughts into a different channel. Persons so suffering would often willingly lay down rules for their own guidance in diet and *régime*, but they seldom have confidence in these. It is better in every case, therefore, to let one's own medical adviser do so; then success will depend upon the amount of rigidity with which they are adhered to.

Liver complaints are usually benefited by the complete rest cure. Here, at the outset, some special treatment will be necessary by way of clearing the system and giving the sufferer a fair start; but, on the whole, purgatives must be used with care, even when constipation exists.

But, indeed, it would be somewhat difficult to name a complaint of a chronic nature which might not be mitigated, perhaps banished entirely, by judicious change, rest, and well-chosen remedies. In fact, remedies, which at home may have done but little good, often commence to show their real beneficial action when the patient has obtained real rest and change. It should not be forgotten, by the way, that change and rest are often synonymous terms. I mean that many hard-worked men and women who are unable to obtain a holiday, may, by altering the nature of

their employment at home, achieve wonderful results for good.

There is a complaint of fashionable life which I have before had occasion to speak of—namely, *ennui*—which is often banished entirely by rest at the sea-side. But the rest in this case must be of a very active kind indeed. The sufferer should choose a place as different as possible from anything he or she has been used to—go to Shetland, or further for that matter—and identification with the pleasures and pursuits of the people ought to be one of the prescribed items of cure.

Muscular pains, which are sometimes very distressing, will often yield to a very short spell of complete rest by the sea or in mountain air. In these cases the rest must be of a bodily kind, even the fatigue of walking should be avoided as much as possible, and it may be advantageous at times to retain the horizontal position even for days together.

There is a species of so-called rest taken by ladies of society, and which I must only mention in order to condemn. Towards the end of a season they find themselves tired and worn out, and seek for change by the "sad sea wave." But is it a sad sea wave? Not to them. 'Twere well if such were the case. But they must needs import society customs and society gaieties to the spot they choose for their residence, or they will go where they are sure to find these. Rest like this is a delusion and a snare.

Rest to the stomach I have treated of before in my paper called "A Banian Day," but I may add that rest from certain articles of diet for a time is often beneficial, notably from sugar, tea, coffee, or stimulants, and last, though not least, rest from medicine itself, so far, I mean, as self-doctoring—nearly always to be deplored—is concerned.

In cases of irritability of brain from various causes, bromide of potassium, with or without the iodide, often greatly aids the rest cure, but this the family physician must prescribe.

Sea-bathing, if regularly carried out day after day, about three hours after breakfast, is an excellent adjunct, and better even than this is a course of hot salt-water baths. This is procurable at most seaside watering-places, and is very soothing to the nervous and mental system.

Need I add that no business troubles must accompany the weary man or woman to the water's edge? Leave business at home, and do not even write a letter unless compelled to do so.

THE HEROISM OF HERBERT STAMFORD.

(THE CHRONICLES OF CARDEWE MANOR.)

BY EMILY CARDEWE.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

AN AWKWARD PREDICAMENT.

WHEN we came back from the Continent—I accompanied uncle and auntie that year—we heard, and were much interested in hearing, of the experience of the Farmers and the supposed ghost in the Manor. It seems to me that the house lends itself to sensational occurrences, for so many adventures have already been related in connection with it. But I think my unpretending contribution will equal most of them in interest.

After Colonel Stormer's departure our little party broke up; only three people came to stay with aunt and uncle after that, but one of those was Mr. Stamford. He was in the Civil Service; a very gentlemanly young man, very quiet, thin, and undemonstrative. He sang and accompanied himself a little, but I used to help him on some occasions; and then he asked for an extension of leave for a week, and was very pleasant, and not *nearly* so shy as before.

But his visit came to an end *very* quickly. We went abroad in April, and to my aunt's astonishment, who should meet us at Milan but Mr. Stamford! *How he possibly could* have known that we were abroad I cannot tell. But he did; and—well, I must tell it, because it has considerable bearing on the story—he proposed to me, and, with uncle's consent, I accepted Herbert—Mr. Stamford.

We all returned to England together, and before he left the Manor, Major and Mrs. Martyn-Henry at Dorncombe invited us to go over and explore their mine, which has been worked for some years. There was some mystery about it which, Mrs. Farmer says, I may read some day.*

Herbert and I were strolling in the garden that evening, building some castles in the air, I am afraid. Then he said—

"Are you afraid to go down the mine, dearest?"

"Not with you, dear," was my reply; and I meant it—for I do not think that any girl will refuse to go anywhere with the man she really loves and trusts. I am sure I would go anywhere with Bertie.

"Then we will go. Your aunt will drive us over, she says—or I can ride if you will drive, dear."

"I think I would rather you came in the carriage," said I, "if you do not mind."

He made a very affectionate reply; and after a

* Mrs. Farmer has already told this tale, as "The Mystery of the Martyn-Henrys," in the Magazine for 1886.

while we went in; but I need not tell all we said to each other. You may admire Mr. Stamford as much as you like, for he is tall and dark, and has such a clear-cut face, and a neat, well-made figure. He looks a great deal more like an officer than a War Office clerk—as some War Office men do, I am told; but then *they* are volunteers, which, of course, accounts for their military appearance!

Next day we started, and on our way passed the Farmers' cottage. Auntie stopped the carriage at the gate, and inquired for her old attendant Lucy. I had only seen Mrs. Farmer on one occasion previously, and that was at Cardewe Manor when the terrible "accident" happened. She came out, a child holding each hand, and welcomed us. Mrs. Farmer has keen grey eyes, and seems to take in her surroundings quickly. She curtsied to us with a half-bow, and immediately re-assumed her independent, but always respectful, manner.

Mr. Stamford and I regarded her with some curiosity, while Mrs. Cardewe was chatting with her; and Herbert said to me—

"I am sure that woman is primed with mysteries and fancies. I never yet saw a person with such eyes and brows who had not some mysticism in his or her nature. In Scotland she would have the credit of 'second sight.'"

"Well, ma'am," we heard Mrs. Farmer say, "I will tell Charley. Thank you, too. Are you going far to-day?"

"We intend to explore Major Henry's mine. My niece and Mr. Stamford have never been in a mine. I am not going down myself."

"Then I wouldn't let them go, ma'am. They are terrible things. The very look of them makes me shudder. I never knew any good in mines but coal, myself, and this is lead, isn't it? So it's sure to be at the very bottom of all!" said Mrs. Farmer.

"But, Mrs. Farmer," said Herbert, "there are gold and silver mines—they are good, surely?"

"Well, sir, perhaps they are; but who would go in his senses and grub away in the ground for bits of gold and silver when he could get it ready made in the bank for less expense and trouble? No, miss," she continued, turning to me, "mines are all very well for miners, and those people whose business occupies them in such depths; but for ordinary people like you and me the ground Providence gave us to walk on should be enough, without boring holes and running risks of fire and water and blind horses, which are not meant for us on earth."

We then said good morning, and the carriage drove away. Herbert was rather indignant with Mrs. Farmer for calling me an "ordinary person," and classing me in the same category as herself. But auntie laughed at him, and explained that Lucy Farmer was a privileged person, and spoke her mind freely.

"She certainly possesses common sense, but I think her objections rather ridiculous," said Herbert. "She is enough to frighten us from our expedition; and all that about the blind horses is nonsense."

"Oh, no," said auntie. "Don't you know that ponies which work in mines do become blind in the course of time? Mrs. Farmer manages to pick up information, if she does not always apply her knowledge correctly."

We conversed upon other topics, and soon reached Major Henry's house—a pretty, rather long, low-gabled structure, with the drawing-room opening directly upon a trim lawn, and a tennis-ground beyond the flower borders. Major and Mrs. Henry took possession of auntie after a while, and left me with Herbert—he made no complaint, so I said nothing, of course.

We wandered round the shrubberies; and he tried to persuade me not to visit the mine.

"Then you want to go without me?" I said, pretending to be offended. (It is great fun teasing Herbert; no one could help it, he is so candid and honest; and it is nice to bring him round again after hearing his indignant and half-injured expressions of devotion. I hope he will never see this confession, though!)

Then he blazed up. "Without you, dearest?" (he said it, and "darling," too). "Go without you? no, indeed. But I was only afraid for *you!*"

"Then you need not be. I am determined to go, and you will take care of me, will not you?"

Now, if any one thinks that I am going to tell *all* my conversation with Mr. Stamford, he or she is mistaken, and Herbert's answer to my question will remain for ever a secret—my lips are sealed on that subject! Still, I find it a difficult thing to write an account of our expedition without telling a little of our conversations, and an equally difficult thing to describe *them!* But I may confess that I was very happy, and we went in to luncheon in capital spirits.

After our meal we drove away again to a deserted-looking spot near the sea, where was machinery; and there were mounds of black stuff and scraps of iron, and people with such funny, and sometimes sadly disfigured faces. There is something in the lead, I was told, which affects them. And then we reached the opening, and looked into it. Ugh! It *was* rather "creepy." Perhaps Lucy Farmer was right! Had I any business in a mine?

However, I was not going to turn back. I was taken away, and wrapped in hideous overalls, and you never saw such a figure as Herbert looked. He laughed, and I positively *screamed* when he came up. He did look dreadful! But we had not any time to spare, so we were put into the cage with Major Henry and a miner-man. There were two more—a Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, and another man, who were to follow us down.

I shut my eyes, and when I felt the thing stop, I opened them again. There were twinkling lights, and some buzzing noise, and a sound of blows. The passage was high enough, and we waited, standing out of the way of the men. I cannot remember half we saw, for I was rather bewildered, and glad to cling to Mr. Stamford. At length the remainder of the party arrived, and then carrying lights, and conducted by

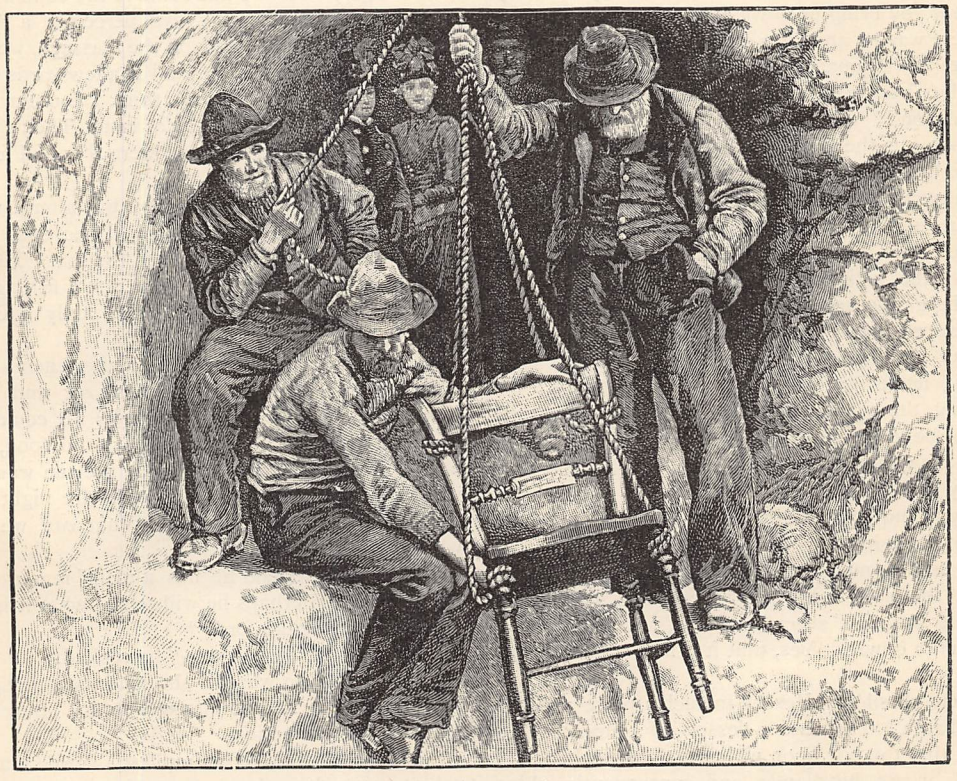
the miner-man, we plunged into the passages, and I became rather frightened.

It appeared, from what the man said, though I could understand very little of it, that we were in the oldest part of the mine, which had been worked a little, and had "given out," he said. Herbert and Mr. Alexander were much interested, but Mrs. Alexander and I kept together, and compared notes; neither of us felt at all comfortable, and every moment I fancied the roof would fall in! Pieces did drop occasionally, and we heard the dripping of water, which had a weird and unearthly sound. At this time I quite agreed with the big new guns on board the ships, and a rattle like the noise made by the shot from it.

"Stay where you are," said the miner-man, very quietly. "There's a bit of soil down; just bide a while. I'll go and see what's the muss."

"Muss!" He meant the matter, I supposed, and I almost laughed as I pinched Herbert. But he did not respond; and when I whispered to him if there was any fear, he only said quietly—

"With *you* I have none, Emily." But his voice was rather shaky, and then my heart began to beat loudly.



"RIGGED UP AN OLD CHAIR WITH LINES" (*p.* 663).

Lucy Farmer, and I told Mrs. Alexander so. She agreed with me.

At last I suggested that we should return.

"I believe you are afraid, Emily," said Herbert, smiling at me, and putting my arm in his, while he held my hand. He patted it—nobody could see—and he reassured me.

"There is no danger," he whispered; "and if there be, darling, we will die together."

This was, of course, comforting; but as I did not want to die, and would prefer to live, I said so; but I felt very uncomfortable, and would rather return. So, also, would Mrs. Alexander; and we turned, stooping again. We had gone about a hundred yards, when we heard a distant shout. Then a roar, then a terrible bang, like the noise made by the discharge of one of

"There *is* danger," I said. "Oh, Bertie, if——"

"Wait! Hush! The man will return in a moment or two. Be calm, dear!"

I pressed his hand, and said no more; but I remembered Lucy Farmer's warning.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

A DESPERATE REMEDY.

IT was one thing to say "Be calm," and another to *be* so. I am certain Herbert was not *really* calm himself, though he tried to remain quiet. Mr. Alexander and Major Henry spoke in low tones; Mrs. Alexander clung to her husband, in terror of death, and I nearly cried. I cannot tell why.

In about five minutes we perceived a star coming

towards us. This was the lamp carried by our guide. He came very slowly, and we all were in great expectation of his return.

"Well, Mason," shouted Major Henry. "A big fall?"

"Aye, major; it ain't so dusty," he replied. "It's a tidy lump. We can't get over it."

"Can't get over it?" cried Mrs. Alexander. "Are we shut in?"

"Well, ma'am, we're shut in until they find us out. Here we are, there's the soil, and beyond's our mates. If they don't dig us out, we must remain here, ma'am."

"And starve!" I screamed. "Oh, Major Henry, how *could* you bring us down here?"

"There was no apparent danger," he replied. "We can find a way out, perhaps. At any rate the men will find us very soon. Johnson knows which way we came, Mason?"

Johnson was the man who had come down with us, and who had remained behind near the shaft.

"I suspect he will guess," replied Mason. "But ye see we're in the old borings. We abandoned this seam last year, and unless we can pass back again we're in rather a tight place; I don't deny it."

"Is there no other exit?" asked Mr. Alexander.

"There is—*one!*" replied the man grimly. "Yes, there's an exit" (he said "*eggs it!*").

"Well, let us go that way," said Herbert. "We are losing time, and alarming ourselves here, while we might be in fresh air again."

"Oh, yes; there's fresh air enough: it's the *eggs it* that may frighten you."

"Why?" inquired the major. "Do you mean the old boring-hole?"

"No, sir; I means the cliff-face bore, where we chucked the stuff. It's thirty—ah, it's *forty*—feet above the sea; it's sheer precipice, and fifty feet of water plumb down! Yes, that it is! That's the *eggs it!*"

We were all silent. Rescue in such a place was not very probable. There were vessels, of course, but we all knew that the bay upon which the cliff looked was bounded by two headlands, and consequently, ships went on straight across, and did not come near the shore. There was no beach. The rock, or cliff, rose almost perpendicularly from the deep water, ascended a couple of hundred feet quite above the sea, and overhung it at the top. We knew this, and understood the desperate condition in which we were.

"Never say die," remarked Herbert. "Some one will rescue us. Cheer up, Mrs. Alexander. I think I know a way to escape."

"Then it's more 'n I do, young master," said Mason in an undertone. "No, sir; you's pluck, I can see, but it's *possibles* we want."

"If we can't find 'possibles,' we must try impossibles," replied Herbert boldly. "Now, Mr. Mason, guide us to the fresh air, please."

"Yes, Mason," said Major Martyn-Henry, "we had better find the cliff-bore."

"This way, gentlemen and ladies; mind your footing, it's rather rough hereabouts; keep close, and mind the water."

Such a half-hour (or hour, for it was quite as long, seemingly) *I* never passed. We had to stoop, and even crawl, in places. My hands, my boots, my petticoats, were in a terrible condition: torn and muddy, and bedraggled. I believe Mrs. Alexander, being stouter, suffered more than I did, poor woman! It was most terrible. The grime and dirt, and the closeness, the terror, the misery of that crawl, I shall never forget—never! Herbert and Major Henry were very kind, but what can men do to assist under such circumstances? Nothing at all.

At length, when we had come to the conclusion that Mason had lost his way, we perceived a dim pale light. This was the end of the passage, which presently began to get higher, and in a few yards we could stand up and rest. I did not think I could even stand up straight again; but I did at last. Then we leaned against the dripping wall, and were thankful for a gasp of fresh air.

We remained some time thus, but after a while we continued our way, and reached the end, where a good-sized opening looked over the sea. There was no ship in sight, not even a boat, not a fishing-smack, nor a pleasure-skiff. We could only wait. We waited.

But while we waited we had another enemy to contend against—hunger! The fresh air and exercise had made us hungry and thirsty; we could scrape moisture from the walls, but we had no food, and no means of procuring any. Besides, the sun was already westing, and we might have to pass the night in this cavern—a terrible prospect. "What *can* we do?" I whispered to Herbert.

"Mr. Stamford said he has a plan," remarked Mrs. Alexander. "Perhaps he will tell us what it is. Can we escape, Mr. Stamford?"

"We may—it all depends," he replied.

"On whom? on what?" she continued, grasping his arm—which she had no business to do. But Herbert didn't notice the action.

"On one of us men," he replied. "We may either volunteer or draw lots. One of us can go and get assistance."

"In what way, Stamford?" asked Major Martyn-Henry; and Mason muttered, "Ye needn't mind me, gentlemen!"

"The only way I can perceive is this," said Herbert. "I am ready to undertake the venture. The man who will bring assistance must reach the sea or the summit of the cliff first."

"It's impossible to climb the hill," said Mason; "I tried it myself, and was nigh killed. No, sir; no climbing up!"

"Then we must climb down," said Herbert.

"My dear fellow, just look over, and then talk of climbing down," exclaimed the major. "There is a sheer clean drop of nearly forty feet into deep water."

"How deep?" asked Herbert suddenly. "Any rocks?"

"No; clean sandy bottom—about twenty feet or more. Eh, Mason?"

"It's all twenty foot, major; sand, and chalk, and limestone, shelving out to fifty fathom!"

"All the better," said Herbert boldly. "There, I'll volunteer; I'll dive down, and swim ashore!"

"You shall *not!*" I exclaimed. "Herbert, for my sake, don't—oh, think of me! Suppose you are dashed to pieces, dearest—think of me!"

"Think of you," he replied; "why, I am going to save you, darling — save you and our friends here. Mason will tell you the whole truth now. The mine has fallen in, and there is no chance of rescue from within. I must, or some one else must, go."

"Mr. Alexander, won't you?" I said.

"I cannot swim," he replied. "Besides——"

"Perhaps you are afraid," I said angrily. "Why should Mr. Stamford go? Why should he sacrifice himself——?"

"For *you*, dear," he whispered. "Emily," he continued, leading me aside within the cutting, "there is really less danger than in remaining here. The tide will carry me ashore round the point. Kiss me, dear, and then leave me to change and prepare."

But I clung to him, and tried to dissuade him. He was determined: he consulted Mason and Major Henry, who was half inclined to try the venture; but Herbert dissuaded him—at his age such a leap was too much. After a quarter of an hour I was persuaded; and, crying bitterly, kissed Herbert, then, with Mrs. Alexander, I retired for a while.

In five minutes Herbert had thrown off all his heavy clothes and his boots. He was ready for swimming when we returned, and he looked prepared for anything. He had no fear. I kissed him again, and I think Mrs. Alexander, who is quite thirty-three, wished to, but didn't. We all shook hands with him, and then he stepped forward, waved his hand to me, joined his feet, put his hands together above his head, gave a sudden spring, and cut the blue water with scarcely a splash.

I could hardly see him for tears. My eyes were streaming, but I rushed to the edge, and, supported by Major Henry, looked over. Herbert had disappeared! For a long while we gazed—he did not come up. Was he drowned? Seconds, a minute, a minute and a half passed, and we did not see him. Then we heard a cry. We looked in the direction from which it came, to the right, and saw my Bertie waving his arm many yards away, while he swam on his left side.

Oh, I was thankful! We all shook hands again, and gave him a cheer, waving our pocket-handkerchiefs. Then, after a while, as we watched him, he turned, and disappeared round the headland.

"He is safe now," exclaimed Major Henry. "The rest is child's play for him. We may wait without anxiety, I am sure. He will bring back a boat, no doubt, and we can be home to dinner, Emily!"

I hoped so. Most devoutly I prayed for Herbert's safety; and we then remained very silent. I did not stay with the others; I preferred to wait alone, and think of Bertie.

* * * * *

In about an hour and a half after he had gone, we perceived a fishing-boat coming close round the headland. She stood close in, and then we knew that Herbert had landed in safety, and was returning to the rescue. We could see several men on deck, but not Herbert in his white clothing. Had anything happened? No; there was he in sailor dress, waving his hand! All safe! Thank Heaven!

The vessel came up, and after some mistakes a rope was thrown up to us, then another, and a man climbed up with a pulley or block, and rigged up an old chair with lines, into which we got, and were lowered down into the fishing-boat. They made me go first, and I wanted no pressing, I can assure you. Herbert received me in his arms, and we went downstairs into the little cabin until all the others were safe on board. Then the sailor brought away one rope, and was let down on the other rope, while the men held the end. The pulley is in the cave still.

We reached home most thankful for our deliverance. The men in the mine were most anxious about us. They had sent messengers over the hill to try and find us in the old borings, but we had quitted the cave before they could get at us.

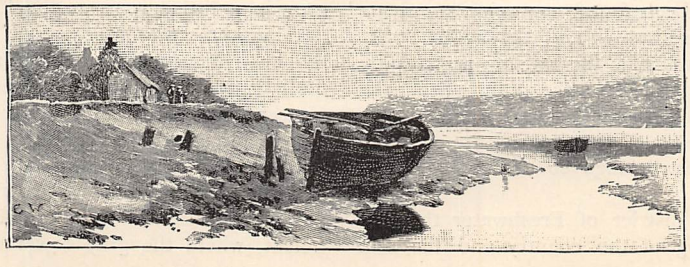
As for Herbert—what could we say that was praise enough? "There is no reward good enough for him, is there?" asked Major Henry.

"Yes," replied Herbert quietly. "This is my reward," he added, taking my hand in his; "when may I claim it?"

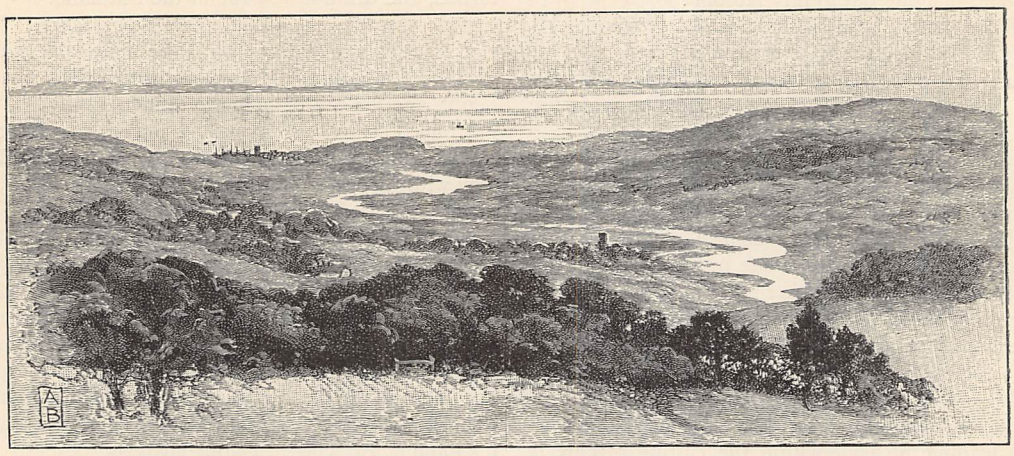
"When you please, dear," I replied; for I am not ashamed to confess I love him dearly. "I am yours. You saved my life, and I will devote it to you."

"I think we are *de trop*, dear," said Major Henry to his wife; "come into the garden."

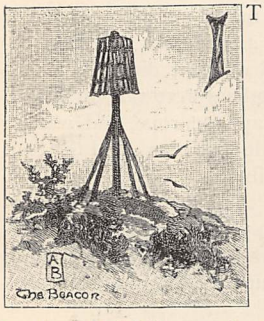
Then they went, and Bertie and I were left together, and so very happy.



A POET'S COUNTRY.



THE VALLEY OF THE YAR, FROM HIGH DOWN.
(*Farringford Wood in the Foreground.*)



IT would be unfair to call any one district exclusively the country of Tennyson in the sense that we associate Stratford with Shakespeare, or Grasmere and Rydal with Wordsworth. The early associations of Lincolnshire colour much of his earlier work, and have left their impress, indeed, on all his writings; the heather-clad hills on the Surrey and Sussex borders have been the chosen summer resort of his later years. But the country that lies round Farringford—the western end of the Isle of Wight—associated as it is with many happy years of the poet's life, and in the minds of many with happy memories of admission there into the charmed circle of the poet's home, seems to ally itself with him in a special manner, and to make the name I have given to it not altogether an unfitting one.

Those who visit it now for the first time must bear in mind that there have been many changes since Tennyson first came to Farringford. Much of the seclusion of former years has been lost through the ever-growing number of summer visitors, and the accommodation it has been found necessary to provide for them both in Freshwater and the newer resort of Totland Bay. And now the railway is creeping gradually along the valley of the Yar. Still, the main features of the district cannot change, nor has it altogether lost that air of rest and leisure, of quiet and retirement, which belongs so essentially to the pure country.

For in this little district of Freshwater there is the happiest blending of the country and the sea. Sheltered by the sloping Downs, as you follow the winding lanes between luxuriant hedges under overarching trees, or crossing one of the little village greens, branch off into a footpath through meadows and cornfields, you might think yourself in the heart of an English county. Yet only a few steps further, when you reach the crest of the next hill-slope (for all the surface of the land is gently undulating, as if unconsciously repeating the landward slope of the Downs) although the sea itself on the one hand is hid by the Downs, the grey-blue Solent is in sight on the other, with its distant gleam of white sails.

The long ridge of Downs which crosses the island from east to west slopes down at Freshwater Gate in the massive slant of Afton Down. Immediately opposite, and rather more abruptly, rises the High Down, continuing the ridge to its western end. Between these two sentinels there is just room for the little bay, or cove—it is scarcely more—of Freshwater, a fairy bay when the sun shines on the bluest of blue seas, and on the white chalk cliffs to whose very edge is spread a smooth close carpet of turf.

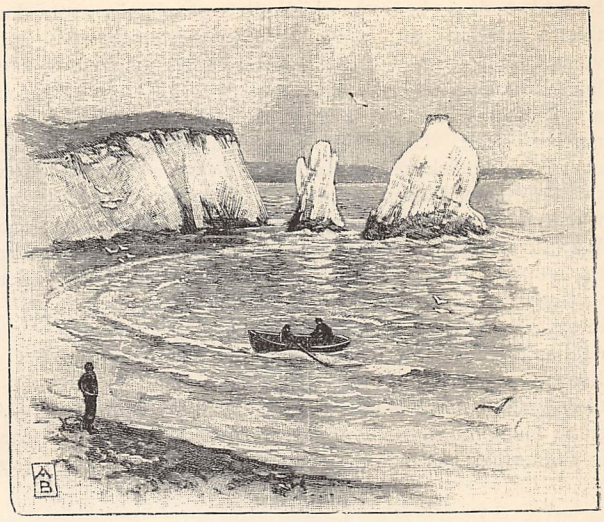
Not a hundred yards from the sea rises the river Yar, which, flowing, curiously enough, away from the sea, forms a kind of boundary to our district. Scarcely more than a little ditch at first, choked with weeds and marked by about half a dozen pine-trees, which grow in a little group at the foot of Afton Down, it develops presently into a small stream, flowing along the low-lying reedy meadows insignificantly enough, until it reaches the old stone bridge, called the Causeway. But passing under this, the stream expands immediately to quite a small lake below the rising ground on which the old church stands, with its square tower and red-tiled roof, and thence you can trace its course flowing on broadly and placidly to the Solent, where the grey tower of Yarmouth Church

shows in the near distance amidst a cluster of dark trees, and beyond it the masts of a vessel lying near the pier.

It is in the heart of this quiet country, midway between the river and the two seas, that Farringford lies. Every one remembers the poet's own description of it :—

> "Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
> I watch the twilight falling brown
> All round a careless ordered garden,
> Close to the ridge of a noble down."

The woods of Farringford stretch along the foot of the High Down, divided from it only by one or two fields. The house itself—"half hid in the gleaming wood"—can only be seen from the immediate precincts, so thick is the belt of trees in which it is set. Photographs have rendered most people familiar with the picturesque front, with its walls and windows so clad with green that they look almost like part of the surrounding wood, and you can scarcely tell where the building ends or the trees begin. A great wide-spreading cedar casts its shadows across the grass, and beside it tall elm-tree-trunks are veiled with a wealth of ivy. From the slight bank of turf, with its light park railing, which shuts in the lawn, a stretch of park-like meadow-land slopes gently to the south, broken here and there by clumps of trees. Beyond it rises the great dome of Afton Down. A few elm-trees, blown rather out of shape by the force of the west wind, interpose to break the outline of the cliff, and between and beyond these flashes the brilliant blue of the sea. Turn to the east as you stand at the upper end of the meadow-ground, and looking across the gentle slopes and the woods beyond, you can catch a glimpse of the Solent and the Hampstead cliffs.



IN THE BAY.

A lane overarched for some distance with trees, green and golden as the sun shines through their leaves, traces the western boundary of Farringford. On the left hand a field stretches along to the foot of the High Down. There are pine-trees scattered across this field, and a belt of elms beyond. Then as the lane skirts the thick trees which surround the house, it becomes a mere cutting between grass banks, and so roofed in that rain can hardly penetrate. A turning at right angles leads by a straight course to the Down. Beyond this the ground sinks a little, and the Down is hidden by a thick belt of trees running along the ridge of an undulating meadow. By the gate of the meadow is a muddy pond, with a large willow bending over it. There is an old wall on your right hand over which, at the corner, hangs a wealth of ivy. Within, visible above the ivy, is a ripening apple-tree. You have turned eastward now, and the lane widens a little, past a farmyard with thatched cottages, between which a pink rose is flowering in clusters almost as high as the chimneys. There are geese and hens in the opposite field, which has large hay-stacks under the trees in the corner. Passing these, you emerge into the road, not far from the entrance to the main drive, by a short avenue, quite stately from the height of the trees and their wealth of foliage. You have come almost three-parts of the way round Farringford, and have skirted the house at no great distance, but there has hardly been a sign of it—so completely do the trees hide it away in their green recesses.

HOOK HILL.

The straight path that leads to the Down is bordered by

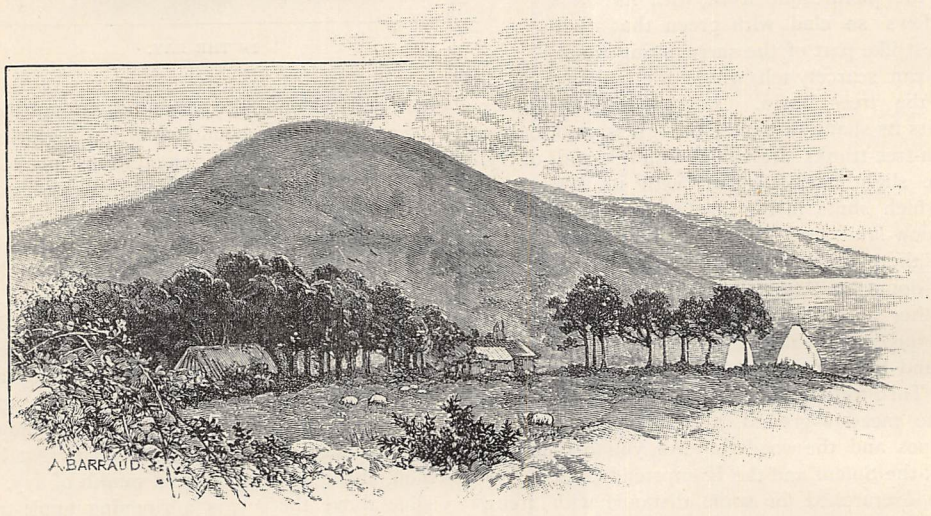
bramble-hedges, beneath which the grass banks are thickly starred with pale pink and white convolvulus. The crest of High Down, with its long outline, is broken only by a clump or two of furze here and there, but there is a good deal of furze on this northern slope. Under the Beacon it has been greatly charred and blackened by fire, but seen from a distance this only lends a deep purplish shade to the hill-side, which is rather a pleasing contrast than otherwise. What a sense of freedom there is on the summit of the Down! How the strong pure air blows round and through you! You give yourself up to it and drink it in eagerly, as if there were a new life in the draught. And so there is. Sit down under the shadow of the Beacon, and watch the butterflies fluttering over the turf—white butterflies in numbers, and with them the small blue butterflies, more plentiful just here than in any other part. When they first settle you lose sight of them, for the softly speckled drab of their closed wings is hardly noticeable. But in a moment or two the wings open, and disclose the deep lavender-blue within, paling at the edges to a little silvery line.

Beyond the Beacon there is a dip in the Down, and it looks only a short distance to the further end, though in reality it is a long way. There are a few patches of heather on the slope, but very dwarf and brown. Not many wild-flowers are here. They grow mostly on the slope immediately above Freshwater Gate, where the turf is carpeted with them. All along the level tract to the west, the ground is strewn with the white and grey feathers of the gulls. You do not see very many, but you can hear them crying incessantly to one another—a plaintive cry, as of a child in trouble. Now and again two of them will rise above the edge of the Down, circling round each other and calling, then sinking again, or one will pass along with a strong steady flight. But the swallows skim across and across, almost touching the turf as they pass and, sometimes, settling quite close to you as you walk.

There is hardly any heather on High Down, but the dark sides of Headon Hill are clad with it, and it spreads like a pink and purple carpet to the edge of the cliffs at Alum Bay. Some of the purple clumps at the very edge stand up a mass of blossom against the blue background of the sea, and to and fro amongst the flowers the bees come and go with a low continuous hum of pleasure. Look out over the smooth blue water, and watch the pleasure-boats, as they make the passage between the Needles, driven back once and again by the force of the current. Or perchance you may see

> ——"below the milky steep,
> Some ship of battle slowly creep,
> And on thro' zones of light and shadow,
> Glimmer away to the lonely deep."

As day advances, the long wall of chalk cliff puts on the tenderest shade of cool bluish-grey, while little purple shadows steal along the water from its foot.



AFTON DOWN.

Our poet has given us a perfect picture of Alum Bay in "The Wreck":—

> "The broad white brow of the Isle—that bay with the colour'd sand—
> Rich was the rose of sunset there as we drew to the land;
> All so quiet, the ripple would hardly blanch into spray,
> At the foot of the cliff."

Any one who has stood at the end of the Down above the fort and looked over into Scratchell's Bay, with its magnificent front conspicuous in its dazzling whiteness for miles and miles, or entered the Solent from the west when the afternoon sunlight falls full on the warm pink and glowing yellow of the Alum Bay cliffs, will recognise the perfect truth and beauty of the description.

"Maud" was written at Farringford, and though we must not press too much to find here the precise originals of its different scenes, it is yet true, as Mr. Haweis says, that it is "full of Freshwater scenery." There is one passage which must have been written on the Farringford lawn, and which breathes the very spirit of the place:—

"O, art thou sighing for Lebanon,
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious east,
Sighing for Lebanon?
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have been increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair
And looking to the south, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread,
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden.

* * * * * *

"Here will I lie while these long branches sway,
And yon fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play.

* * * * * *

"It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

* * * * * *

"Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?"

What, again, could be a more perfect image than this of the deep brilliant blue of the sea as it winds in and out round the headlands to St. Catherine's Point in the distance, binding the land as with a bright ribbon?—

"When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
Half lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
The silent sapphire-spangled *marriage ring* of the land."

But turn inland away from the sea along some of the lanes or across the fields. Here in a large wheat-field, within sight of the sea, the mowers are at work, five of them in a steadily advancing line, four using their scythes well together with a kind of rhythmic swing, the fifth coming in irregularly. In the opposite field they are leading, and scattered straws along the hedges tell where the carts have passed. A week later, and the ploughs will be at work in the fields.

The hedges are a great delight, although the early summer must be the time to see them in their full beauty. Close to Farringford there is a little green, and from this the most tempting of footpaths leads away along a little stretch of grass left between the fields, with a view of the high mound of the Golden Hill Fort in front. The grass is full of wild-flowers, the hedges a mass of brambles. A little further on, where there is some water, hardly more than a ditch, by the side of the path, the foundations of the over-hanging hedge are old hawthorn-boughs, upon which wild plum and wild rose bushes have reared a super-structure, interlaced and bound together by trails of the wild convolvulus. Amongst these, one large leaf shines out a deep blood-red, with a few purplish-black freckles at the edges, and there is a little half-blown bit of meadow-sweet. Below, amongst the nettles and grasses down by the water, gleams one small pink blossom of the Herb Robert.

There is another delightful hedge along the foot-path which leads across the fields to Totland Bay: a high hedge with oak saplings in it, and a ridge of furze above it on the further side. All kinds of wild growths have their home here. The blossoms and berries of the brambles abound, of course. There are branches of nuts, and great trails of convolvulus, full of buds and large white flowers. The lavender scabious and the purple knapweed bloom beside the path; there are scarlet poppies here and there, and ferns amongst the nettles and grass. The butterflies love this hedge, and form quite a body-guard, fluttering round you as you walk along: white butterflies, blue butterflies, and tortoiseshells.

Along the ridge of the fields, where the view across the Solent opens out before you, and the bracing air from the north meets you as you come up from Middleton Green or Freshwater, there is another hedge where the brambles run riot—one great trail bowing down over another, and spreading along the ground: large blossoms—some white, some with a faint blush of pink, others through all shades of pink deepening almost to violet—the berries reddening, some beginning to turn black, and the bine in many places crowded with them. A few leaves here and there have turned yellow with freckles of brown, but most of them still retain their colour. Some wild honey-suckle has twisted itself through from the other side of the hedge, with a few blossoms partly out, and a cluster of bright crimson and purple berries. Above the brambles is a mass of elder, full of berries, green and purple, but the clusters looking red because of the crimson stalks. Beyond the hedge the ground dips again, and you look right across to the sea. A place, this, to watch the sunset, when the western sky is all flooded with golden light, or a purple haze lies along the coast-line, and the sun goes down amidst deep rosy and purple clouds; or perhaps there is a bank of grey cloud along the horizon, and the sun, as he sinks behind it, gilds the upper edges of the clouds and throws up quivering shafts of light.

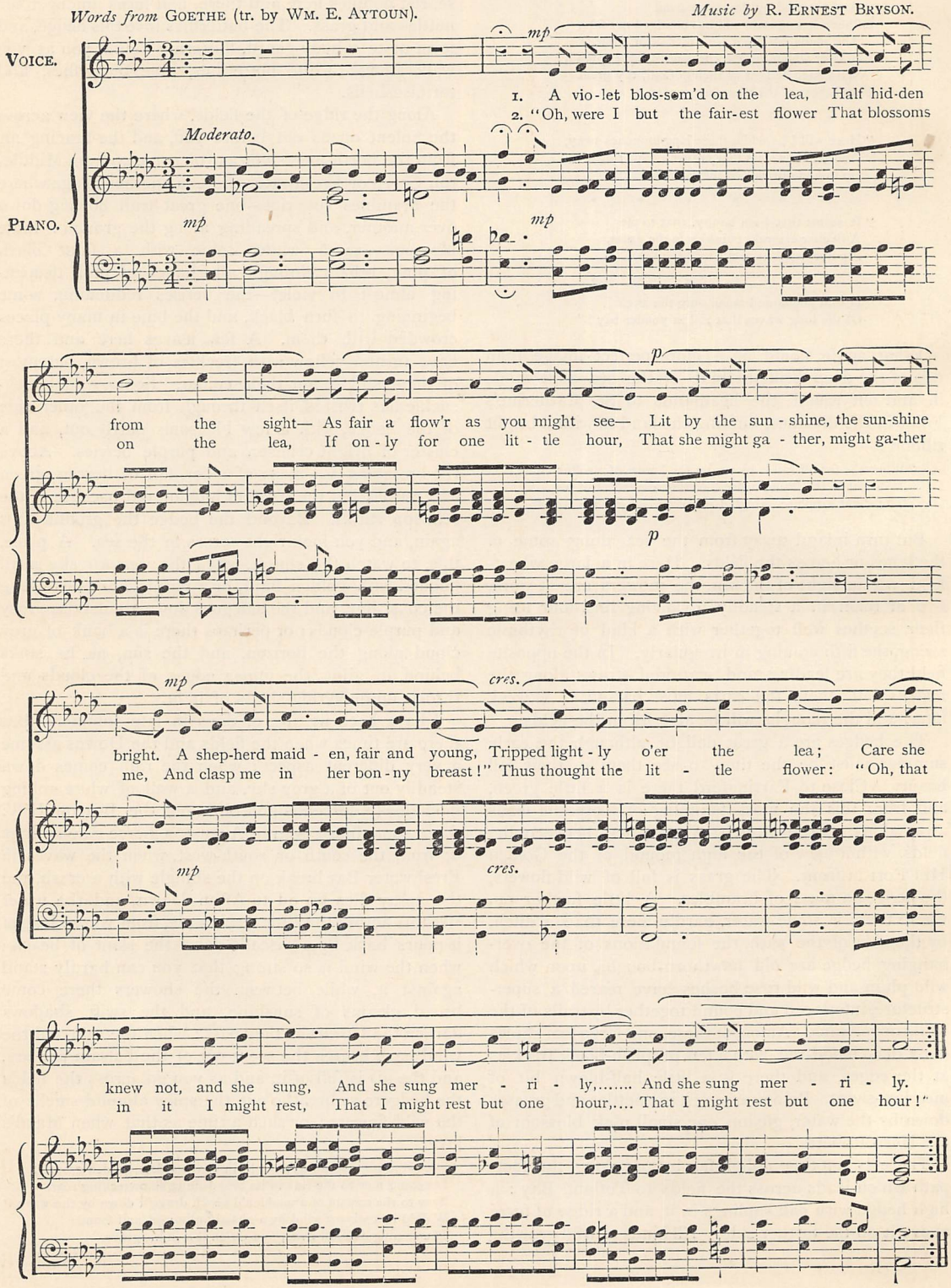
I have been writing of days in late summer. But there are times when the fields and the Downs assume a very different aspect: when the rain comes down steadily out of a grey sky, and a wall of white rolling mist slowly descends and blots out the Beacon Hill: when sometimes, even in August, a fierce gale springs up from the south or south-west, when the waves in Freshwater Bay break on the shingle with a crash, and the spray flies up on to Afton Down, and the water streams across the little esplanade, from whose ledges it pours back in a cascade down the slant of beach: when the wind is so strong that you can hardly stand against it, while between the showers there come broad gleams of sunshine, and the swift shadows darken the Downs as they pass: when the rain and the wind have beaten the scent out of the balsam poplars, and the air is full of it, and as you go across the fields the hedgerows breathe out the spicy almond smells of the wild-flowers; or such a time as that when Maud's lover—

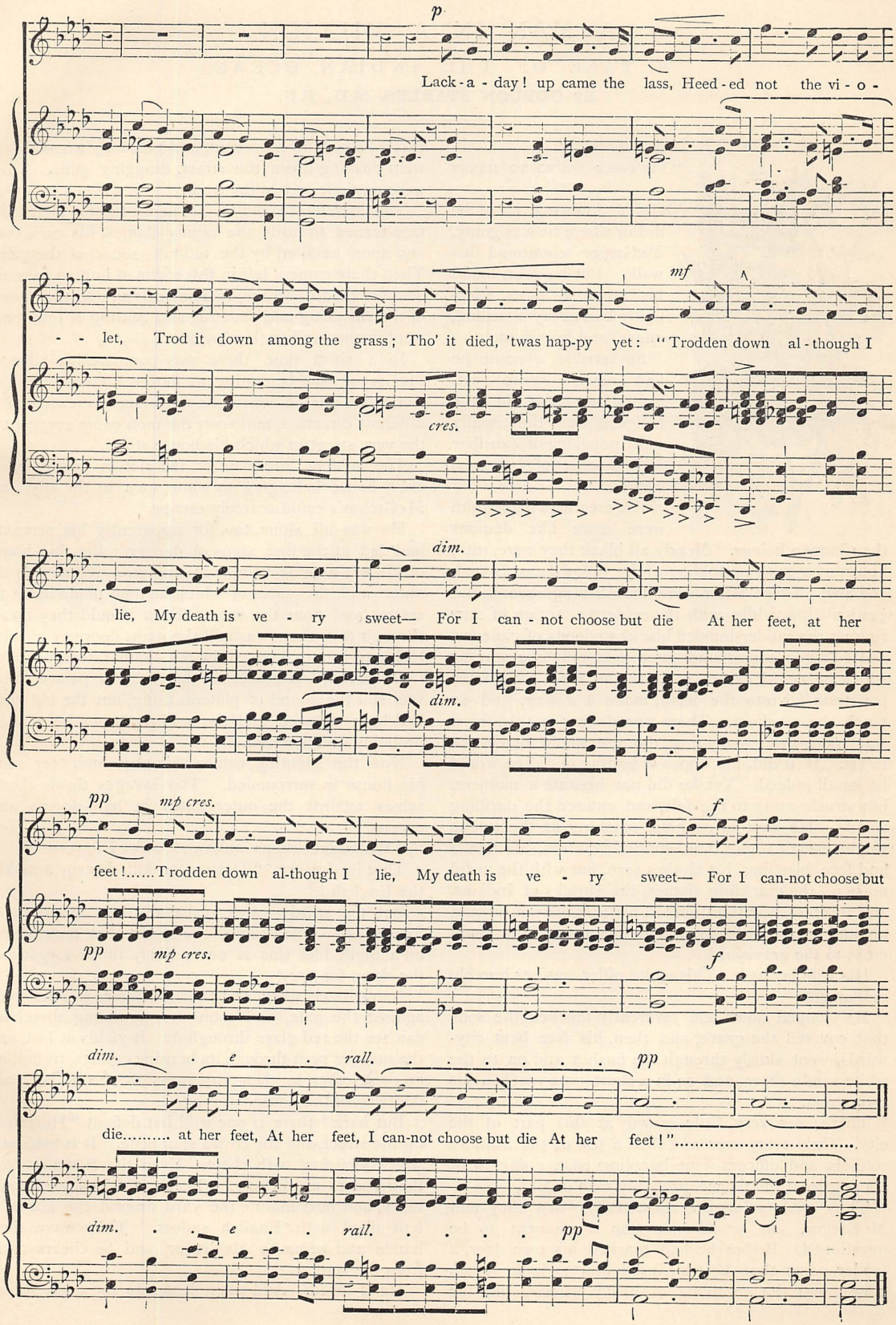
——"arose, and all by myself, in my own dark garden ground,
Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave."

R. W. R.

The Violet.

Words from GOETHE (tr. by WM. E. AYTOUN). *Music by* R. ERNEST BRYSON.




p
Lack-a-day! up came the lass, Heed-ed not the vi-o-
mf
- - let, Trod it down among the grass; Tho' it died, 'twas hap-py yet: "Trodden down al-though I
cres.
dim.
lie, My death is ve - ry sweet— For I can-not choose but die At her feet, at her
dim.
pp
mp cres.
feet!.....Trodden down al-though I lie, My death is ve - ry sweet— For I can-not choose but
f
pp
mp cres.
f
dim.
e
rall.
pp
die..... at her feet, At her feet, I can-not choose but die At her feet!".....
dim.
e
rall.
pp

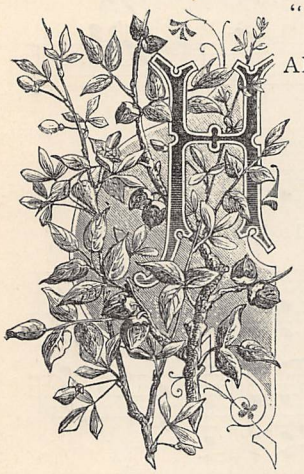
A MAN IN A MILLION.

A TALE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

"I'M OWER YOUNG TO MARRY YET."



HARDLY knowing what he did or where he was going, McGregor continued his walk. But he soon found his progress most effectually barred by a yelling, angry, and fearful mob.

So terrible a scene he had never before witnessed, nor could he have believed that the usually quiet populace of Zanzibar was capable of being so excited.

The creatures before him were more like demons than human beings. Nearly all black they were, with, however, a good sprinkling of the yellow-faced Somali Indians. These latter were brandishing spears, and gesticulating wildly, with the evident intention of stirring up the milder-minded blacks to deeds of violence.

McGregor soon found there was only one way by which he could expect to enter the town. He must penetrate far into the bush, make a *détour*, and so reach the seashore. There was danger in this, for it was more than likely that the fire would reach the forest. If it did, his hopes of getting out alive would be small indeed. Yet he did not hesitate a moment, but struck away to the left and entered the darkling woods. He kept as near the outskirts as the smoke would permit; and thus, stumbling often, his hands and face bleeding, his clothes torn, but with the awful noise of the crackling flames, the shrieks of Indians, and throb of war tom-toms in his ears, he ran on and on, and at last came to an open plain, which he could cross to the graveyard.

His wife lay here. This white pillar was her humble monument.

He stooped down and reverently touched the sods that covered the grave, and then, his face bent citywards, went slowly through the bushes and on to the white sandy shore, and so in a short time reached his own street.

There was very little crowd at this part of the city. Only every now and then a few of the Sultan's soldiers and officers went hurrying past, going to or coming from the palace, probably with orders.

They each salaamed respectfully when they met McGregor, but would not stop a moment to be questioned. Before he had reached his own door, a louder noise than before caused him to look ahead. There was the rumbling of heavy wheels, and the excited shouts of horsemen, and presently a cavalcade went dashing down the street, dragging guns. They were on their way to the front.

The merchant stood on his house-top for hours, his face turned towards the raging flames, his ears ever and anon assailed by the tell-tale sound of the guns. Then there came a lull in this storm of human passion. The fire died down too, to some extent, and the sound of the shrieking and shouting and beating of tom-toms went farther and farther away.

In a short time there was comparative silence. McGregor was beginning to flatter himself that the worst was passed, when the noise recommenced in a different direction, and soon the mob came surging up the very street in which his house stood.

The evident intention of the rioters was to sack every house belonging to white men in the city, and McGregor's could scarcely escape.

He was all alone, too, for apparently his servants had fled at the first signs of danger. But this home of his was a perfect tower in strength. There was an outer wall, the gates of which he now made haste to secure, and none too soon. Even should they break through this, there was still the main doorway of solid teak and iron to force, so he felt comparatively secure.

On ahead, and nearer to the Sultan's palace, there was still the sound of platoon firing, but the big guns had been silenced, and the soldiery beyond the walls probably overpowered.

Now the shouting comes this way, and very soon his house is surrounded. The savages throw themselves against the outer gates in half-dozens and dozens.

"Wakataneeka, na wakawoa, waka Engreese!"

That is the cry, "Destroy or kill, destroy and kill the English!"

But the sturdy gates resist all their attempts to force them. Then comes the shout, that once heard on a night like this is never likely to be forgotten: the shout for *fire!*

Immediately after, as by magic, flames rise and roar against the gate, and soon the trembling merchant can see the red glare through it. It yields at last, and the savages pour through its burning embers, trampling on each other in their eagerness to reach the main doorway of the house.

But hark! there is one wild but defiant "Hurrah!" up the street, and the crowd stampede. It is evidently *sauve qui peut* with them. Even the Somalis drop their spears as they fly. There is a volley of musketry, and next minute the yard around the house is half filled with English sailors. They wave their hands and arms to McGregor, and he cheers them from the roof.

He is saved. And when he opens the door, almost

the first to enter is Clements himself. Blackened with smoke he is, in his shirt-sleeves, and armed with sword and revolver, but McGregor knows him and they grasp hands.

"Thank goodness, old partner, we are in time," says Clements, "but we've had hot work up at the palace gates, I can assure you."

"And my daughter?"

"Daughter and Flora and all are safe. And so am I. We haven't been in an hour. But it is all right now; and in two days' time Zanzibar will be as peaceable and quiet as London."

And so it was, though to secure that peace there was more bloodshed than I like even now to think of.

* * * * *

In a week's time, with the exception of the blackened ruins of the native portion of the town, and the burned grass and scorched trees and bushes in the neighbourhood, there was nothing to tell of the fearful riot which had so recently rent the city in twain.

Arabs bought and sold their human merchandise in the slave-markets; the streets and bazaars were crowded with the usual busy, bustling, smiling multitude; the blood-red Arab flag floated peacefully on the palace roof; the Sultan's soldiers came and went almost unarmed; and every night, and all night long, parties of merry negroes and Somalis danced to the beat of tom-toms and bray of Indian chaunter.

Hilda and Flora resumed their old life, and almost daily went walking in the forest or riding in the outskirts.

Once only did Clements remind Hilda of her promise to think of what he had proposed, and try if possible to make him a happy man.

But playfully now Hilda held up her finger at him, and reminded him in turn that not much more than two out of the five months had yet gone. Indeed, Clements soon found out that not only did Hilda desire to put the evil day—if evil day it should be—far off, but that Flora aided and abetted her, though in a pleasant and sometimes even merry way. There was not much merriness at the girl's heart, so her mirth must have been assumed, for once when Clements was talking rather too endearingly to Hilda, and she could see the child was annoyed, she picked up a guitar, and, touching its string—

"Silence for a song," she cried.

"With pleasure, Miss Flora."

"Well, do you know this?" she continued, "it's all about Hilda."

"What," he cried, "a song about Hilda? Why, I *should* like to hear that."

Then, with mischief sparkling in her eye, she commenced—

"I'm ower young, I'm ower young,
I'm ower young to marry yet;
'Twould be a sin, forbye a shame,
To tak' me frae my mammy yet."

"Chorus, Mr. Clements. Chorus, sir," she cried, imperiously, and even to his own discomfiture, and feeling all the while very like a fool, he had to join in singing, "I'm ower young to marry yet."

* * * * * *

It must not be imagined that poor Yacoob, languishing in the Sultan's penthouse prison, was forgotten either by McGregor or any one else. But it appeared impossible at present to do anything for him. One day, however, while returning from a walk, Clements as usual being the escort, they met, face to face, the very Arab who had drawn his sword to kill Yacoob in the bazaar.

Hilda shuddered, and drew closer to Flora as if for protection.

"That is he," said Flora, "the evil Arab!"

"Yes, but have you seen him before?" said Clements. Then the girls told him all the story.

The Arab in question was still in sight. He had stopped at a stall.

Clements was quick to act. He seized a little half-naked black boy, and talked rapidly to him in Swaheli, and away the lad went to dog the gentleman Arab's footsteps, and find out where he lived. That very evening the boy brought all the information to Clements which he required.

Now, since the night of the riot, Clements had found great favour in the eyes of the Sultan, Had it not been for his bold band of blue-jackets, the palace might have fallen into the hands of the mob, and the Arab dynasty been ended for a time. So an audience with His Highness was easily obtained, and an hour afterwards, accompanied by two of the Sultan's soldiers, they had entered the suspected Arab's house. But the bird had flown. Nevertheless, they found evidence enough of a deep-laid plot to deprive Yacoob of his liberty and life; for in a cupboard was the other half of the piece of grass-cloth which had been found in the badane, and had so incriminated the poor negro.

Clements was now more of a hero than ever in Hilda's eyes. His bravery, dash, and even cleverness had no apparent bounds. Alas! for Clements, however, hopes were rekindled in the girl's heart that her Prince still lived, and the idea of a union with her father's partner was more repugnant than ever.

Nor did the evidence obtained benefit Yacoob a great deal. The Sultan promised to reconsider the whole matter, and probably give Yacoob his freedom. And with this promise, the matter ended for a time.

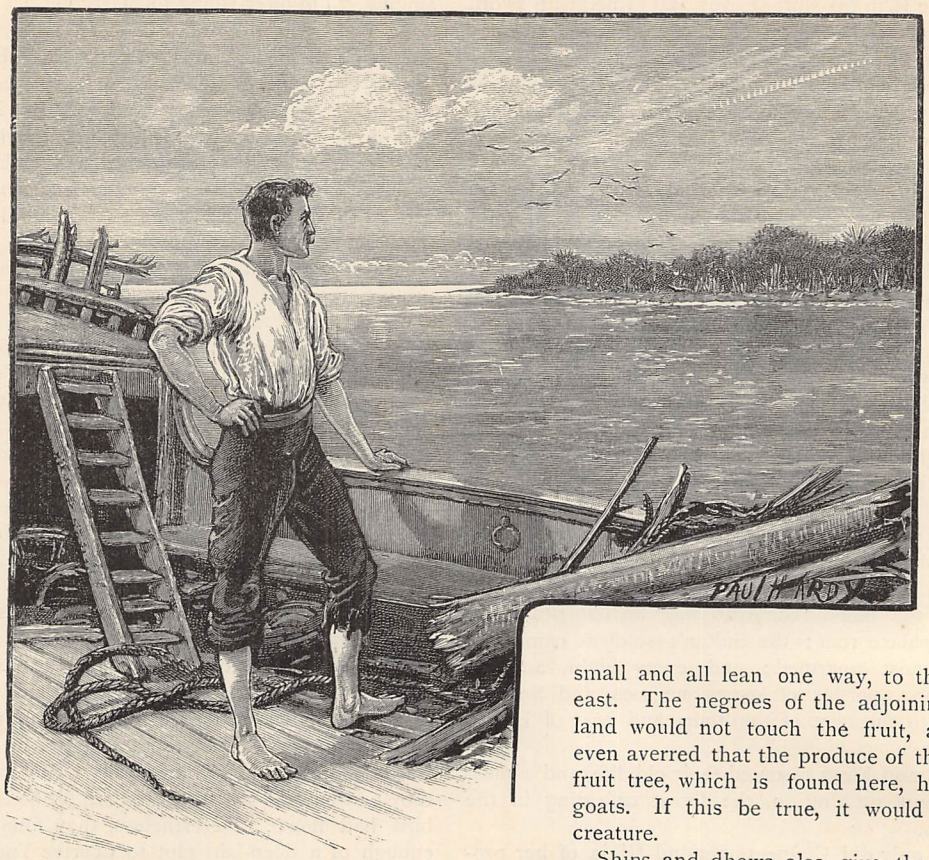
Mammy Yacoob wept a little in her quiet way when she heard that Clements had been unsuccessful.

"P'laps," she sighed, "some day or anoder my good-for-nuffin bamboo get free."

Clements would not do anything openly to lose all he had gained in Hilda's estimation, but he determined to press her indirectly; he therefore acquainted her father that he could no longer wait for the money owing him; that business was becoming hampered, and therefore he must dissolve the partnership.

This last was the heaviest blow. It seemed entirely to break the old man up. He grew weak and nervous. He seldom went to business now, and was as querulous at home as an old woman.

Poor Hilda! she dearly loved her father, and now



"CLOSE IN YONDER WAS AN ISLAND" (*p.* 674).

he seemed dying before her eyes. So she came to him one morning, before he had left his room.

"Father," she said, "I am ready. Give me but a month."

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

"THE ONLY LIVING BEING ON THE DOOMED DHOW."

THE island of Hooma-Hooma has an evil reputation. It does not seem to flourish any the less green and beautiful on this account, however. How long it has lain under a kind of ban, it would be impossible for me to say; probably for one hundred years and over. There always is some small amount of truth in tradition, and the ugly rumours about maroonings and hangings, and worse than even these, which have been handed down from negro sires to negro sons, may possibly have had some solid foundation in fact.

If you look on a good map you may spy this island, but it is not called Hooma-Hooma,* nor do I mean to give any clue to its latitude or longitude, for the simple reason that there is said to be treasure on it, which is worth looking for.

Anyhow, natives all give Hooma-Hooma a very wide berth. The few cocoa-nut trees that grow thereon are small and all lean one way, to the north-east. The negroes of the adjoining mainland would not touch the fruit, and it is even averred that the produce of the bread-fruit tree, which is found here, has killed goats. If this be true, it would kill any creature.

Ships and dhows also give the haunted isle a long offing, but for a different reason. It is surrounded on almost every side by shoals, and these shoals are constantly shifting, summer after summer, so that charts are worse than useless, they are dangerous. Another peculiarity about the island is this: except at one part—a kind of bay—currents sweep round it, and there are deep and ugly whirlpools here and there, not always in action, but coming into play with certain tides, and like the shoals shifting ground occasionally.

Such is Hooma-Hooma, and if Captain Kidd, who, once upon a time, was well known in these seas, chose this place for a rendezvous, it showed he was possessed of both wisdom and daring.

* * * * * * *

Our story now, like the whirlpools round Hooma-Hooma, changes ground and takes us on board a large slave-dhow, that left Zanzibar one squally evening in the monsoon season, about nine months before the riots in that city. The Arab captain of this vessel had good reasons for getting away to sea on this particular night; he had heard that a British cruiser was lying north at Lamoo, and, therefore, now was the time, if ever, to ship a fine cargo of slaves that lay waiting at a barracoon in the mangrove woods on the coast far to the south. This captain—a tall and handsome fellow, with olive complexion, and hair in brown ringlets, that hung down as far as his waist,

* Hooma-Hooma, meaning "very bad."

and dressed in the long flowing camel's-hair robe of the Northern Arabs—was walking near the poop when his second in command came up and addressed him.

"We have run down a badane in the squall, master, and a white man is hanging by a rope overboard."

"Allah is merciful. Pull him on board."

A minute afterwards, Douglas Irvine was dragged over the side, and, staggering up to the Arab captain, he saluted.

"I'm an involuntary passenger," he said. "Can you land me anywhere near here? You shall be handsomely paid."

"Allah-il-Allah. Dog of an infidel, no. You are our slave. Take him below and put him in irons!"

This was a terrible reception, but Irvine submitted without a murmur. The hold to which he was led was filthy in the extreme, stiflingly hot, and swarming with cockroaches and earwigs. There was no sleep for the poor fellow this night. How was it all going to end? There was only one ending for it, he feared. He would be landed in irons, and marched away into the interior, and sold as a slave to some African potentate; for these kings value white men above everything. But a fate like this was surely worse than death. Death? Yes, and that reminded him. Even if Yacoob were saved, he himself would be reported drowned; Hilda would sorrow for a little time, then her marriage with Clements would drive everything else out of her head. Flora, he knew, would sorrow for ever and aye. He felt more for her now than he did for himself. For three days the dhow flew onwards over the wild sea, for it was blowing hard and uncertainly, with many a terrible squall which might have caused a less strong vessel to broach and founder.

Irvine could scarcely touch the badly cooked rice that was presented to him, and the very smell of the water would have caused a thirsty dog to turn from it with loathing. On the fourth night the storm increased in violence, and the dhow rolled and pitched to a terrible extent. He heard the thunder, too, reverberating high over the shriek of the wind through rigging and stays, while every now and then even the dark hold where he lay was illuminated with the blue forked lightning.

Irvine sat up and listened half in awe. Then he began to think that if the dhow were to founder, it would feel doubly dreadful to sink like a log, shackled and ironed as he was. If free, he could at least have a struggle for his life. The thought made him twist and tug uneasily and nervously at his fetters. He was strong, and tough, and young, but he could not have believed it possible for even a giant to burst these irons. They did give way nevertheless, and he now felt infinitely less miserable.

Suddenly he heard screaming and shouting on deck, and the thud of bare feet rushing hither and thither. Some orders were being given and hurriedly obeyed, but he could not understand the words.

But he understood at once what had happened when there came first a sudden shock, followed by a grating, thrilling sound under the keel, then the crash of falling masts and breaking timbers.

The dhow was aground somewhere, and the seas were making a clean breach over her. The noise of the beating, merciless waves was terrific. Surely the strongest dhow that ever floated must speedily go to pieces with such giant forces at play upon her.

What should Douglas do? What could he do? Only pray. Pray, and wait for death. Instinct would have made him rush on deck, but the wreckage had fallen across the hatch, and he tried in vain to force

"'SILENCE FOR A SONG,' SHE CRIED" (*p.* 671).

his way out. It was a terrible situation. As the time went by the suspense appeared to grow greater and greater. Death would have been a happy release. But it came not. To make the time seem shorter, he lay repeating to himself the psalms in metre he had learnt when a boy at school. While thus engaged he fell asleep, and when he opened his eyes all was still and quiet around him, and long pencils of light were streaming in from above. It was still indeed —the stillness of death ; for he was the only living being on board that doomed dhow.

By dint of long and strenuous exertions he managed at last to clear away a portion of the wreck, and to creep on deck. The poop was in ruins, masts and cordage in a heap, while the bulwarks looked like half-finished sheep hurdles. But the sun was shining brightly, and lo ! close in yonder was an island; its low sandy shore, with the white ribbon of breaking water and the cloudland of trees beyond, was inexpressibly lovely.

The morning breeze brought hunger. But here, in the ruins of the poop, was food in abundance, and even pure water.

Irvine ate like a man who has been long famished. Then he sat down to think and consider. There was no boat. The crew had evidently taken to their little badane and been lost, for its timbers were floating about close at hand. The distance to shore was not more than seventy yards. It would be easy to swim, but he feared the sharks. No, he must construct a raft.

Down below, forward, he found an axe, and saw, nails, and a hammer. So he set to work at once.

Now at sea nothing is certain except the unexpected, and while busily engaged sawing through a piece of mast, he was scarcely surprised to find a hand placed on his shoulder.

He looked up, dropping his saw as he did so. Beside him stood a great hulking negro, with a smiling face, and looking, on the whole, as innocent and good-natured as a Lancashire lad on a fair-day.

His cummerbund and woolly hair were wet with salt water that trickled down over his legs and face.

"Hullo ! my friend. Where do you hail from ? "

"I swimmee here, from de s'ore, sah."

"Indeed, and are there any more of your sort on shore ? "

"No, I'se a free niggah. Any chow-chow ? "

"Yes, I'll give you lots to eat. But you must take a spell of working first. How did you come here, and how did you learn English ? "

"I second cook to the barque *Salah*. I try to scupper the head cook, 'cause he kickee my shin. Den de captain he kickee me oberboard fo' true. 'Here young man,' de captain say, 'you too handy wid de knife, walk de plank.' "

"Well, 'pon my word," said Irvine, "I don't consider you a very desirable companion. Never mind, it seems I'm to be Robinson Crusoe here, for a time, so you shall be my man Friday."

"Monday my name, sah."

'All right. It matters little to me if it were Tuesday. Serve me well, and I'll be a father to you. If you're false, I'll shoot you."

Between them they speedily constructed a raft, and after it had been lowered and moored alongside, they proceeded to provision it.

They shoved off at last, and soon managed to gain a footing on the shore.

None too soon, however, for already clouds were banking up in the south, and scarcely had they succeeded in landing all the stores, and housing them temporarily in an adjoining cave, ere a fresh storm burst over the sea.

It soon increased to almost hurricane force, and it was evident nothing more could be done for that day.

Irvine noticed, with sorrow, that the raft, which might have been useful another time, was being broken up by the waves. Piece by piece it was floated out to sea, and he saw it no more.

By sunset Irvine felt both tired and drowsy, so he invited his man Monday to supper, or "chow-chow" as the negro called it, then lay down to rest.

He placed the revolver on the sand close to his head, but when he awakened at broad day-light next morning, and found Monday squatting at the entrance to the cave singing low to himself, and looking more like a Lancashire lad—if the Lancashire lad were black—than ever, he felt somewhat ashamed of himself for having suspected him.

"Good morning, Monday."

"Mawnin' to you, sah."

"Monday, where is the dhow ? "

"She go sah, fo' true."

She had indeed gone for true. Not a vestige of her, not a stick or timber of her was to be seen.

Douglas Irvine had little idea then that he was on the evil isle of Hooma-Hooma.

With the assistance of his man Monday, he set about at once making the best of the forlorn situation, but while he was doing so, he could not help remarking to the negro—

"Some boat or dhow, I suppose, will soon be round to take us off, Monday."

"Boat or dhow, sah ? No, sah, no boat or dhow eber, *eber* come to dis unhappy island. We mus' live here till we done gone dead, sah."

"'Pon my word, Monday, that is no very pleasing outlook. But why, my friend, should no boats visit here ? "

"'Cause, sah, de island hab got plenty ebil spirit on it."

But after breakfast Monday seemed a new man, and certainly a very much bolder one. He gladly assisted Irvine to cut down trees and commence the erection of a hut, for though he did not believe it at all likely he should be long a prisoner on the island, it was as well to be prepared for eventualities. Besides, to work was to banish grief and sorrow.

They slept next night and for many nights to come in the cave by the sea-shore. The white sand floor made a bed that was certainly soft enough, and dry enough too. There was one drawback, however, the

huge sea-spiders, a species of monster crabs, that came up out of the sea not only in scores, but even in hundreds soon after sunset. It was not an agreeable sensation to awake at midnight and find one of these horrible, warty, shelly demons squatting upon one's chest.

It was almost impossible to keep them out of the cave. But they left towards morning, making a rattling sound with their claws as they marched seaward, and now and then emitting a kind of cooing noise, though how produced it would be impossible to say.

But day after day the hut progressed towards completion. It was a very simple construction, built of barked trees, the interstices filled up with a kind of seaweed that grew on the rocks in great abundance. Then it was thatched with grass and seaweed. The selection of the trees for building the little cottage, and the barking of them, took longer time than the actual construction, for Irvine had not been long on the island before he made two discoveries. First he found out that there were far worse foes here than the sea-spiders, namely, scorpions and centipedes; secondly, that these loathsome and dangerous creatures were never found on certain species of trees. So of these latter alone the dwelling was constructed.

Irvine also indulged in the luxury of a hammock. This made a safe and comfortable bed at night, and a delightful lounge during the day.

What this modern Crusoe missed most of all, was a book or books to read. However, he made up for the want of these by rambling, gun in hand, all over the island. It contained plenty of feather but no fur, except a species of vole that he often shot near a small lake in the interior. Neither he nor Monday could eat the sea-birds that fell to the gun. They tasted oily and fishy, but pigeons were numerous and parrots were frequent visitors.

There were many sorts of trees here, especially mangrove and bread-fruit. The former would have been but little good in themselves, but on some portions of this mysterious island they grew, not only close to the sea, but in the sea at high water, so that many sorts of shell-fish clung to their roots.

Among the pools of water left when the sea receded, several varieties of edible fish were found, and there was also a kind of bush, the leaves of which made a very good substitute for tea. So a whole month passed away, but never a dhow or vessel of any kind was sighted.

What was the meaning of it? Irvine wondered. Surely there must be some truth, after all, in what the negro said, that no one came near the island because of its evil reputation.

Three months went by. Irvine cut a notch in one tree every morning, and another in another tree once a week, and thus managed to keep some tally of the time. Life was becoming sadly irksome now, but still no friendly boat or ship appeared.

A large collection of dry wood was kept constantly in the cave, ready for the two to drag out and light up in case help, in the shape of a vessel, did appear some day on the horizon.

Another month and still another, and the monotony of existence had become a burden now. There were days that Irvine did nothing save lie dreamily in the mouth of the cave and gaze seaward.

But one forenoon a ship did heave in sight.

"Quick, Monday, quick! Look, look, it is a British cruiser. Bring out the wood. Quick, man, quick!"

The vessel was evidently a man-o'-war, under easy canvas, and heading slowly away north.

While Monday built the pile close down by the water's edge, Irvine hurried away to a hollow in a rock close by, where turf was always kept smouldering, and in a few moments the dense smoke curled up into the blue sky.

The vessel was about a league from the shore, and no human voice could have reached it, nevertheless, as he rushed about waving his jacket aloft, Irvine shouted again and again till hoarse and tired.

But the vessel sailed on and on and took no notice. If the signalman had observed the smoke at all, he must have thought it was raised by natives, and that the affair was therefore not worth reporting.

The island seemed drearier than ever now, but still the star of hope shone on.

One day while reclining at the cave's mouth as usual, a bright idea occurred to him. Why it had not dawned on him before was a puzzle.

"I say, Monday," he cried, "bring me a sherbet bottle or two."

Monday did as required. Irvine put them in the sun to dry, and meanwhile, tearing a leaf from his note-book, he wrote thereon as brief and effective a description of the "evil isle" as possible, and of his own long imprisonment therein, and praying for relief to be sent to him ere it was too late. He made a copy of this note, then rolling the pieces of paper up, put them each in one of the bottles. The bottles were corked and sealed with gum from a tree so as to be perfectly water-tight.

And now, with a heart beating with joyful emotion, he approached the water and threw one in as far as he could. The other he dispatched from the south side of the island; and that evening, before he turned into his hammock, he knelt in the starlight and prayed for a blessing on this mode of seeking deliverance from his terrible imprisonment.

CHAPTER THE NINTH AND LAST.

"'WE HAVE MADE IT ALL UP, FATHER,' HE SAID."

EVERY week during his long imprisonment on the haunted island, Irvine committed two of those little sherbet* bottles to the care of the ocean. Some one of them, surely, he thought, would be picked up by a passing vessel, and help be thus secured.

Wandering inland one day, Irvine saw a huge bird hovering in the air. He took careful aim—for every grain of powder and every pellet of shot were now of infinite value to him—and succeeded in killing it. It

* Sherbet is the name given by the Arabs to delicately flavoured fruit syrups, which they mix with water, and thus concoct a delicious and cooling drink.

fell fluttering into a clump of trees about seventy yards away, and Monday, who on these sporting trips did duty as a retriever, was sent to find it.

A few minutes afterwards Irvine heard a scream, and looking in the direction whence it came, beheld Monday running towards him.

So quickly did he speed along, that he looked all legs, like the figure on a Manx penny.

He could hardly describe what he had seen, but it must have been something strange and fearsome to cause such terror. Irvine did not hesitate a moment. He loaded his gun, this time with a ball cartridge, and advanced cautiously towards the thicket, Monday walking fearfully after him on tip-toe.

Among the trees he came upon an open glade, and in the centre thereof a post with a rusty chain attached, and beneath, on the ground, a pile of human bones! Doubtless this spot had been the scene of some terrible tragedy in what are called "the brave days of old." This was a sight to appal a stouter heart than poor Monday's, and one that made even Irvine shudder.

"Oh, come quick, marster! Don't you go to sit here, sah."

But Irvine had already seated himself on the ground. He did not hear his servant's voice then, nor even notice his frightened, superstitious looks. He was thinking of the long-forgotten past. The scene, or one somewhat like it, which had been enacted in this glade was conjured up before his mind's eye as he gazed on those terrible relics. The landing of the boats on the white coral shore; the two prisoners in chains, the pirate chief himself stern and fierce; the arrival at the glade; the pitiful looks of the victims as they were being chained to a tree; their unheeded appeals for mercy; their hopeless looks as they were left; and—but I dare not pursue the picture further, nor think of the broiling sun beating mercilessly downwards on the wretches' heads, nor of the birds of prey hovering near, as the one Irvine had just shot had hovered; let us hope that their sufferings were brief, and be thankful to Heaven we live in happier times than those.

Irvine rose slowly at last, and was about to follow Monday, who was nervously beckoning him on, and away from this ugly glade, when his eyes fell upon the figure of an X rudely carved with axe or sword on a tree opposite. Behind him, also on a tree, he found another X. A line drawn from cross to cross would pass close by the spot where the malefactors had been hung in chains. The discovery struck Irvine as very strange. Those marks had been put there with a purpose. There could be no doubt of that.

He went back now to his hut near the sea-beach, but in spite of Monday's terrified remonstrances, returned again soon, with some rude wooden tools. A line was marked out between the crosses, and both Monday and he commenced to dig along it. It was no very difficult task, for the ground was soft and sandy. Suddenly Monday shouted aloud—

"Come quick, sah. I not dig mo'. Here is one coffin-lid!"

It was no coffin-lid, however, but a trap-door, evidently the hatch-cover of some small ship. Irvine prized it open, and lo, here was the entrance to an underground cave or vault. Before it could be explored, another visit to the hut was necessary, for the cave was very dark.

Fire was procured, and a torch made, and then Irvine cautiously lowered himself down.

The sight he saw made him almost shout aloud for joy. Why, here, in this cellar, was piled as much ivory, in the form of elephants' tusks, as would fill a large dhow, while, on a stone shelf in one corner, a bag of some kind stood. He kicked it with his foot, and it burst open, permitting a shower of golden coins to fall to the ground. Then came the saddening, sobering thought, that all this buried wealth was of less value to him than firewood so long as he remained a prisoner on the island.

Never mind, while there is youth there is hope. It took him three hours to unearth the store of ivory, and count the number of tusks, and the gold coins that fell from the bag. These latter were mostly Indian and Spanish, and he had therefore no means of telling their value; but between them Monday and he counted three hundred and twenty splendid ivory tusks. Indeed, they seemed to have been a picked lot: there was not one of them in all the stack that would not have fetched sixty guineas in the market at Zanzibar.

Having placed them all back in the cave, they replaced the hatch, and once more covered the whole with mould.

After this strange incident the time seemed to drag past more slowly than ever. He could not keep his eyes off the sea. He never cared to be far from the beach. He felt nervous now, ill almost, and trembled in every limb when he attempted to walk any distance, while his sleep at night began to be haunted by the most frightful dreams.

Was he going to be ill in earnest? He feared so, and when one morning he could barely stagger down to the sea-beach, where Monday was cooking the meagre apology for breakfast, then indeed he knew that the worst was come.

Poor simple Monday looked at his master, scared at first, and finally burst into tears.

He took Irvine's hand, and, holding it affectionately to his brow, patted it as a child might have done.

"Oh, marster, marster," he cried, "de end is coming fo' true! Wot shall Monday do when po' marster go way to de land ob de Great Spirit?"

Gently nursed by the kindly negro, Irvine lay all day now in the soft warm sand at the mouth of the cave—seldom caring to move—his eyes bent ever, ever on the sea.

One night while lying awake—as he thought—in his hammock, Irvine saw a figure in a dress of white and blue, with a gentle girlish face, and long flowing locks of brown hair, walking along the silver sand by the sea. It was Hilda. She entered the hut, and approached the hammock, but when, with a fond cry, he stretched out his arms towards her, the vision fled.

It was but a happy dream. Yet all medical ex-

perience proves that happy dreams are the heralds of returning health.

Next day, Monday found a hive of wild black bees in a small lime-tree, and joyfully brought the honey as an offering to his sick master.

Day after day, Irvine partook of that honey, and day after day he gained in strength and spirits, and was soon able to sit up, though not to walk.

"'WE HAVE MADE IT ALL UP, FATHER'" (*p.* 678).

Monday's joy now knew no bounds. "De honey hab done it, marster, de honey hab done it," he shouted, "and de Good Spirit send de honey fo' true!"

Irvine was lying as usual among the sand one afternoon. He had been watching the sea so intently that his eyes felt tired and painful, and he had closed them at last, and slept. Monday was away looking after more hives; but, hearing a distant shout, Irvine sat up. Yonder came his faithful servant, sure enough, reminding his master once more of the image on the Manx penny.

But the news he brought was startling in its joyfulness. A dhow had cast anchor at the other side of the island, and a boat was speeding towards the shore. Irvine staggered to his feet, but tottered and fell again.

"Hurry, hurry, Monday!" he cried. "See who they are. But, friends or foes, bring them here."

* * * * * * *

Oh, the joy of that meeting! An hour ago Irvine lay alone among the sand, ill and in despair; now, his sister Flora was pressed to his heart, and yonder stood Hilda, looking more beautiful than ever he had seen her, and smiling through her tears. Dear old McGregor was there too, and even Clements.

"Don't all go and leave me. Oh, don't go!"

It was Irvine's voice, the tones were peevish, pleading, plaintive.

"What d'ye mean, dear boy? We have come for you—come to take you away home."

"No, no, no! I've had visions like this before. This will fade and fly like the rest."

And it was long hours before Irvine could really be convinced that those he saw around him were creatures

of flesh and blood, and not the baseless fabric of a dream.

The boat had gone back to McGregor's dhow-yacht for provisions, and in a short time Irvine began to bear a slight resemblance to his own happy self again.

The dhow lay at anchor off Hooma-Hooma for two weeks, by which time Irvine was almost completely restored to health. He was well enough now for embarkation, and he had heard Hilda's story from McGregor's own lips: that after she had consented at last to wed Clements, she was taken suddenly ill, and that on recovery she was ordered to the Cape.

The dhow was on its way thither when little 'Tinka one day, during a calm, clapped her hands and pointed to a bottle that was floating past. The note therein told Irvine's story; his prayer had been heard, and the sea had faithfully delivered its message.

They were alone, McGregor, Hilda, and Irvine, when the former told all this.

"And now," he added, "I am not going to war against Providence any longer. I prefer poverty and my child's happiness, to a success in life which I cannot secure without selling her to the highest bidder. Hilda, go and speak to Douglas; I am off for a walk on the beautiful beach."

He lit a cigar and strode away out into the moonlight, leaving the lovers to themselves.

Just a quarter of an hour after this they presented themselves before him. They were hand in hand. Hilda's eyes were cast down, but Douglas Irvine looked manfully in McGregor's eyes.

"We have made it all up, father," he said.

But next day came the grand surprise, which till now Irvine had held back.

He took McGregor and Clements inland, with Monday carrying spade and axe, and great was the merchants' astonishment indeed, when the vault was opened discovering the store of wealth beneath.

For a few minutes Clements looked dumbfounded.

His heart was still on Hilda, and he had hoped against hope to the last. But now—why, he simply behaved like a leal-hearted Englishman.

"Give me your hand, young Irvine," he said; "and I wish you all the joy and happiness you deserve in life."

Then they shook hands all round.

"Ah, partner!" said McGregor, "I knew all along you had a right true heart within that breast of yours."

The treasure was loaded up that very day, and the return voyage to Zanzibar commenced.

They had a duty to perform.

The dhow-yacht reached port safe and sound within a week, and when in company with his friends, Douglas Irvine, alive and well, stood before the Sultan, then even Zanzibar justice could no longer hesitate to set poor Yacoob free.

There was great rejoicing at Glen-Gyle House when Yacoob came home. Poor little Mrs. Yacoob went into hysterics with joy to see her "good-for-nuffin bamboo" once more before her.

There was greater rejoicing still, however, and Glen-Gyle House, at Boobooboo, was dressed in flags from roof to basement, when one morning the *Wasp's* cutter pulled round the corner, and from it landed the clergyman who was to marry Hilda and Douglas Irvine.

And the dhow-yacht was all ready and waiting to take the happy young couple away to the Cape.

A honeymoon at sea! How delightful it sounds!

LOOK IN MINE EYES.

WHY dost thou ask me so often
To tell thee the love of my heart?
Canst thou not trust me in silence,
Tender and true as thou art?
Have I not giv'n thee my whole love,
All that my being has known?
Words cannot prove it thee, darling,
Make thee more truly mine own.

Look with thine eyes into mine, love,
Thou need'st not doubt or despair,
Look with thine eyes into mine,
For the love that is shining there.

How much I love thee, my darling,
Why dost thou bid me to tell?
Love cannot put into language
All that the heart knows so well.
If I could tell it thee, darling,
Fashion the words o'er and o'er,
Still there'd be something unspoken,
Still I should worship thee more.

Why do I love thee, my darling?
Love has no reasons to give:
Only I know that I love thee,
Only to love thee I live.
Words have no music to show thee,
Language no magic to prove
What I would do, love, to bless thee,
All I would dare for thy love.

Look with thine eyes into mine, love,
Thou need'st not doubt or despair,
Look with thine eyes into mine,
For the love that is shining there.

FREDERIC E. WEATHERLY.

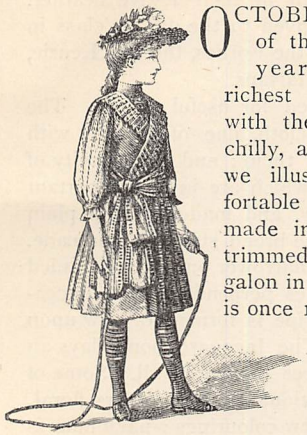
"LOOK IN MINE EYES."

(See p. 678.)

WHAT TO WEAR IN OCTOBER.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS: FROM OUR LONDON AND PARIS CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.



OCTOBER in the country is one of the cheeriest months in the year; the foliage is lovely, richest golden-browns mingling with the green; but it is often chilly, and in our initial vignette we illustrate a warm and comfortable dress for a child. It is made in a dark brown woollen, trimmed with close-set bands of galon in brocaded velvet, for velvet is once more asserting itself both as trimmings and intermixed with woollen in brocades. The idea of this particular frock, as far as the skirt is concerned, is evidently inspired by a Scotch kilt; the pleats are prettily arranged, and the appearance of additional trimming is given by a well-knotted sash. At the side the loose bodice crosses, each edge bordered with trimming set at right angles to the vest, where the galon is put on in horizontal rows; the full sleeves are set in a band of the galon at the wrist. The hat is the Longchamps form, flat, with many flowers on the top. The hair is loosely tied *en catogan*.

In our next illustration a child of older growth wears a simple frock, which is exactly reproducible in the new plain woollens of the season, such as estamene and foulé serge (a very fine make), amazone, and ladies' cloth, and a long range of Sedan cloths, so called because they receive their finish at this place, which is more associated in our minds with the famous siege than anything else. Burmah cloth, with a herring-bone design in the weaving, would make up well for this class of gown, as would drap vigogne. The make of the frock is certainly simple, and recalls what was worn twenty years ago. The full skirt is sewn to the pointed bodice, being twice gathered. At the hem is a narrow-gathered flounce without heading, edged with five rows of black velvet. The bodice is fully gathered at the neck and waist. There are black ribbon bows on the shoulder, and round the armhole there is a continuing ribbon drawn down to the point at the waist, in two ends and bows. The sleeve is full, and is drawn in at the wrist with more black ribbon. The hat stands as an aureole round the face, with roses beneath the brim, and rows of ribbon placed high up in front of the crown.

The other figure in this second illustration shows the latest mode of applying trimming on skirts, viz., in points. The gown itself is a plain cloth of a biscuit tone; the silk guipure in the front is green. It is carried up higher at the sides than in the centre. There is no over-drapery to this skirt; the back is gathered, there are box-pleats at the side, and the front breadth has three folds of the material brought into the waist, giving some graceful folds. The sleeves are cut in quite the newest way, tight at the cuff, large and full at the shoulder, so that the additional material stands up well. The bodice is cut as a double jacket and waistcoat, the outer one bordered with guipure, the inner made of white cloth with fancy buttons, and the upper portion is hidden by a lace jabot and all-round collar. The hat is of the same tone as the dress, with a rosette of ribbon in front and a long ostrich-feather at the back. Hats still continue to be worn, to the exclusion of bonnets almost, by both married and unmarried women.

Braiding is the favourite trimming for autumn dresses, but it is not difficult to obtain, as the entire garniture is sold ready to put on, and only needs careful tacking. The patterns are elaborate, and mostly in points which reach quite half a yard up the skirt. Sometimes the braid is arranged edgewise, sometimes flat, and two or three widths of braid are mingled; the designs are close and intricate. This is used, as a rule, only on the front breadths, and the bodice has distinct motifs for the sleeves and front. Points turning upwards from the waist and dividing the fulness is a favourite form of arrangement. As a rule, no two gowns are alike, hence it is difficult to lay down any hard-and-fast rules.

Buckles are worn with blouse bodices, and often confine the fulness at the waist in other-shaped corsages. A good novelty is a clasp inside the buckle, which holds the ribbon firm without those tiresome teeth which fray the band so much.

Silver ornaments are going out, but there is a revival in the form of old silver, not unlike the oxidised worn some years since. These are inexpensive, especially the chatelaines, which have come in again; and women who wear them jingle as they move like the merry milkmaids of old times.

Ornamental pins in real gold and imitation, and pearls real and mock, find their way to the dressing-table of most women, as they are used to fasten bows and loops on all kinds of dresses. They are delightfully pretty, and the new kind of coloured pearls, which will not break and are to be had for a few pence in all colours, are sold by the thousand.

Plenty of fur will be worn. Fur capes are made with high rounded collars, which can be turned down if desired. Astrakhan and seal are often blended in the same cape. There is, however, a great feeling for the long tippets with stole ends, which reach to the feet. These are made in sable (the more grey hairs the more fashionable), in blue fox, squirrel, moufflon, now often dyed a brown tint, and Greenland fox. Muffs are to be worn of the gigantic size fashionable when the Incroyables held sway in France. They do well for driving, but are cumbersome for walking. Smaller muffs are made with secret pockets.

There is not much new in gloves. Suèdes are still worn, but there is a growing feeling for kid. For country wear there are the many-buttoned wash-leather gloves, which are cheap and wash like a rag, huge flat brass coin buttons giving them a certain style. Gauntlet gloves with elastic wrists are well suited to the country also. For half-mourning people are beginning to use once more white gloves sewn with black. Everybody nowadays in the morning would seem to wear black stockings.

Umbrellas are made with quaint handles. Malacca canes with gold or silver tops are worn more than any other style, but lapis lazuli and onyx are also used, and ducks', chickens', and dogs' heads find their way on to women's umbrellas as well as men's.

Bows of mousseline chiffon in colours to match the dress are attached to the fronts of dresses, and give great style and finish. This favourite material is also used for evening gowns.

II.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

Before describing to you how gowns are being made, let me first tell you something about the new materials. Checks are the fashion, and their variety is infinite, but many are shaded and shadowy. Several are formed by flecks and splashes, leading up as it were to the Scotch plaids, which each season find more favour in Paris than in their native heather. Just now a preference is given to the darker class in greens and blues, such as the Forbes, the MacKenzie, the 42nd, and the Gordon tartans.

Shepherd's plaid is used for useful gowns. The newest are of Mouchté cloth, fine of texture, with streaks and splashes upon them; and the novelty of the year is in the panels, which are in fact important breadths, somewhat costly, and made up with plain material. The panels have broad stripes of brocade, with perhaps a couple of narrower ones accompanied by velvet stripes, sometimes perpendicular, and occasionally a broad velvet stripe is formed of row upon row of horizontal lines. The Jacquart loom plays an all-important part, and does its work well. Some of these panels show conventional designs, others floral. There are no decidedly new colourings; navy blue is always the dominant winter colour, and puce is worn also, but terra-cotta which verges into brown, and brown that verges into terra-cotta, are fashionable, also an infinite variety of greens, reseda taking the lead. Speckled cloths have come to the fore again, but are made up with the plain ones. Camel's-hair appears in a new guise with a rough surface and knicker-bocker effects. Some of the braided patterns are curious and quaint, such as a snail-like scroll in a light colour on a darker, each scroll large and distinct, in navy, beaver, terra-cotta, and green. Checked cashmeres, with mohair stripes, are new.

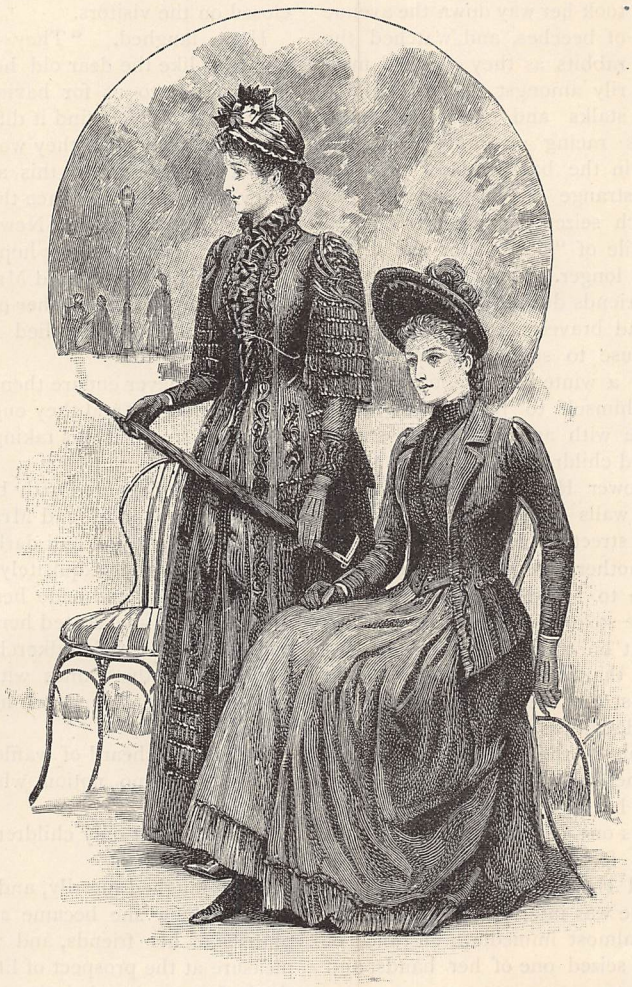
A MINUTE AT THE RECITAL.

In many of the brochés wool and silk blend, the silk giving much importance to the pattern. The floral effects on stripes in shaded silk are novel. Some of the camel's-hair have checks and stripes combined, with very light tints, such as red, brown, reseda, terra, grey, and so on. The panels are often more silk than wool, the velvet brocade thrown on either or both, and the leaves are occasionally outlined with black. French women greatly affect the neutral-tinted cloths, with a distinctive pattern upon them, in cross-stitch design, of flowers subdued in colour, and many of the autumn gowns are made thus.

Our third sketch shows a dress of soft plain woollen fabric, having the skirt bordered with fringe, headed by a scroll in thick guipure work. Note that the jacket is longer in the basque than we have been wearing of late, is cut up in divisions, but united again by a gore of contrasting stuff let in; the sleeves are full. There is a lapel to the front like that on a man's dress coat; the vest, with its double row of buttons, is cut down at the neck to allow an under-vest to show. In the model from which this is taken there

is only a contrast in material, not in colour ; the cloth is myrtle-green, the fringe green silk, the guipure black, and the vest is green silk. The hat is lined with velvet, drawn on wires to form puffings. The shape stands up well above the face.

The mantle illustrated in the accompanying figure is made of rich thick silk with chenille fringe, edged and interspersed with beads ; the sleeves are quite new in idea, and most becoming to the figure. The basques are not very long at the back, while in front they reach almost to the hem. A black lace ruche borders the front and neck, and loose ribbons are knotted in front. A handsome guipure laid on the mantle is a most important feature. The mantle fits the figure well, and is admirably suited to develop the lines of a well-shaped waist.



VISITORS.

French women seem to cling to gants de Suède, and a wonderful novelty has been brought out, viz., a purse inserted in the palm of the hand. A semi-circular incision is made in the palm, to which is then attached a metal rim ; this opens, showing a white kid lining forming a complete white purse, which would hold sovereigns, shillings, and florins. A better sovereign purse could hardly be invented. This is certainly turning to a clever account a somewhat vulgar plan of carrying money in the glove. These particular gloves are mousquetaires, eight-button length, but fastened with a couple of buttons at the wrist. They have only just come out, and are greatly in demand. The leather cases for watches, hitherto attached to bracelets, are now adapted to hang at the side as chatelaines, not so safe as the wrist but nicer-looking. If you are so minded, you may carry your money or your watch in the top of your stick or umbrella ; indeed ornaments are now turned to a useful account, and useful articles converted into ornaments.

Paris has been so busy with her Exhibition that she is sadly behindhand with her models, and it is only now that the English market is getting supplied. Plaids are utilised for silk trimmings, as well as wool—indeed, the most marked features of the moment in the French capital are the tartan sashes and tartan skirts made up with black cloth loose jackets.

The mantles this year are either long or appear to be so, for those that are short at the back have very long ends completely covering the front of the dress. They are costly, for they are most expensively trimmed with jet, silk, and tinsel gimps, fringes with rich drops and aiguillettes, and plenty of costly fur. Few cloaks are of one material ; they are nearly all made in plain velvet and brocade which is of the richest and most costly class.

The larger mantles could well be worn without any dress beneath. Many are fitted to the figure, but all have high collars and very high sleeves, notions borrowed from the Médicis period. Certainly the fashions of the moment are decidedly polyglot : —the garments of Henri Deux mingle with those of the first Empire, while for tailor-made garments we are making fashions which appertain only to the nineteenth century, and are likely to be handed down as such. They have grown out of the wants and wishes of our age and of our active life, and the desire for healthy exercise.

Travelling and useful cloaks are not cheap, for the woollen brocades of which they are made are good durable fabrics, but they are elegant and comfortable. Many have the long pendent sleeves, and not a few others the Astrakhan capes and sleeve-trimmings, which add so considerably to their cost. They envelop the figure, indicating it well at the back, but not so much in front.

"THOSE DREADFUL GIRLS."

THE park surrounding Charlton Manor House was looking its best one lovely morning in October, as Hope Charlton took her way down the avenue of beeches, and watched the rabbits as they scudded merrily amongst the dried fern-stalks and the long grass, and saw the squirrels racing up and down the tall stems of the firs in the background. She felt she was bound on a strange errand; she was not used to the pang which seized her when she came in sight of the grey pile of "home," for she might call it by that name no longer. Her father had suffered like many of his friends during years of agricultural depression, but had bravely faced his troubles, and having let his house to some Americans who were anxious to spend a winter in a good sporting district, had betaken himself to Jamaica to see if anything could be done with an estate he possessed there; while his wife and children took up their abode for the time in the Dower House, an old red-brick building whose garden walls joined the park, on the side where the village street came up to the lodge gates. Hope and her mother, who was an invalid, had been with Mr. Charlton to Meadhampton, and Hope had seen the last of the steamer which conveyed him away, and was now bent on carrying out his final instructions, and seeing that the housekeeper made everything look its best for the reception of Mrs. Caleb Gerrans and her daughters Pauline and Clarissa. She made a pretty picture in the autumn sunshine as she walked briskly on, her grey cap and ulster suiting well her slim figure and her blue eyes and bright hair.

The next morning was one of those hopelessly wet days which make one feel as if the world could never be dry again, and Hope was hearing her little sister's lessons, when she was interrupted by a ring at the door-bell and the almost immediate entrance of two tall girls, who each seized one of her hands, and exclaimed in a rapid duet—

"Well, now, you are real good! we are ever so much obliged to you. Did you pick all those nosegays, and fix up our bedrooms? They are just lovely! It is wet enough to drown a beaver, but we put on thick shoes and wrappers, and came right along!"

Hope felt somewhat bewildered with the highly pitched voices and the twang, as well as by the extreme beauty of her visitors; but when they were seated in the faded arm-chairs by the library fire, and she had time to disentangle Pauline from Clarissa, she enjoyed the long chat which ensued. The entrance of her mother caused a diversion, and when the frail-looking lady took her place on the sofa, Clarissa exclaimed—

"Oh, my! are you sick, ma'am? I am real sorry."

"Mother is not strong," explained Hope; and the young ladies did not stay long, fearing they should weary her.

"My dear, what dreadful girls!" said Mrs. Charlton, settling herself among her cushions, as the door closed on the visitors.

Hope laughed. "They were very kind, mother, and they like the dear old house, and never said one word of pity to us for having to leave it. I feared they would. They find it difficult to get Mrs. Potter to understand what they would like in some things, and I am going up this afternoon to talk to her. They really live in a place they say is 'out West,' but are come just now from New York, and their brother will join them soon, they hope."

"Their brother!" said Mrs. Charlton. "I thought Mr. Gerrans was the father of the family."

"No; their father died ten years ago," replied Hope.

"I shall never endure them or their brother!" said Mrs. Charlton, "and they ought to have waited till we called on them; it was taking a liberty to rush in like that."

Hope was delighted with her visit to the Manor in the afternoon, and found Mrs. Caleb Gerrans charming. She was small and dark, with bright eyes and a sallow face, and exquisitely dressed. She greeted Hope cordially, and bade her come "right close" to the fire, while she seated herself in a luxurious chair, and holding a tiny handkerchief in one hand, shaded her face from the flames with a feather fan held in the other, and recounted her difficulties with Mrs. Potter.

"She never heard of waffles!" she said plaintively.

"And had no notion what hominy was!" said Pauline.

"She thought only children liked molasses!" put in Clarissa.

Hope laughed merrily, and a bright hour followed, during which she became accustomed to the quaint phrases of her friends, and was delighted with their pleasure at the prospect of life in England, and never tired of answering their innumerable questions. Her visit made a subject for conversation all the evening with her mother, and she felt that a new interest had entered her life.

The three girls very speedily became friends, and Pauline and Clarissa were also soon popular in the neighbourhood. Their piquant faces, beautiful dresses, and sociable manners stood them in good stead, and they rode well, walked a great deal, and went in and out of the cottages, and talked to old and young as if they had been amongst them for years. They invariably called Mrs. Charlton "Ma'am," and astonished the youthful vicar of the parish by addressing him as "Sir," while they told Dollie Charlton she was "real smart," and said Millie was the "cunningest little darling" they ever saw.

"Mr. Gerrans is a most charming man!" was the

unexpected greeting Hope received one afternoon in the week before Christmas, as she opened the library door on her return from a walk with her little sisters.

"Is he, mother? You have seen him, then?" was the smiling response.

"Yes; he has been here for nearly an hour, and he might be an Englishman as far as manners and appearance go," said Mrs. Charlton, by way of bestowing the highest praise in her power on her new acquaintance.

"Does he mean to stay long?" inquired Hope.

"I do not know," was the reply, "but I imagine he does, for he is planning all sorts of improvements: he is going to drain the meadow by the alders, and put up new gates in all the Home Farm enclosures, and——"

"But, mother," interrupted Hope, "those things are not a tenant's business, I am sure. Why should he do it?"

"He says he cannot help feeling interested in the place, his mother and sisters have been so happy here; he thanked me warmly for all the kindness shown them. He seems to have thought of all the things your father has so much wished to do."

"When did he arrive?" asked Hope, in a tone of vexation. "He seems to have become very quickly acquainted with the state of dilapidation we are in!"

"Do not speak like that, my love; it sounds as if you were not pleased. Mr. Gerrans arrived yesterday, and has been about with Hopkins this morning. He brought an invitation from his mother for you to dine there to-night. I promised you should go; they will send the carriage for you."

Hope was not in a happy frame of mind. She had heard (such news travels fast) that "Wilmington P. Gerrans," as his visiting-cards labelled him, was fabulously rich, and she resented bitterly that he, a stranger and an American, should come with his dollars to patch up the rents in the family drapery. She was warm-hearted and generous, but she felt surprised and almost jealous at the ease with which Pauline, Clarissa, and their mother had taken a place in the society of the neighbourhood, and she fancied that their brother might supplant her father. She would have liked to refuse the invitation for the evening, but she reflected that she must meet her father's tenant some time; so she suffered herself to be dressed by her mother's maid, and was amused to find the old servant had chosen, for her, her freshest toilette of soft silk and creamy lace, and had arranged lovely sprays of roses for her hair and dress.

"Why, how grand you have made me, Parkes!" she said; "and where did you get these flowers? Is it to be a dinner-party?"

"I don't know, miss," was the reply; "but they do have a deal of company; the flowers came this afternoon from the Manor."

Hope was vexed. She had often wished for some of the treasures of the greenhouses, but the girls did not care for flowers, and it had never occurred to them to send her any, and directly their brother arrived came these roses! She thought Mr. Gerrans was officious. Her resentful feelings did not last long, however, for no sooner did the butler at the Manor usher her into the long, low, oak-panelled drawing-room, than they perforce changed into amusement. Standing in front of the fireplace was a tall, broad-shouldered man, in evening dress, looking as well in that costume as an English gentleman does. His dainty little mother, a heap of soft lace and crimson silk, was shaking with laughter, in a large easy chair; Pauline and Clarissa were sitting on a broad, low couch, and talking *English*. Their voices, accent, the very pose of their heads, were altered, and they rose and greeted her with the same stiffness and want of animation that most of her friends would have shown.

"Let me present my brother to you," said Pauline softly.

"Ah, you have spoiled it now!" laughed Mr. Gerrans. "An English girl would have said 'introduce,' not 'present,' would she not, Miss Charlton?"

"I think so," said Hope.

"We have been showing Wilmington how easy it is to speak as you do," said Clarissa, "and we shall surprise our friends at home!"

"How will they like it?" asked Hope.

"Not at all," was the reply; "you do not know what the sound is in a New York drawing-room when a good many girls are there for tea; they screech, and screech, like rusty car-wheels; and when I wade in with my English, they will pretend they cannot hear. Wilmington don't like me to say 'wade in,'" she added, relapsing into her natural tones.

Hope spent a merry evening, and was amused to remember, as she took the flowers from her hair, that she had entirely forgotten Mr. Gerrans' wealth as well as his impertinence.

Christmas passed pleasantly. Mrs. Charlton was cheered and interested by the visits of her tenant, for in the course of his extensive travels he had visited Jamaica, and spoke hopefully of the condition of the country, telling her it was extremely probable her husband would find his excursion thither profitable. Millie and Dollie, with their brothers Jack and Tom —from Winchester—spent delightful holidays; the weather was frosty, and the lake at the Manor presented an unbroken surface of smoothest ice, whereon the skaters of the neighbourhood delighted to congregate, and where the Americans were pre-eminent for their grace and skill; while their mother was never weary of sending out strange hot drinks and delicate cakes for the refreshment of her guests, nor of entertaining large parties for luncheon or tea within doors. Hope entered with a light heart into all the festivities, and enjoyed above all a party at the Manor, where the kindness of Pauline and Clarissa prevented her from feeling she was merely a guest in her old home.

The next few weeks, however, brought a change. Hope became gloomy, irritable, and unlike herself. She did not venture to search for the real reason, but blamed every cause except the true one. In reality

"HOPE HAD SEEN THE LAST OF THE STEAMER" (*p.* 682).

the angry feeling she had experienced when Mr. Gerrans first came had grown into almost a passion of jealousy. It seemed that wherever she went she heard nothing but praises of the new-comers. At dinner-parties the conversation was sure to turn on the hospitalities of the Manor, the goodness of the imported "chef," or the excellence of the host's taste. At "At Homes" she heard of the toilettes of the girls, and the jewels of their mother; in the cottages the people who had known her from her cradle thought to please her by cataloguing the good deeds and kindly words of the dwellers at the Manor; even at home she could not escape, for her mother and sisters were incessantly praising the Gerrans family, and Tom and Jack added their voices to the chorus. Her father's letters had been her chief consolation; but even these had now lost their savour, for he too began to speak with warm commendation of "Wilmington P.," as Hope scornfully called him to herself. She tried, by every means in her power, to keep the family at a distance, and refused so many of their invitations, and spoiled so many of their plans by her petulance, that the girls were fairly puzzled, and nearly quarrelled on the subject with their brother, who refused to believe that Hope was unamiable, and took her part warmly in every discussion.

Hope was returning one bitter day in March from an errand at the far end of the village, when she was overtaken by Mr. Gerrans, who greeted her with his usual friendliness, and insisted on taking charge of a parcel of books she was carrying. He looked very handsome, and his broad shoulders seemed to keep the terrible wind from her, though she would not feel cordial, and it was with a bad grace she asked him to come indoors when they reached the Dower House. Hope found that her mother was asleep, and the little girls were at the Vicarage, so she had to entertain her visitor alone. He unrolled a sheet of plans to show her, explaining it was a design for a new lodge, and asking her to submit it for her mother's approbation.

Hope was annoyed. She said bitterly, "This is an addition to the obligations we already owe you, I suppose? I begin to feel the burden too heavy!"

"Miss Charlton! what can you mean?" exclaimed Mr. Gerrans. "Obligations? I know of none."

"We have no money for these extensive improvements," said Hope fiercely. "It must be you who supply it!"

"That is quite true," replied he quietly. "I chance to have funds unemployed, and am very glad to receive for a part of them the excellent interest your father is willing to give me."

"I did not know——" began Hope, blushing.

"Of course not. Ladies are not interested in business matters, and I should not have introduced so dry a subject," he said, smiling. "And now I will say good-bye. I am leaving to-morrow for America."

"Going away?" exclaimed Hope, surprised.

"Yes; at all events for a time; but I hope to return to see your father before we quit his house altogether," was the answer.

"I trust you have liked being here," stammered Hope, while a rush of feeling for which she could not account seemed to stifle her utterance.

"I like England very much, Miss Charlton, and I used to wish to live in this country, but of late I have been disappointed in it, and the wish has left me now."

"Disappointed?" said Hope. "In what way?"

"I had heard so much of you and your mother from my people," he said, speaking now very rapidly, and looking down upon Hope's flushed face, "that I felt I should come amongst friends when I arrived. I thought I had for a while, but you have taught me that your friendship was too much to ask, and now—I do not care for it; for I have learned to love you, your surroundings, everything here," he continued passionately, "while you have taken pains to teach me I may not even claim the title of friend!"

He paused, and Hope saw his face all lined and changed with the passion of his words. She seemed to see her foolish conduct in its true light, and to be aware how ungenerous and unkind she must have appeared. Another feeling she was forced to acknowledge also—she was extremely sorry that Mr. Gerrans was going away, for in her heart of hearts she could not but own that he had all the qualities she most admired, and his kindly presence had helped to cheer her mother and her little sisters through the winter. This was all at an end, and with a strange pang and a revulsion of feeling she could not control, she raised her soft eyes, now full of tears, to him and said, tremblingly—

"Is it true? Must you go?"

He looked searchingly at her, then his face changed. "Hope, my darling!" he said, "I think you do not hate me after all!"

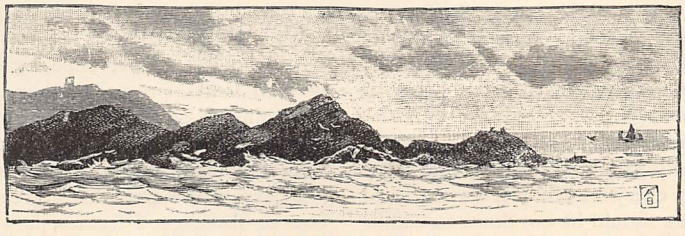
When Mrs. Charlton awoke from her nap and came downstairs for tea, she found, to her great surprise, that her daughter's views about Wilmington Gerrans had undergone a change, and that her old home would have to surrender her to the keeping of its sometime tenant.

"I do declare!" said Pauline.

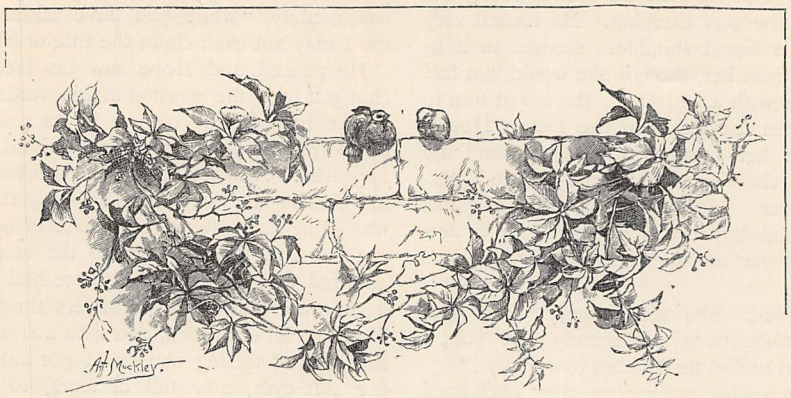
"I am consternated!" exclaimed Clarissa.

"I shall be ever so pleased, my son, if she is real nice to you," said his mother, when the news of the engagement was conveyed to the ladies at the Manor.

Brighter times dawned soon for the Charlton family, and when Hope took her way to the Fort at Meadhampton to look for the return of the steamer she had watched out of sight with such a sad heart months before, she carried with her the assurance that her father would be able to arrange for himself any improvements he wished to make on his estate, for his land in Jamaica would prove a valuable supplement to that at home. Mrs. Charlton never wished that her son-in-law owned a different nationality, and even became quite fond of the young ladies she had once called "those dreadful girls." M. R. L.



THE GARDEN IN OCTOBER.



OUR VIRGINIA CREEPER IN OCTOBER.

WITH the decline of the year we naturally look for a corresponding decline in much of the glory and beauty of the garden; but though it is not always summer, and we cannot go strawberry-gathering in January, yet each season brings with it its own occupation and its own delights; while we must not forget that if in any one of the four seasons of the year we relax our efforts in the garden, we shall practically never have any summer at all, in so far as fruit and flowers are concerned. One thing, however, we will do at the outset; and that is, we will make the most and the best of the flowers that remain; and this leads us to say something about our chrysanthemums, which ought to be now coming on in all their luxuriance. Now that they are about to expand their flowers, they ought to have as much air and light as possible, so as to enrich the clearness and brightness of the bloom. We are, of course, speaking of those that have been recently moved into our green-house. And most important for them just now is a systematic watering: an alternate watering with clear water one day, and a little weak manure-water on the next, helps to keep the foliage fresh and green.

For their general cultivation throughout the year, let us say, beginning with January and February, that after Christmas nearly every bloom will have disappeared, when the plants should be cut down to within some three inches of the pot itself; these chrysanthemum pots you can then place in pits, or plunge in the earth, taking care to protect them with some dry loose litter; notice also whether the soil has at all wasted from your pot, in which case fill up with fresh compost; the soil, we should add, that is best adapted for the chrysanthemum is turfy loam and peat, while a little leaf-mould is also a good thing.

In March, some re-potting may be necessary. As you take the ball of earth from the pot, shake off a good deal of the old and spent soil, and use fresh soil and new drainage. In April you will find plenty of young shoots making their appearance, and some of these you can strike under a bell-glass. In May you can remove your plants to a sheltered and shady spot in the garden, where they will begin making their summer growth; while those that you struck the previous month may by the end of May want potting off: though these should afterwards remain for a while in a temperature similar to that in which they were originally struck, until at least they have recovered any check they sustained by the re-potting process. In June any very long shoots may be topped and struck, but, as a rule, the cuttings taken off in July and August make shorter and better plants. By September, or, at all events, by the end of it, the plants will have finished their growth, and will be indicating flower, when they can be removed to the places in which they are to bloom, and carefully watered as we originally directed. Those plants whose bloom is over in December can then be cut down; and thus we have in summary treated of our chrysanthemums for the round of the year.

And now to revert once again to the operations adapted to the present autumnal season, let us have something to say about our pits and frames. One green-house we may be supposed to have; but anything very extensive in the way of glass is not only a great expense to erect, but a great expense to keep up. Two or three good frames, however, are a considerable help to a poor gardener, and are comparatively inexpensive. In the wane of the year, the mere

protection of some old and unused frame will be sufficient to keep alive many of our bedding-out plants, or, at all events, the hardiest of them—such, for example, as our calceolarias. All that you have to do is to exclude frost, while you need give no heat. A little protection round the sides of your frame, and in severe weather some matting or some such material thrown over the glass of your frame, is all that is necessary. And again, early in March, and when the worst of the winter has passed away, an extra frame made up with the necessary quantity of manure will give you abundant heat in which to force and strike an endless variety of subjects for your garden ; and, indeed, the frame which is destined to contain your melons and cucumbers can, particularly in the first instance, be largely utilised for seed pots, whether of flowers or vegetables. Three frames in a garden of an acre, if well economised, would give very satisfactory results. Then, again, another great use of a cucumber or melon frame, now of late become vacant, is that mushrooms can easily be grown in it. Mushrooms, indeed, can be raised under the stage of the green-house, or even in a cellar. And further, a good supply of hand-glasses and bell-glasses, in addition to the frames, is another compensation for those persons who do not possess the luxury of a large green-house.

Something must surely be said this month of our fruit and vegetable garden. The orchard harvest will of itself occupy us largely this month ; and here the first precaution necessary to give is a very old one, and that is relative to the *way* in which the fruit is gathered : all apples and pears that are accidentally shaken or knocked down should be put by themselves, and not housed with the carefully gathered and unbruised fruit. The October peaches we usually harvest early in the month ; they seldom ripen uniformly, so that the gathering of some that have ripened early will improve those that, perhaps for a week or so longer, are allowed to remain on. Then our vines that are in the open ought by this time to be rapidly ripening. It is a mistake to pick off the leaves that grow in the vicinity of the bunches of grapes. That foliage is a distinct element in the nourishment of fruit is sufficiently evident from the fact that when the leaves are destroyed by the caterpillar —and the caterpillar, alas ! has been reported as unusually destructive this year—the gooseberries and currants simply remain green, and refuse to ripen. Hence we see that leaves are useful as well as ornamental ; but when they are blown down in the October gales they are certainly far more useful than ornamental. Pigs and horses, and many a poor worn-out labourer, have found a bed of dry leaves a sort of luxury ; leaves trodden down make fine manure ; leaf-mould is a valuable compost ; leaves we stack sometimes over our sea-kale pots and round our frames for their friendly warmth and protection. Who will say that leaves are of no good ? But they are unsightly if allowed to waltz round and round on our garden path to the melancholy music of their own creation. Another heavy harvesting operation this month is on the potato-bed. Store them away out of the reach of damp and frost : this rule holds good whenever we speak, indeed, of storing anything away. And then the celery must needs be now and constantly earthed up. Very particular gardeners sometimes, before earthing up, tie each head of celery with bast matting, as if it was a lettuce, and untie it again when the earthing up is done. But this is hardly necessary in domestic gardening.

A NECESSARY TASK.

A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

A TENANT FOR CAPPERS.

I WAS going out to lunch. I looked in my journal, and found I had not done such a thing for five years: not since I laid my darling in her grave. Well, it was time to begin again, and it was quite a reward for the effort to see Mr. Talbot's pleasure.

"You are quite sure, dear, it won't knock you up completely?" he asked me, however, out of precaution.

"If I go to bed for a week I will do it," I answered, and so the matter was settled.

We arrived at Cappers punctually at two o'clock, and were met by Gerrard in the hall.

"He's come," he said, in a stage whisper; "Jack's taking him round the house now. He is awfully old, and very tall, and wears a wig, but I know he thinks Cappers stunning. He's quite a gentleman, too, and talks like the people in old-fashioned books."

"How do you know all this, Gerrard?"

"Why, when he first came Jack was out: gone over to Stanhead; so, as he said he should like one of the family to take him over the house, father sent me, and he said he was very much 'obleeged.'"

"What a charming old man!" I said. "It is so nice to meet with those people now-a-days. My mother always said 'obleeged.'"

"You'd better come into the library; he'll be down directly. We're going to have an awfully good luncheon for him, and only Gwen and I are to come downstairs."

We followed Gerrard into the library, where the family had agreed to receive the old man, in compliment to his book-loving tastes, and found Sir John quite in spirits.

"Gerrard gives a very good account of your future squire," he said, as he welcomed me warmly. "He is quite in character with the place, wears a wig, and is as old-fashioned as the house."

"So I understand," answered my husband; but before I had time to put in a word or ask a question the gong sounded, and simultaneously the door opened and Jack walked in, preceded by his guest.

I do not think I have ever seen so thin a man. The bone of his nose looked as though it must, before many minutes had elapsed, pierce the skin; he was old, certainly, but, to my advanced years, not so "awfully" so as he was to Gerrard, and he looked a gentleman from head to foot. Even his palpable wig gave him a respectable antediluvian appearance: in fact, he seemed made for Monk's Hollow, which is a trifle behind the times in a good many respects.

Then followed the introduction to Sir John, Lady Challoner, and ourselves, and the interchange of the usual amenities suitable to such an occasion, after which we all moved into luncheon in the large dining-room.

It was something like old times to be sitting at the well-spread luncheon-board at Cappers again, and to join in and listen to agreeable conversation, to see Sir John smiling and *débonnair*, and Gladys with a smooth unruffled forehead, whilst Gwen and Gerrard maintained a solemnity of demeanour suitable to the occasion. I had been in the company of many agreeable people at Cappers from my girlhood upwards, but seldom in that of any one more so than Mr. Danvers. He belonged to that class of men in this generation passing, if not altogether passed away: the men who were scholars as well as courteous gentlemen: who carried a Horace or a Virgil about in their pockets: had Latin quotations on their tongues on every occasion, and to whom conversation was still a fine art. It was difficult, as we sat and listened to the easy flow of anecdote and *bon-mot*, where, however, the important personal pronoun "I" played a large part, to believe that this man had, for almost half the years of his life, dwelt on an Australian sheep farm, from whence he derived his large fortune, and that since his return to England a few years ago he had lived in seclusion: buried in books and in scholarly or scientific studies.

Sir John was delighted with him. He was indeed a welcome change in the gloomy monotony of his present restricted life, and, all his old hospitable instincts reviving, he begged Mr. Danvers to send to Marcombe for some luggage and to spend the night at Cappers. This, however, the old man refused to do. His health, he said, would not allow him to sleep away from his own particular arrangements, and, moreover, he was anxious to return to Marcombe, where he was prosecuting some inquiries of a private nature.

"When I say private," he added, "I use the wrong word. My unfortunate nephew, Hugh Danvers, has, I regret to say, become an unenviably public character, and as such you have, no doubt, like the rest of the world, heard of him."

"Very much of him," responded Sir John, with a glance at me.

"I confess," continued Mr. Danvers, "that I am not prepossessed in his favour. But his unmerited misfortunes have softened my heart towards him, and I am desirous to know when he leaves Fastmoor—which, I understand, will be to-morrow—where he is going to, and what he purposes doing."

"Then you have come to the right quarter for information," responded Sir John. "My son there," pointing to Jack, "meets Mr. Danvers to-morrow, and brings him over to Monk's Hollow, to the Rectory, where his daughter is now staying with Mr. and Mrs. Talbot."

"His daughter?" exclaimed Mr. Danvers, displaying a degree of animation that took me by surprise, "how extraordinary! She is the very person whose whereabouts I have been seeking to discover. The family have often wondered what had become of her, and what she had been doing since her father's trial and conviction. Personally I have no acquaintance with her. When I returned from Australia a few years ago I was not, like Colonel Newcome, sensitively anxious to be welcomed by my relatives with open arms. I argued that they knew nothing of me, and I still less of them, and that I should prefer to inspect them before taking them to my bosom. I am a bit of a hermit, you know, Sir John, and an old-fashioned hermit to boot. There are but few of my branch of the Danvers family left, and these few I approached with a caution which was reciprocal, as they were naturally doubtful as to what kind of a figure I should cut after my long residence in the Antipodes. Thus gradually drawn together, without sentiment or illusion on either side, we became good friends; but I gathered that my nephew Hugh, whom I had not yet seen, fascinating and charming as he was described to be, would not be to my taste. I knew exactly the class of man he was: a class I do not admire. I have no sympathy with the gentlemen who figure in the so-called society papers, who ruin their families by their vices and extravagance, and who play the part of millionnaire to an admiring audience of impecunious, not to say *roué*, aristocrats. Those are the men, sir, who are dragging England down to the dust, and I for one will have nothing to do with them."

"You are severe, Mr. Danvers!" Sir John put his glass down on the table with a bump, and his colour rose. Mr. Danvers' plain-spoken words had gone disagreeably near his own mark.

"Only old-fashioned, my dear sir: only old-fashioned. Altogether behind the times, with an old-fashioned reverence for England's ancient virtues, which seem to be obsolete now-a-days. But these are only my private opinions, that I must not inflict upon you. At any rate, I determined to have nothing to do with Mr. Hugh Danvers, even if he were as fascinating as Orpheus, and his daughter as beautiful as Venus. I have a heart complaint, Sir John, and I make it a rule not to meddle with people who may give me shocks. Therefore, when he left his card upon me, and invited me to come and stay at his country place in Berkshire, I declined; and I declined again when he asked me to dine in London; and every time I took up the paper and read about his racehorses, his yacht, his shooting parties, his this, that, and the other, I was glad I had done so.

"When the smash came, I own I never doubted his guilt for a moment; no more did the greater part of his family. The ladies, as becomes them, were gentler in their judgment, maintaining that with all his faults Hugh was an honourable man, but most of their husbands and brothers were dead against him, and so it came to pass that we all condemned him.

"When his daughter found that this was the case, she ceased to hold communication with any one who believed her father guilty. The only person she took into her confidence as to her plans for the future was the rector of her parish in Berkshire: at least, this is what I have been told. She disappeared from the family ken, and we have heard nothing more of her, but I understand that she is a remarkably pretty, clever girl. I only trust that she has not inherited her father's extravagant, ostentatious disposition, and that she has been living the retired secluded life that befitted her unfortunate circumstances."

"Pretty! She is the prettiest girl I ever saw," answered Sir John, who was still, I could see, a little nettled by his guest's outspoken opinions. "You may be proud to call her your niece. As to living quietly ask Mrs. Talbot here, for Miss Danvers has been the national schoolmistress in this village for the last year."

I shall never forget Mr. Danvers' face as Sir John made this announcement. It was so ludicrous in its distress that I was forced to blow my nose violently to hide my amusement, whilst Jack beat a hasty retreat to the sideboard, where he quietly exploded. That his niece should be a village schoolmistress was in truth a terrible shock to the old man, who, although he had been in England five years, and before that in a very modern colony, had still so shut himself up with Nature and with books, as to have but a very faint notion of the strides of the womankind of this latter half of the nineteenth century. So great, indeed, was the blow, that it had the effect of reducing him, for a time, to absolute silence, and he did not quite recover it until luncheon was over. Once more in the library, he drew me on one side, and questioned me closely on the subject, whilst I inwardly congratulated myself that I had been induced to accept Jack's invitation. For I could speak for May as warmly as if I had been a near relative, combating one by one her uncle's prejudices until I ended by assuring him that he would be very fortunate in making the acquaintance, I hoped before long, of so charming a great-niece. This seemed a new view of the case to the old man, whose belief in a young lady who could become a national schoolmistress had been most seriously impaired; but our conversation was but a short one, as he had still some part of the house and grounds to inspect, after which Mr. Talbot was to show him the pride of the village, the church, and the view from the churchyard. I had had time, however, so far to achieve my object that the interview terminated in his saying that if Hugh Danvers and his daughter were making any stay in Monk's Hollow, he should do himself the honour of calling upon them, and he would beg his remembrances to his nephew when I saw him on the morrow.

With that I was fain to rest content, and, resigning him to Mr. Talbot's care, I returned home, feeling

that I had done a good day's work, to rest after my unwonted exertions, and also to see about May's levée.

It was about four o'clock when, supported by Mrs. Lovegrove, she walked with a firm, even, elastic step into the drawing-room, whither another sofa had been conveyed for her use. I started with amazement when I saw her, and she, on her side, coloured crimson, looking at Mrs. Lovegrove as though they were a pair of conspirators. And so, in truth, they were. They had taken advantage of my absence to obliterate the last trace of the national schoolmistress, and to convert May once more into Miss Danvers. A soft, downy, golden fringe lay on her pretty forehead, and instead of the plain red dressing-gown in which I had hitherto seen her, a deep ruby-coloured plush tea-gown of the most exquisite texture enhanced the naturally graceful lines of her figure.

"Why, May!" I exclaimed, and then stopped, struck dumb by her sweet beauty.

"Don't she look nice, ma'am?" interrupted Mrs. Lovegrove, who had all the professional nurse's pleasure in making her patient look pretty. "You would not know her for the same, would you?"

"No, that I should not," I exclaimed, as May came forward and knelt down by my sofa.

"Dear Mrs. Talbot," she said, putting her lovely face against my cheek, and blushing hotly, "it is for father."

"Never mind who it is for, my child," I said, thinking of Jack's impending visit, "it suits you exactly."

"I want to look as much as I can like old times," she continued, as Mrs. Lovegrove settled her on the sofa; "and he was always so fond of this tea-gown that I have kept it by me through all these years."

"Why should you apologise, May? It is only right and proper that you should return to your old self. You are giving me, for one, a real pleasure by making yourself pretty; and as for Mr. Talbot, he will be equally pleased, for you know what a lover he is of all things beautiful."

She smiled as she took the beef-tea that Mrs. Lovegrove had brought her, and whilst she was drinking it I told her all about her uncle, the luncheon at Cappers, and his delight in the old house. I was in the midst of a graphic description of his personal appearance when the door was opened, and Captain Challoner was announced. I gave one glance at May: she was crimson.

As for Jack, he came into the room without seeing me at all. His eyes only sought one person, and how they shone when they saw her!

"How d'ye do, Jack?"

He turned round and took my hand mechanically. I let him go at once, poor boy! I would not tease him to-day. The next moment he was holding May's little white hand in his, looking at her as though he thought she were made of rose-leaves, and would blow away, whilst he uttered the commonplace words—

"I am so pleased to see you downstairs again!"

I was determined that, as I had been so weak as to allow this foolish pair to meet, the conversation, whilst I was in the room, should be general, and devoid of all sentiment, for which there was abundance of material in May's illness and her father's unmerited captivity.

"I have told Miss Danvers, Jack," I interposed, "that you have arranged everything about to-morrow with Mr. Dawtrey."

"Yes," still looking at May, "it is all settled. Dawtrey lends his pair, and we shall be back here in no time." Hitherto May had not spoken. Now, at at last, she found her voice.

"Captain Challoner," she said, with a sweet, simple dignity, "I can never thank you enough for all you have done and are doing for me. My father will thank you when he comes home."

"May is in such a state of gratitude," I interrupted, "that it is quite uncomfortable. I have forbidden her to use the word 'thanks' again. Now, Jack," I continued, "she is an invalid, you know, and ought, by rights, to see no visitors to-day, but as you have to arrange some matters with her about to-morrow, you may stay exactly five minutes. Only recollect," I added, in a whisper, "that she must not have the slightest excitement. I trust you." With that I got up and left the two together. I knew I could do so under present circumstances without any fear of consequences. Jack's tongue was tied by a variety of causes, whilst it was necessary that May should see him alone, in order to confide to him any last details or messages for the morrow, too painful or too sacred to be mentioned before a third party. But I was fidgety and restless until the five minutes had expired, and I might retire to the drawing-room. There were tears in May's sweet eyes as I approached her sofa, whilst Jack had risen and was standing by her, near the mantelpiece.

"Well," I said cheerfully, "have you settled it all?"

"Everything, I think," he answered. "I have promised Miss Danvers to be back here by three to-morrow, if not sooner."

"Then now you must go," I responded relentlessly. He shrugged his shoulders.

"She is a real dragon to you, I see, Miss Danvers," he said; "and I suppose I must obey her. Good-bye."

He took her hand again, and their eyes met. A minute later, and he was opening the front door, whilst I turned my attention to May.

"After tea, dear, you go upstairs again," I said. "You have had quite excitement enough for one day, and you must reserve all your strength for to-morrow."

She looked at me with an indescribable smile. "Oh, Mrs. Talbot," she said, "I am so happy!"

Poor child! I wondered how long her happiness would last.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

HUGH DANVERS.

I DO not think I was ever more surprised. Even to this day it comes over me how perfectly different he was from what I had prepared myself to expect. Only

that morning I had been looking at the coloured photograph on china that hung in May's room, and that I knew by heart by this time : the photograph of an extremely good-looking man, with the wavy hair that his daughter had inherited, the chiselled lips set to fun and humour, the somewhat florid complexion enhancing the vivid blue of eyes that looked as though they could never grow old.

This was what Mr. Danvers had been, and May assured me that the likeness, when taken, some four years ago, was absolutely true to the original. At the same time she tried to impress on me how terribly he was altered, but somehow I could not take it in. I could not picture him otherwise than with that bright, sunny, well-to-do—if I may use the expression—countenance, so exactly corresponding to the character Coles, Sir John, and May gave of him, and it was with this face before my eyes that I looked out of my bedroom window to catch the first glimpse of Mr. Dawtrey's bay horses, as they trotted over the moor, down the steep hill, into the secure haven of Monk's Hollow.

I had left May in the drawing-room alone. At the first sound of the horses' hoofs she would be out in the hall, down the steps, even speeding along the drive, I knew, and I could not try to stop her. Mr. Talbot had been with her to the last minute. He had power to soothe her trembling, to still her beating heart ; he carried about with him the charm of his own saintly life, which seemed to rest and calm every one with whom he came in contact. But he had left her now, and retired to his own den. The meeting between the father and daughter must not be witnessed by any stranger-eye.

I opened my door, for in the far distance I had espied a cloud of dust, amidst which I could distinguish a rapidly advancing something.

"Ancaster," I cried, "tell her they are coming ;" and with that I returned to my post of observation, the window, again. Yes, there was no doubt about it : it was the Dawtrey carriage, and it was drawing closer and closer every minute. I could now discern the two figures sitting in it, now the colour of the horses, and lastly, as it turned into the Rectory drive, the closely cropped white hair and colourless face of a man, who sat by Jack's side.

"Was this Hugh Danvers?" I asked myself. "Was it possible?" I rubbed my eyes and looked again, feeling as though I were the victim of some optical illusion. But no, it was no illusion : he it undoubtedly was. The carriage was stopping now just by the bend of the drive, and there stood May. How she had got there I do not know ; white and trembling, but with, oh ! such a smile of welcome on her sweet face, and in another second father and daughter were clasped in each other's arms, whilst Jack drove swiftly on round to the stables.

I turned away from the window with a foolish, choking sensation in my throat, and a dimness in my eyesight that made me feel very angry with myself. When I looked out again, some five minutes later, the pair were sauntering slowly along towards the house, her arm in his, his round her waist : a white-haired, bent *old* man—not a trace, as far as I could see, of the former Hugh Danvers about him. They were but about a hundred yards off, and now I could see him quite plainly. I drew back as from a sudden shock, for it was the face of a broken-hearted, doomed man that met my gaze. Yes, May had her father restored to her, but too late. Ah ! Coles, Coles ! What had you not to answer for? I was roused from my sad reflections by my husband.

"Come down, my dear," he said, "into the study. Jack is there, and you will get chilled if you stay up here, and after a little while you can go in to May and her father. Poor child ! she will want looking to, for the excitement is keeping her up now, but I fear she will break down later. I have just been summoned to Coles : he is dying. I am very thankful that he will pass away knowing that Mr. Danvers is a free man. I have not a minute to spare, so don't keep me."

I repressed the many observations I had to make to him on the subject of Mr. Danvers, and let him go, whilst I wended my way downstairs to the study to make my confidences to Jack.

I found him standing by the fire, looking very grave and thoughtful.

"You are glad it is over, Jack, aren't you?" I asked, as I approached him.

"Very, very glad," he answered. "Have you seen him?"

"Yes, out of my bedroom window. Is he in the least like what he used to be?"

He shook his head. "When you are close to him, hear him talk, and see what is the ghost of a smile on his face, then with great difficulty you trace a faint likeness to the Hugh Danvers of old days ; but I would defy his nearest relations to recognise him if they passed him, even if they were on the look-out for him."

"Jack, don't laugh at me ; but if ever I saw a man whose heart was broken, it is Mr. Danvers."

"Certainly, I won't laugh at you, for I agree with you. I go still further. I say if ever I saw a man whose days were numbered, it is Mr. Danvers."

"Oh ! my poor May, my poor darling !"

Jack's face contracted for a second as if with pain.

"Perhaps she won't perceive it," he said. "She has not probably seen death as often as you and I have, and may not understand its approach. And, of course, it may be months, or even years, yet. But," he added, his eyes kindling as he thought of Mr. Danvers' wrongs, "if he is not a soured, embittered man for the rest of his days, he is a finer character than his best friends ever credited him with being."

"Mrs. Talbot ! dear Mrs. Talbot !"

It was May's voice calling me. I opened the door, and there she stood, her pretty hair all ruffled, her white cheeks with two spots of colour on them, her eyes red with weeping, yet shining like two moist violets.

"My darling !" I said.

She put her arm through mine. "He wants to see

"THE DOOR OPENED, AND JACK WALKED IN, PRECEDED BY HIS GUEST" (*p.* 688).

you to thank you," she whispered. "Oh, Mrs. Talbot, we are so happy!"

Jack was right then; she did not perceive it.

"Where is Mr. Talbot?" she continued. "He would so like to see him!"

"He has just been summoned to poor Coles; he is dying," I answered.

"Then he will be able to tell him he has come," she said. "I am so glad, for he will die easier." And with that she opened the drawing-room door, and I stood face to face with Hugh Danvers.

* * * * * * * *

I do not know that first impressions are always trustworthy, but in the case of Mr. Danvers mine continued very much the same as in the hour that May opened the drawing-room door and introduced me to him.

Ten days had passed away since then; I had had ample time and opportunity of studying him, and the more I did so the less easy was it for me to realise that this silent, quiet, broken-down man was Hugh Danvers, the good fellow, the brilliant talker, the sought-for guest to make a party go off well, of former days.

It was very pathetic to see him and May together. They were like lovers more than father and daughter. She had no eyes, no ears, for any one but him; whilst he, on his side, would make pitiful efforts to be something like his old self for her sake, even going so far as to try now and then to get up a joke.

which made us both feel more inclined to cry than to laugh.

"You must give him time," said Jack, as I poured out to him one morning my various impressions and ideas. "It will take him months to recover in a small degree all that he has gone through, both mentally and physically. As to his being the same man again, that he never will be, and no one could expect it of him. For her sake we must be thankful that, as far as we can see, he has not become hopelessly soured and cynical."

"Yes, that is what Ancaster says," I replied. "He seems to understand him much better than I do, managing somehow to beguile him into speech over his pipe of an evening."

Jack smiled. "Yes," he said, "leave him to Mr. Talbot. He could not be in better hands, and you will see, in another fortnight or three weeks' time he will be mentally a different man."

And he was right. Men are certainly more patient of results than women. They do not sow their seed one day, and expect it to spring up and bear fruit the next. They are more contented with the day of small things than are their womankind, and thus I found, when another fortnight had gone by, that, quiet as he still was, Mr. Danvers was decidedly improved in spirits. He talked more, was more interested in all that was going on around him, smiled occasionally, and would now and then let fall a phrase, an aphorism, or relate an anecdote that would cause his daughter's eyes to kindle with delight.

That he shrank from all society, refusing to encounter the numerous visitors who drove up to the Rectory day after day to call on May and him, was only natural. It seemed to me that the whole county was streaming to Monk's Hollow, led by the Challoners and Dawtreys, and anxious, I could not but suspect, to catch a glimpse of Mr. Danvers, and not without an eye to his beautiful daughter.

If such was their object, they were doomed to disappointment. I, nearly always a prisoner to the house, was left to do the entertaining on these occasions, and to answer the innumerable questions with which my friends assailed me, whilst May and her father, with my full consent, would slip out of an adjacent window or the back door for a walk by the river, or a saunter amongst the primroses in the Cappers woods.

I need hardly say that Sir John had been amongst the first to welcome his old friend back into the world with a warmth, a tact, and delicacy that won Mr. Danvers' crushed and seared heart at once and for ever. Here was a fellow-sufferer, one who, like himself, had loved and enjoyed the good things, the pleasures, the luxuries of this world, and had had them banished from his life by one fell stroke. Their misfortunes had started from a common source, they had known each other in old days, and had shared many tastes; and thus it came to pass that the only time in the day that May left her father would be when, at the close of their rambles together, she would drop him at Cappers for a chat or a game of chess with Sir John, whilst she returned to make tea for me, and to gladden the eyes of my visitors by a sight of her sweet face.

I knew the meaning of this as well as if she had made me her confidante. She loved Jack, and was trying to stamp out her love. For her, she conceived, there would never be any question of matrimony. Her life was bound up in her father's, and therefore it behoved her to avoid Cappers, and every one connected with it. Fortunately those were busy days for us all, with plenty to do and to think about. The Challoners had their hands full in preparing to turn out as soon as possible, as Mr. Danvers was anxious to get in by Easter, whilst May was amply occupied in looking after her father's health, and in helping him with his business affairs, which he preferred to conduct solely by correspondence. Day after day he grew more attached to Monk's Hollow, with its mild, soothing climate, its peaceful seclusion, so suitable to a weary, storm-beaten body and soul—more attached to my husband, who understood handling the wounded spirit with such consummate tact and gentleness.

"If May would like it," he said to me one day, when we were alone together for a few minutes, "I should wish to spend the few months I have to live in this quiet, sheltered spot."

I was startled, for never before had he alluded to his health to me.

"Yes," he continued, replying to my involuntary look of surprise. "I am thankful to say she does not see what I know you and Mr. Talbot do. She is quite aware that I am ill, but she fancies I shall get better, and as it is a comfort to her, I do not wish her to be undeceived." Then, kindling into more animation, "Mrs. Talbot," he said, "I am thinking of Coles' Cottage. We are anxious not to abuse any longer your extraordinary kindness and hospitality, and I think we could get into it very quickly. It is in excellent order, I understand. You will be glad to keep May near you, I know?"

"Oh, Mr. Danvers," I cried, "what a delightful idea! But I thought there was some talk of your going to the south of France for the rest of the spring?"

"Yes, that was May's idea, but I have told her I would rather stay quietly here."

"And as your wish is her law," I said, "I consider that the matter is settled. It is too charming! I have been making myself miserable at the thoughts of parting with her. She has grown so very, very dear to both Mr. Talbot and myself."

He smiled half sadly, half proudly. "She has the knack of endearing herself to people," he answered. "You and Mr. Talbot have been, and are, goodness itself to her, and that is another reason for fixing myself here. When I am gone, I shall leave her near friends—such friends as she is not likely to meet again in a lifetime, I think. The only drawback to the plan is the neighbourhood at Cappers of my uncle."

"But may not that be an advantage?" I ventured to say.

"I think not. His relationship to me has not hitherto proved an advantage. Sir John tells me that he is so good as to say he intends calling on me, now that he has returned to Marcombe. I shall not see him, or allow May to do so."

"Is not that a pity?" I asked. "Mr. Danvers, will you permit me to give a little advice?"

"Most assuredly. Not only a little, but as much as you please. Any advice from you I shall regard as a command."

"Oh, pray don't look on it in that light," I replied, "or I cannot possibly give it. All I want to say is this: don't reject old Mr. Danvers' overtures. I am sure he means well and kindly, and, for May's sake, you must not throw away friends, much less relations. Blood is thicker than water. He is your uncle, and although hitherto he has not proved himself a pleasant one, yet he has been consistent from the beginning. Who knows but that his vicinity may prove a source of happiness and enjoyment to you as well as to May? He is a most agreeable, cultivated old gentleman, and I assure you, when I have got over the departure of the dear Challoners, I mean to make great friends with him. Poor old man! He will be very lonely in that big house by himself."

Mr. Danvers looked up at me, with the shadow of a humorous smile.

"I will be guided entirely by you," he said. "I have no doubt you are right. I would do anything in the world that would bring one spark of happiness or comfort to May," and with that our conversation abruptly ceased, as the door opened, and May entered.

"Father dear," she said, "Gerrard has just run across with a message. Mr. Danvers is going to lunch at Cappers to-day, to make some final arrangements, and is coming here to call on you afterwards. You will see him, won't you?"

"If you wish it, dear."

"I wish you to do nothing that you don't like."

"But he does like it," I interposed. "We have just been agreeing that Mr. Danvers is to be cordially received when he arrives."

"Have you? Oh! I am so glad."

"Are you, darling? I would see Mephistopheles himself, if it would please you;" whereupon May smiled with delight at this gleam of his former self.

The rest of the morning was spent in debating the cottage plan, which was, as we all agreed, a most reasonable one. Coles had died the very evening of Mr. Danvers' release—a peaceful quiet death, surrounded by his family, and with the happiness of knowing that the man he had so deeply injured was once more free. He had put by a small sum of money for his widow and children, and Mrs. Coles, finding herself suddenly reduced from affluence to poverty, and with a pious horror of debt and difficulty, had at once removed into an ordinary labourer's cottage, leaving her old home untenanted. It was a nice house, built more than half a century previously for the head bailiff or manager of the Cappers estate in its then palmy days, and, though small, neither low nor stuffy, as is usually the case with cottages. On all sides it commanded a view, which in itself was an elixir, whilst the garden attached to it had the knack of yielding better flowers, fruit, and vegetables than any other in the neighbourhood. May was charmed with the idea of making it her home, as indeed she would have been with anything that her father proposed, and the result was a final expedition that very morning, with a view to business.

They came back at luncheon-time quite decided. May had discovered endless capabilities in the comfortably old-fashioned house. There was no doubt that the bailiff of those days had had a very proper idea of comfort, and a good deal to say to the building of his future abode. Mrs. Coles was delighted to sub-let so quickly, whilst Mr. Danvers promised himself much pleasure in continuing her husband's horticultural pursuits. Altogether, the place seemed made for them.

We were still pleasurably talking it over—we two women especially—devising and arranging in our mind's eye the carpentering, painting, papering, &c., when I recognised the Marcombe fly crawling up the drive.

"Here is Mr. Danvers," I gave notice, and straightway his nephew stiffened himself in his chair, whilst a pale pink flush rose to May's cheek. In another minute Jane was announcing the visitor, and the old man came in. He gave a quick keen glance at the three occupants of the room, but when his eye fell on May, a smile rose to his lips—a smile of pleasure.

I have long ago come to the conclusion that Gladys is right, and that no man—not even Mr. Bostock—can resist May.

Nevertheless, there was more nervousness and confusion in old Mr. Danvers' manner than in that of his nephew, who, with all the *aplomb* of a man of the world, rose and greeted his uncle as if they had stood in exactly the same relations to one another—as they might have done—when the latter first returned from Australia, some five or seven years ago. With May's warm, yet at the same time somewhat reserved, reception the old man recovered himself, and when I had asked him one or two questions about Cappers and the Challoners, he settled down to a cosy chat, whilst he motioned to May to come and sit near him.

On and on he talked, Hugh Danvers, May, and I throwing in a word now and then, lighting up my little drawing-room with a host of varied recollections and information, and showing already an extraordinary knowledge of Monk's Hollow, and all the surrounding country, which would have delighted my husband had he been present. But all the time he never took his eyes off May, and had it not been impolite to me, would have addressed to her all his eloquence. As it was, he divided it pretty equally between us, and so charmed did he appear to be with his new-found relations, that I verily believe he would have stayed till dinner-time had I not unfortunately

suggested tea. The bare word drove him away. He had a deep-rooted horror of five o'clock tea, and no sooner did he hear the rattle of the teacups than he rose to go. Warmly he bade us adieu, promising to renew his visit before long, but when it came to May, he stooped and kissed her forehead.

"I think my great-niece will excuse my taking an uncle's privilege," he said; "and I hope, if she has any regard to her digestion, that she does not drink tea at this hour."

"Indeed she does, Uncle Bertram," she responded: "and two cups too, whenever she can get them."

"Ah! *la jeunesse, la jeunesse*," he answered, shaking his head, but overjoyed at the "Uncle Bertram." "Well, then, when you come and stay with me at Cappers, I suppose I must have it for you, or you will run away again."

"And for father too, please. He is quite as bad as I am."

When the door had finally closed on the old gentleman, I turned triumphantly to his nephew.

"Well, Mr. Danvers," I said, "don't you agree with me that your uncle is a delightful man?"

"He has the gift of the gab," he answered, "like the rest of the family. At any rate, you were quite right, Mrs. Talbot. I am very glad that I saw him."

"I think he is a dear old man," said May; "and so agreeable and well informed. I like his nice old-fashioned dress and manners too. It will be very pleasant to have him at Cappers: of course, it will not be like the Challoners," with a faintly rising colour, "but still——"

"Blood is thicker than water, as I said before," I repeated, "and there is no doubt that you have won his heart, May. He conceded you your tea without a murmur."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

PARTINGS.

EVENTS marched quickly at this time in our little village, succeeding one another with a rapidity that fairly took my breath away.

Mr. Danvers was not a man to let the grass grow under his feet, and a week after the conversation recorded in the last chapter the cottage was ready and waiting for him and May to take possession. With the Challoners too the last days had come, and they were on the eve of their migration to London, which was to be their future home, to Gladys' intense delight, in spite of Gerrard's warnings.

"You must not spend money in London, mother!" he said, after the manner of children of the present day, who know so much better than their parents, and holding up a very dirty forefinger. "We are not a bit rich; we can only just keep our heads above water because Jack has got an appointment and written a book. I shall try and do something for myself as soon as ever I can. I don't like sponging on Jack."

"Gerrard, my boy, don't pray become a prig," I entreated. "I would almost rather see you naughty."

"Ah! he combines the two characters most easily," said Gladys, in her drawling way. "What a mercy it will be when he is at school! I am counting the days to his departure."

"No, you ain't, mother, but I am," cried the incorrigible boy, as he scampered out of the room, banging the door behind him.

"I really am glad he is going," said Gladys, when he was out of earshot, "for he is nearly twelve, and he would be quite wretched in London. He is right, though, in what he said. We shall be horribly poor, thanks to your beloved Jack, but it will be easier to bear in London, where one can do without a carriage, than down here, where I can never get out of this valley; and we shall be in a desperately out-of-the-way part, with no interesting shops to tempt me."

They were all impatient to be off, now it had come to the last moments—all, that is to say, but Sir John.

The poor man clung to his old home the more tenaciously now that he was to leave it. He dreaded facing the London world in his present state of health; he dreaded London, so called, in a new and out-of-the-way part of Kensington: far from the clubs and the roar and din of its main arteries. Above all, he felt keenly becoming a pensioner, as he expressed it, on his son, all the more that he knew Jack would have to lead a life of rigid self-denial in order to furnish the supplies for the new order of things. But he was very good about it all, expressing his feelings in rather less strong language than usual, and talking little about himself.

"He was glad that Gladys was pleased," he said, "and it was a good thing the children were to have some education," but he was decidedly in very low spirits, and on the last day he said to me—

"Jack was right. I could not have sold Cappers: it would have broken my heart."

As to Jack, he only laughed when his father pronounced himself a pauper and a pensioner, averring that it was far better to be both than to have lost Cappers. He himself was in as good spirits as Sir John was in bad, for he was on the eve of starting for India, cheered by the fact that his book had come out the previous week, and even in this short time was a decided success, in that it had created a sensation. The life of inaction, so trying to a strong man, was over for him; once more he could be up and doing, and putting his shoulder to the wheel both for himself and his family.

I think we were all glad when it came to the departure. As for me, I was so miserable at the prospect of losing my dear cousins and Jack, my boy, that I was impatient for the ordeal to be over. It seemed to me that Monk's Hollow was being turned inside out, and the only remnant of its old self left was the staring house on the hill, where dwelt the Bostocks. And they, too, were very much changed. Whether they were ashamed of themselves for threatening Sir John to foreclose, whether Lizzie Bostock was really so mortified at not marrying Jack that she felt at enmity with all the world, or whether she was disgusted at the, so to speak, triumph of May Danvers,

I cannot say. We all of us behaved to her and her father exactly as hitherto; Gladys asked them to tea and to luncheon over and over again; I was equally hospitable in inviting them to the Rectory; Mr. Talbot—always a peacemaker—toiled up the hill more than once at hours when he hoped to find them at home, whilst whenever we met them we were cordiality itself. But in vain: Lizzie went rigidly about her duties as usual, was ceaseless in her activity in the village and at her orphanage, but she never came near the Rectory or Cappers, treating even Mr. Talbot coldly, and myself and May with an icy frigidity that would have been impertinent, if it had not been ludicrous. It was all very uncomfortable and disagreeable, particularly in a small place like Monk's Hollow, and I regretted the whole matter extremely. If Lizzie had been, or were still, in love with Jack, I could not but feel sorry for her, although, at the same time, I could not exonerate her from having deliberately and of set purpose sought to engage his affections from the very moment that he drove into Monk's Hollow in her father's carriage. There was so much that was good in both her and Mr. Bostock, they were really such excellent conscientious people, that though personally they had never been very congenial to me, still I could not but grieve at the cessation of a friendship with parishioners which was the growth of years. I resolved, therefore, the first time I met Mr. Bostock alone, to ask him the reason of his and his daughter's conduct, for I felt convinced it was none of his doing.

The opportunity came a day or two afterwards. I was being drawn in my chair from Mrs. Coles's new cottage, when I came face to face with Mr. Bostock in Love Lane.

"Go home, Aaron," I said promptly to the gardener who was drawing me, "and come and fetch me in a quarter of an hour. How do you do, Mr. Bostock? No, I am not going to let you pass without a word. You see, I have stopped my chair, and sent Aaron away, on purpose to have a chat with you."

If it had been Lizzie instead of her father, I could not have done it; but a woman can always get her way with a man if she means to, and I was quite determined to have it out with Mr. Bostock. He was obliged in very courtesy to stop; he could not help himself. He murmured something about business, but I did not listen. Aaron was out of sight, so I could commence my attack at once.

"Why do you and Lizzie never come and see us now?" I asked point-blank. He looked very confused. Poor man! I dare say he longed for Lizzie, but I was not going to let him off.

"Ah, well! Mrs. Talbot, the fact is—ahem—you have visitors."

"That is quite true, Mr. Bostock, and very charming ones too—at least, so every one seems to find them. They have been inundated with callers from every side of the neighbourhood."

Mr. Bostock looked a little sour. The county folk were rather a sore point with him.

"There is no accounting for taste, Mrs. Talbot," he said, with some asperity. "Neither I nor my daughter care to know your visitors, and that is the honest truth why we have not come to the Rectory."

"Well, I am glad I know the reason, although it is a strange one. I can assure you, you are the losers. But no doubt, as Mr. and Miss Danvers are going to take up their abode amongst us, you will in time reconsider your decision."

"Going to take up their abode amongst us?" gasped Mr. Bostock.

I nodded serenely. "Yes, really," I answered. "I wonder you had not heard the news in the village. They have taken Coles's old house, and move into it almost immediately."

"You don't say so! Well!"

"An excellent arrangement," I continued, "whereby we shall enjoy Miss Danvers' and her father's very charming society, and Monk's Hollow will gain in every way, for Miss Danvers kindly promises to retain her post as organist."

"I always thought her a nice girl, and she is a very pretty one," murmured Mr. Bostock faintly—lucky that Lizzie did not hear him—"but I shall never cease to reproach myself for having engaged her as schoolmistress." Then, with an air of paternal pride that was really touching in its self-abnegation, "I am sure to do wrong if I have not Lizzie at my elbow."

"My dear Mr. Bostock," I answered, "pardon me, but you are a great deal too modest. You, who have managed, and still do manage, an immense business without Lizzie's assistance, need not reproach yourself for one instant. You did perfectly right in engaging Miss Danvers. She is the best mistress we have had for years; she is a first-rate organist; her influence in the village, which is very great, has been all for good, and her presence amongst us has proved an unmixed blessing. Our present new mistress—who, by the way, certainly does not err on the side of beauty, as did Miss Danvers—is not to be named with her in point of efficiency. What then have you to reproach yourself with, unless it be," I added with a smile, "that you had the good taste to be captivated by Miss Danvers' looks? After all, what's in a name?"

But he shook his head mournfully. "It was not right," he answered: "not right at all."

"No, of course it wasn't," I replied briskly; I was tired of this mountain that had been created out of a molehill. "But you have fully expiated your share in the transaction by engaging Miss Browne, who is as great a contrast to her predecessor as the soul of the most ardent worshipper of plain, uninteresting respectability could wish. And," I continued gravely, "what was the wrong, compared to that done to Mr. Danvers? It seems to me that we can none of us do enough to make amends now to him and his daughter for his unmerited imprisonment. We must all feel sincerely grateful to your friend Mr. Carey for having fired the train whereby his innocence was discovered."

"Ah, poor Carey! poor Carey!"

"Are you alluding to the banker, or your soldier friend?" I asked.

"To the banker," he said. "I knew him. A good man he was—a very good man."

I could not repress my indignation. Here was Mr. Bostock actually pitying Mr. Carey, and refusing to visit Mr. Danvers.

Mr. Bostock drew himself up. "You use strong language, Mrs. Talbot," he said.

"I know I do," I answered penitently, "and I beg your pardon. The fact is, I do feel very keenly the wrong that has been done to Mr. Danvers: his life

"MAY AND HER FATHER WOULD SLIP OUT FOR A WALK BY THE RIVER" (*p.* 693).

"Mr. Bostock," I cried impetuously, "are you falling into what I saw designated the other day in a paper as 'the new English softness'—a softness that makes men pity the murderer more than the murdered, and turns crime into a martyr's crown! Mr. Danvers, as I believe he himself fully acknowledges and deplores, was culpably careless, extravagant, and speculative, but nothing more, whereas a more cowardly piece of villainy than Mr. Carey's I have seldom heard of. And yet you refuse to visit the one, and pity the other."

broken and worse than blighted. If you saw him, I think you would forgive me."

"Ah, well! I must talk the matter over with Lizzie."

"Yes, do," I said. "I am sure that she will come round to my views." Then thinking I had said quite enough—"What changes we are having, are we not?" I asked. "We shall miss the Challoners dreadfully."

Once more Mr. Bostock drew himself up, stiff as

buckram this time, whilst his countenance assumed a judicial aspect. I wondered what was coming.

"They will be no miss to me and my daughter," he said, with his old pomposity. "We have ceased to hold much communication with Cappers."

"Indeed!" I answered; "then of course their absence will be no loss to you. It is a great one to me and Mr. Talbot, more especially as Sir John is my cousin. I don't suppose a day goes by but what we meet, and I am afraid a solitary old man, however agreeable he may be, will not in any way compensate to us for their departure."

"It is a good thing that Sir John has managed to let the ramshackly old place to any one," he said. "Forgive me, Mrs. Talbot, if I say that I have not conceived any very great idea of Mr. Danvers' brains from the mere fact of his becoming a tenant of Cappers."

"No?" I queried. "You see, people have such different tastes. Just those points that you dislike about Cappers were what attracted Mr. Danvers—fortunately for Sir John, for he promises to prove an admirable tenant."

"I am glad to hear it—very glad," responded Mr. Bostock, and with that he bade me a somewhat formal good-bye, and began descending Love Lane, whilst I patiently awaited Aaron's return.

Poor Mr. Bostock! It really was too bad! He had set his heart on becoming the owner of the "ramshackly old place" by hook or by crook, and in both cases when his plans had been ripe for execution the Danvers family had stepped in and frustrated them—May had unconsciously spoilt the little castle in the air of Lizzie reigning at Cappers as Lady Challoner, and now old Mr. Danvers had come forward to prevent the place being thrown into the market, and Mr. Bostock becoming its possessor. It was undoubtedly very provoking for them both.

I went home feeling very wretched, for I had made my adieus last night to Sir John, Lady Challoner, and the children, who had all departed this morning. Only Jack was left behind now—for one day, to clear up things—and he was to leave for India next week. I felt convinced that I should find him at the Rectory when I got home, for he was engaged to dine at the barracks at Canderleigh this evening, and was to proceed from thence to London. Sure enough there he was, sitting between Mr. Danvers and May, looking better than I had seen him since his return from Egypt.

"My dear Jack, have you been here long?" I asked.

"I really don't know. About ten minutes, I suppose."

"Half an hour," said Mr. Danvers.

"Impossible!"

"It is a fact. I heard the church clock strike. We have been talking over his book, and the review in the *Looker On* this morning; I tell him his fortune is made."

"Mr. Danvers has not spared my blushes," said Jack, "nor," in a softer voice, "Miss Danvers either. I accept their predictions as a good omen." Then, slightly raising his voice, and with a solemnity that lent his words almost the appearance of a vow, as he turned towards May and her father, "I promise you all three, that if I can make my fortune, no amount of work shall deter me. I owe it to my father, I owe it to Cappers, and I owe it to myself."

"Amen!" said Mr. Danvers, whilst May, suddenly flushing, became absorbed in Aaron's operations in the garden.

Jack rose to go. "I am due at Canderleigh at eight," he said, "and I have a good deal to do yet before I start, so I must look sharp."

"But, my boy, you have not said good-bye to Ancaster."

"I have, indeed. Do you think I should go away without doing so?"

I felt a sudden what the French call *serrement de cœur*. At Mr. Talbot's age, who knew if they would ever meet again in this world? I was recalled to myself by Jack's and May's adieus, and yet they were very simple. They held each other's hands for one long second, looking straight into one another's eyes. What they read there I know not, but when I followed Jack out into the hall to say my own good-bye privately, he seized my two hands.

"Take care of her for me, Mrs. Talbot," he said, in a broken voice, "for I love her better than my life. Give me time and I will win her. Meanwhile, shield her from sorrow as much as you can, and let me know all—everything about her."

"Of course I will; but, Jack," remembering Gladys' words as to May's attractiveness for the male sex, "suppose—some—other man——"

He looked grave for a second. "You must not interfere in any way," he said; "she is perfectly free. I have not said a syllable to her, but," with a suddenly radiant smile, "I don't feel afraid."

The next moment he had wrung my hand nearly off and was walking towards Cappers, whilst I retired to my room and—I am not ashamed to own it—indulged in a good hearty cry: *Scheiden thut Weh*, the Germans have it. But how much worse it is when you are getting on in years and the partings grow more and more frequent! In the midst of my tears, I wondered what May was going through, poor child! Her heart, so loyal and true to her father, had gone out of her keeping, and how hard was the struggle to allure it back again! She did not know, and no one had the courage to tell her, that her prospective sacrifice would not be necessary, that the lifetime she intended to devote absolutely to Mr. Danvers would be but a few months, or, at the outside, a year or two, and meanwhile her poor, much-tried heart was a battle-field of contending emotions.

When we all assembled at dinner that evening we were a very quiet party. Mr. Talbot felt keenly the parting from his old friends; to him, also, Jack was as a son, and although, with his usual forgetfulness of self, he would not give way to low spirits, they were there all the same; Mr. Danvers was more than usually silent and thoughtful, whilst May, looking very

white, and with, as I thought, traces of tears about her eyes, was feverishly talkative and even excited in manner. It was a relief to us all when the meal came to an end, and she and Mr. Talbot departed for the church practice, leaving me and Mr. Danvers *tête-à-tête*.

For once in my life my conversational powers forsook me. I felt convinced that Mr. Danvers was meditating on the same subject as I was, but, like a wise man as he was, he forbore to put his thoughts into words. After exchanging a few commonplaces, we both picked up our newspapers and proceeded to study them. That is to say, I perused mine without taking in a syllable that I was reading, and when I happened to glance at my neighbour, he was holding the *Looker On* in his hand upside-down. It did just as well, I doubt not. The next day, he and May, after overwhelming us with expressions of gratitude, departed for the cottage, and Mr. Talbot and I were left alone. The same day Mr. Danvers arrived at Cappers, with any amount of luggage, and a new era set in for Monk's Hollow.

With this era, with the departure of the Challoners, the arrival of Mr. Danvers, the emigration of May and her father, I resign my pen once more into May's more competent hands. My task is done. I did but fill up the gap caused by her illness, and whilst the currents of our lives ran side by side. Now, although they are parted but by a few hundred yards, still they flow in separate channels; and it is best that May should resume her pen, and tell the end of her own story.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

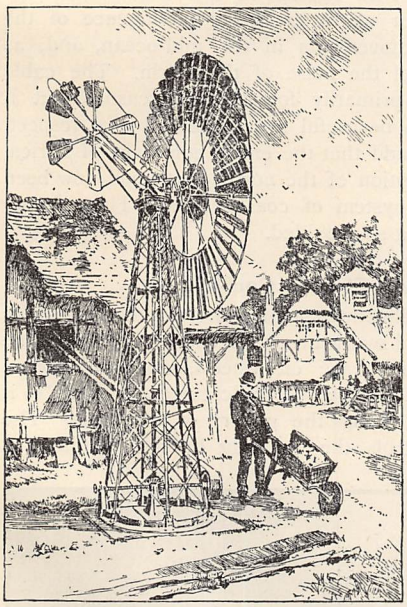
THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

A Wind-Engine.

Wind-power has gone, to a great extent, out of use since the introduction of steam. Nevertheless, it tends to come into operation again, if only for driving dynamos or pumping, and country work in general. Its drawbacks are the inconstancy of supply, and the varying force of the wind. The last of these is overcome by a simple regulation of the vanes in the engine, which we illustrate. The vanes are automatically "feathered" according to the wind-pressure, and thus the speed of the wind-wheel is regulated. A circular plate is exposed to the pressure of the wind, and by means of suitable gearing sets the vanes at a more or less acute angle. The speed of the wind-wheel being thus regulated, the rotation of the vertical shaft within the supporting framework is kept pretty constant, and this in turn communicates its motion to a pulley, from which, by leather belting, the power is led away.



Another New Step-Ladder.

There has recently been patented by a Driffield firm a new step-ladder, admirably adapted either for library or domestic use. The steps fold like an ordinary pair, and rigidity is attained in this latest invention by means of a couple of strong spring catches, without the aid of any cord, or further stay. And on the release of these springs the back legs may be turned upwards, when the springs are again brought into action, only on a lower pair of catch-plates, and a safe and handy lean-to ladder is formed. Every reasonable precaution is taken to guard against the possibility of accident, and the result is an admirable combination of the advantages of the ordinary household "step-ladder" and the "long ladder." For the hanging of curtains and pictures this new ladder should be a boon to the householder, especially as it packs away very neatly into a convenient space.

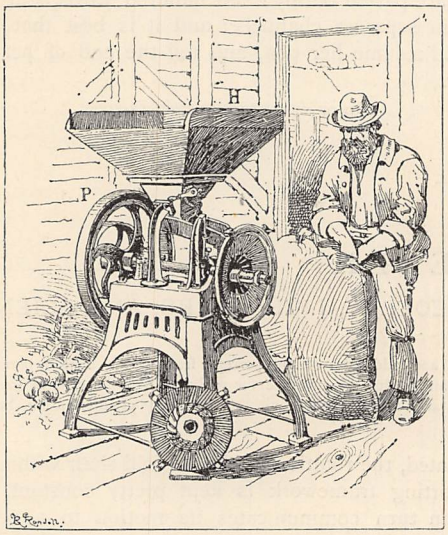
Another Remedy for Hydrophobia.

It is said that in the island of Skye a remedy for hydrophobia has long been known and successfully used. Although we can say nothing on this point, we give the particulars for what they are worth. A handful of leaves of the thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*) must be boiled in a pint of water, until the bulk is reduced to one-half. The fluid must then be strained

through a fine white cloth, and administered in one dose. If swallowing be difficult, it must be forced down the throat. It is claimed that before long violent paroxysms will ensue, accompanied by copious perspiration; that sleep for eight hours will follow, and that the patient will then be free from rabies.

A New Grinding Mill.

The mill we illustrate is designed for use on farms and estates for grinding fodder, such as grain. The



wheels are of cold blast steel made in the form of conical discs, one of which is shown separate in the figure. They are grooved on both sides, and are thus able to serve, as it were, twice over, by reversing the grinding surfaces. The material to be crushed or "kibbled" is fed into the hopper, H, and the mill driven by the pulley, P. A pair of plain metal rollers, with smooth surfaces for flattening oats or barley, is also supplied with the mill, which is usually driven at a speed of 350 revolutions per minute.

A Manganese Meteorite.

A meteoric stone of special interest has been acquired for the National Museum at Stockholm. It fell in Scania on April 6th, attended by a red flash like lightning and a report like thunder. The weight is 11 kilogrammes, and the hole it made in the ground was 30 centimètres deep, but having recoiled the stone was found on the surface lying near the hole. Its colour is greyish-black, and it appears to consist almost entirely of manganese, which has fused on the outside owing to the friction of the air as the meteorite descended. The red flash "like lightning" and the noise "like thunder" do not, of course, prove that the fall of the stone was actually accompanied by a lightning-flash. The red-hot particles given off may have seemed to be lightning. But nevertheless the phenomenon helps to account for the many reports about "thunderstones," that is to say, meteorites falling with a flash of lightning, or at least the sound of thunder. Mr. Symons recently questioned the possibility of meteorites being accompanied by lightning, and the matter is still open to investigation.

For Holes in Wood.

Fine sawdust, mixed into a thick paste with glue, will be found an excellent material for filling up nail-holes and broken places in wood.

A New Opiate.

The *Berlinische Klinische* announces the discovery of a new opiate by Professor Kast, of Freiburg. It has been called "Sulfonal," and belongs to the "disulphates" group. The crystals are tasteless, without smell, and readily dissolved. It is stated to have the property of producing sleep in invalids, particularly nervous people, but not in healthy people. Such drugs should, of course, only be used under the authority of a qualified medical adviser. But it is claimed for this that it does not alter the pressure of the blood in any great degree, and it is said to be of a harmless character.

An Ocean Observatory.

The island of Bermuda is a sort of natural observatory for watching gales from the tropics into the North Atlantic, and, as it is about to be connected by submarine cable with Halifax in Nova Scotia, it will be possible for us to get early intelligence of the atmospheric movements in the mid-ocean, and, as it were, to feel the pulse of the storm. The cable is to be laid primarily for imperial reasons, but it cannot fail to be useful in a meteorological respect. We may also add that the entire continent of Africa, with the exception of the north coast, has now been girdled by a system of coast cables. There is no other continent so provided.

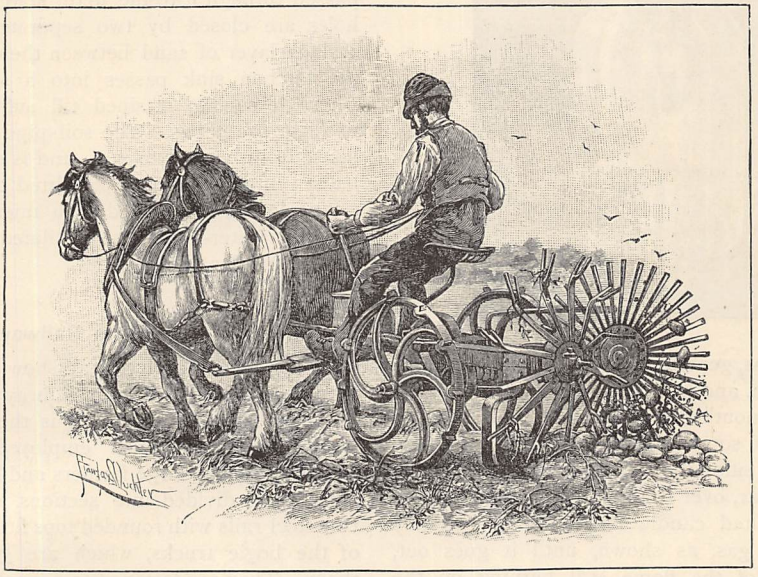
An Electric Coal-Digger.

Our figure illustrates a machine for digging under a seam of coal by means of electricity. The machine is run into its place on wheels, and the electric motor is started by an electric current brought to it in wires run along the gallery of the mine. The operator controls the working by the handles, as

shown, and the cutter plies its task on the seam. One of the machines is on view in the Paris Exhibition. By its aid a man and his helper can undercut 110 tons of coal in ten hours, the seam being 6 feet thick. For this the power required at the pit-head is a little over $2\frac{1}{2}$ horse-power.

A Potato-Lifter.

The potato-raiser which we illustrate was recently exhibited at the Royal Agricultural Show, Windsor.



A POTATO-LIFTER.

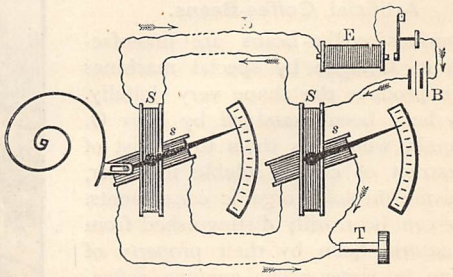
It consists of a revolving wheel having forked spokes, which upturn the potatoes, and a second wheel with plain spokes which prevent the potatoes from being covered over with earth. An elevated seat is provided for the driver, who, by means of levers, controls the working of the machine.

Dalura Wood Decoration.

A new method of ornamenting the interior of dwellings has been introduced into London. It is the invention of Mr. Bernard Ludwig, and consists in printing patterns on the wood by means of steel rollers and the application of heat. The figures or pattern thus impressed appear light on a darker ground, and give the effect of carving. This treatment is believed to render the surface of the wood less pervious to damp, and its appearance is highly artistic. Various kinds of timber can be treated in this manner for use in panelling, ceilings, cabinet-work, and so on.

The Tele-inductor.

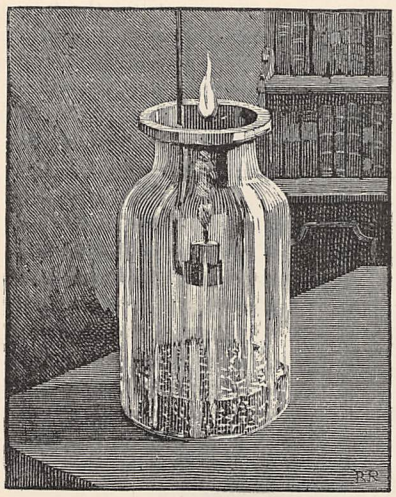
A means of indicating at a distance the water-level, the temperature, or the height of the barometer, and such-like information, has been devised by M. P. Moennich, of Rostock University. The figure will explain the principle of the apparatus. There are two "primary" coils of wire, *S*, *S*, in circuit with the intermittent electric current from an ordinary induction coil, E, and a battery, B, the wire, L, serving to make the connection. The current in traversing these coils induces corresponding currents in the "secondary" coils, *s*, *s*, which are pivoted inside the primary coils, and fitted with similar pointers which move over corresponding scales. These secondary coils are in circuit with a telephone, T, and the currents induced in them, circulating in the telephone, give out a musical hum so long as the coils are not at precisely the same angles with regard to the primary coils. When they are at the same angle the telephone becomes silent, for the induced currents in *s* and *S* have neutralised each other. It follows that if one coil, *s*, is moved to a certain position on the scale, the other coil, *S*, will have to be moved to the same position on its scale before the telephone, T, is silenced. If then we cause the varying water-level, or barometer-level, as



the case may be, to move the coil, *S*, on its pivot, the level can be indicated at a distance, however great, by the person there shifting *his* coil, *S*, until the telephone is mute.

A Parlour Will-o'-the-Wisp.

The natural phenomenon of Jack-a-Lantern or Will-o'-the-Wisp can be produced by very simple means on a small scale. It is, as most people know, the effect



of hydrocarbon gas, generated by decomposing organic matter in a marsh, and in a state of combustion. If we take an open-mouthed glass jar, like that shown in the figure, and put some baking soda in the bottom, then pour dilute sulphuric acid, or muriatic acid, or even strong vinegar, over it, the jar fills with carbonic acid gas. A lighted candle may then be carefully lowered into the gas, as shown, until it goes out, leaving the top of the flame still burning on the surface of the invisible gas. The flame is fed by the gases ascending from the smouldering wick. The effect only lasts a short time, but it can be renewed by raising up the candle till the wick re-lights, then lowering it again as before. The experiment can also be performed with a gas-jet, but in this case the parallel is not so complete, for the candle produces the gas by its decomposition on the spot. It is necessary that the air of the room should be very still for the experiment to be successful.

Artificial Coffee-Beans.

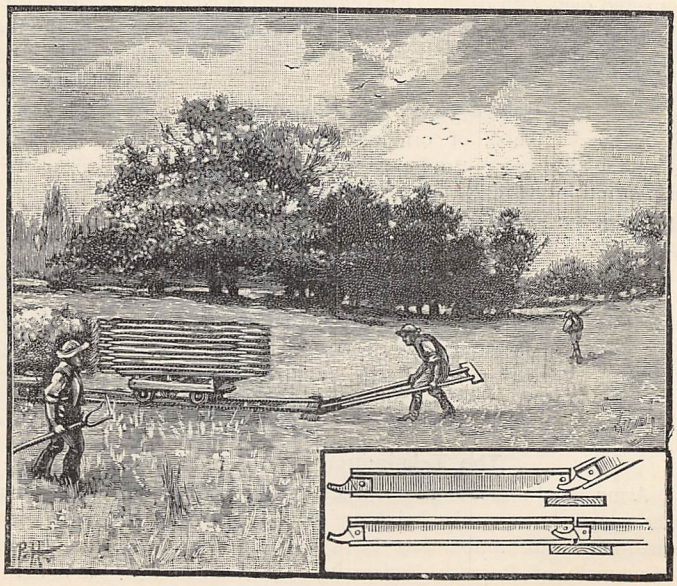
Spurious coffee-beans are manufactured in Cologne by special machines which produce the shape very skilfully. They have been examined by Herr O. Reitmair, who finds them to consist of an extract of coffee, soluble in water, and some insoluble organic constituents. They can be readily distinguished from the natural bean by their property of sinking in water. The genuine coffee-bean floats on water. Moreover, strong oxidising agents do not decolourise the artificial bean so rapidly as they do the natural coffee.

A Sanitary House.

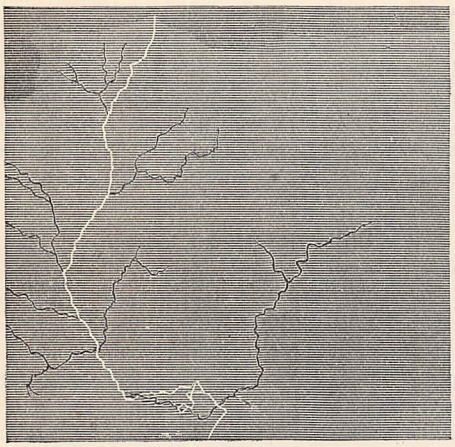
It is interesting to hear of the sanitary arrangements recently carried out for the proprietor of one of the medical journals, in Queen's Gate, Kensington. The house forms one of a terrace, and is so arranged that the drainage can be brought from back to front through the house in a trench lined with concrete and containing a cast-iron pipe 4 inches in diameter, jointed with blue lead. At each end of the pipe there is a manhole and box for inspection formed of glazed porcelain. If the pipe should choke, rods can be passed through it to the main sewer. Both the manholes are closed by two separate doors, having a 12-inch layer of sand between them. The flow from the kitchen sink passes into a siphon flush tank, where it can be retained till sufficient is collected to flush the pipes. The soil pipe runs through the house from bottom to top, and is crowned by an exhaust ventilator. Air is admitted to its base through a pipe in the area fitted with mica flaps. The trap of each water-closet is ventilated into a separate pipe of smaller diameter.

A Farm Railway.

At the recent agricultural show in Windsor Park there was exhibited a light railway for farm purposes, imported from Bohemia. It is the invention of Herr Dolberg, and is much employed in Austria and Germany by the large farmers and landed proprietors. The line is divided into sections, each consisting of two steel rails with rounded tops fitting into the wheels of the bogie trucks, which are grooved to receive them. They are fastened to a wooden or steel sleeper in the manner shown in figure. The line can be laid very simply and expeditiously, as will also be seen, and on almost any kind of farm-land. The upper part of the illustration represents a bogie carrying a supply of sections with their sleepers attached,



and a man laying the line with these in advance of it. For carrying manure into fields, or produce out of them, the line is well adapted, and it may even be useful in large manufactories.



Dark Lightning.

In a recent "Gatherer" we alluded to the "dark" lightning-flash which has been discovered by the aid of photography. We are now able to give an illustration of the phenomenon from a photograph taken by the Rev. A. Rose during one of the summer storms. The dark flashes are seen to be branching from the main bright flash. Mr. A. W. Clayden, who has studied this singular effect, is not a believer in the theory of Professor Stokes, that the darkness is produced by absorbent gases generated by a preceding flash along the same path. Mr. Clayden has made a number of experiments which seem to show that the dark flash is due to the reversal of the photographic image produced by the glare of diffused light on the clouds, and not to a "dark" discharge of electricity. The diffused light appears to undo the photographic effect of the luminous flash in certain cases.

An Elastic Wheel.

An elastic wheel, free from the objections of a rubber tire, which soon wears out, has been introduced by a Leeds firm of engineers. The india-rubber is in this case placed round the nave in the form of a ring, with apertures in it on which the spokes abut. The effect of the ring is that of a cushion or soft buffer, which prevents jarring.

A New Sewing Machine.

A sewing machine of a novel kind has been introduced by a well-known firm. It is called the "vibratory shuttle" or "V.S." machine, and not only works very silently but with the minimum of vibration. The new shuttle is of a cigar shape, and its bobbins are filled automatically. The head of the machine is locked to the table by means of a flat spring, which is released when the works are to be inspected. The new machine is especially adapted for household purposes, and is stated to be inexpensive.

A Manual Corn-Thresher.

A manual thresher for corn, flax, and other seeds, which can be worked by women and lads, without any aid from steam, has recently been introduced. The thresher is of simple construction, and will thresh damp or short grain as well as dry and long. It deals simply with the ears, not injuring the straw, which ties up clean and tight. With such a machine, which is of moderate price, a farmer is independent of steam-threshers, and can thresh when he likes.

Marinated Mackerel.

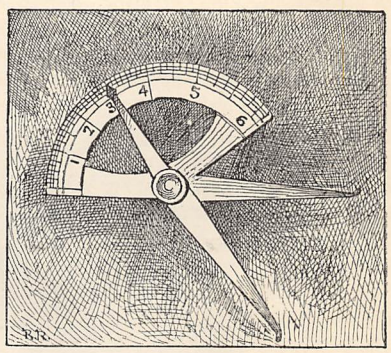
At a recent exhibition of the Cornwall Polytechnic Institution, Mr. Perry, of Penzance, exhibited some marinated pilchards, which were found toothsome after being kept twelve months. The process of marination consists in excluding the air from the fish by a layer of wax paraffin, or ozokerite, which is poured in melted, so as to seal the jar. Honey can also be preserved in this way, and mackerel is now kept by it.

An Automatic Nail-Maker.

An automatic machine for making horse-shoe nails has recently been brought out. Wire is coiled on a reel on the top of the machine, which cuts off, stamps, points and heads the nails without any hand assistance whatever. The receiving box only contains perfect nails, for if there is any hitch in the working the machine stops of itself, and points out by means of an index where the fault occurs. A few moments only are required to remove the offending nail, and the machine starts again.

Indicating Callipers.

The callipers that we here illustrate are designed to indicate on a scale the inside measurement of the thing to which they are applied. One leg of the callipers is prolonged and pointed to form the hand of a graduated scale, which gives the measurement as shown in the woodcut. A modified form of the instrument is also made for telling outside dimensions.



Locomotives as Fire-Engines.

The occurrence of fire in trains has led the directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to modify their locomotives so that they can be employed as fire-engines in case of necessity. A hose is attached to the steam-pump, of sufficient length to convey the water of the cistern to the seat of the fire. This hose

is carried on the tender, and quickly attached to the pump when it is required.

A Live Barometer.

A live barometer has been found very trustworthy in St. Louis (U.S.). It is a small tree-toad, which is exceptionally susceptible to changes of weather. It is enclosed in a glass tube, and provided with a small ladder for it to climb. This ladder it climbs to the very top when the air is moist, and rain is to be expected, but it descends again directly there is a prospect of fine weather.

Ocean Floats.

Floats are to be set adrift by order of Lieutenant Pillsbury, of the U.S. Coast Survey. They will be 8 feet long by 1½ inch square, and made of pine-wood painted white. The staff will be weighted at its lower end by four galvanised iron wings to catch the flow of the currents. A vane at the upper end will serve as an indicator of the float, and masters of vessels are requested to raise the float and make a note of its position, when found, on a form supplied in one of several glass tubes attached to the float. The latter is then cast adrift again, and the form is to be forwarded to Washington.

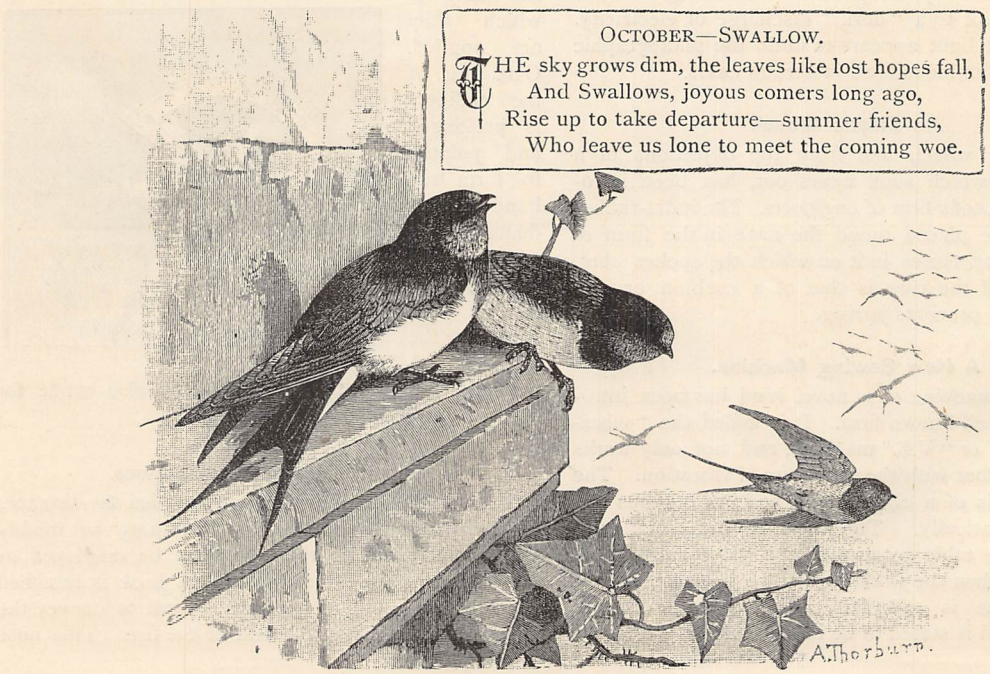
"Cassell's National Library."

Once more Professor Morley has been enabled to include a copyright work in this series—Professor Francis T. Palgrave's "Visions of England," a collection of lyrics, on the heroes and events of our country's history, that has won the commendation of the most eminent of historical and literary critics. It is greatly to be desired that the poetry of our history should be more widely known, and we congratulate our readers on the opportunity which is now afforded to all of acquiring this beautiful collection. Recent volumes in this "Library" are Johnson's "Rasselas," and Bacon's immortal "Essays," both of which should, in this handy form, find favour in the eyes of travellers. In poetry, we are glad to see Milton's "Paradise Regained," and Cowper's "Table Talk." Shakespeare's "Henry VI." and Lord Lyttleton's "Dialogues of the Dead" are also now to be found in this series.

Two Books for Ladies.

Some time ago we drew attention, in connection with our "National School of Housewifery," to the new "Book of the Household" which Messrs. Cassell were issuing. The first volume of the work is now complete, and is before us. A more appropriate or more useful present for a tyro in housekeeping it would be difficult to imagine. Every department of household management and furnishing is fully dealt with, and the making and care of clothes for old and young ladies and gentlemen described. In this connection we may mention a little register entitled "Baby's Record," which has just been published by Messrs. Field and Tuer. Blank spaces are left for the particulars of baby's first teeth, first speech, first walk, first illness, and first game—indeed, for baby's first steps in every walk of child-life. It is claimed for the register that its entries would prove very useful to a doctor in dealing with the child's ailments.

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.



A WOMAN'S STRENGTH.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Vere Thornleigh's Inheritance," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

MAY RESUMES HER PEN.

"TELL the end of your own story," so bids me Mrs. Talbot, and yet it is very difficult for me to resume my pen: difficult to write of myself, more difficult to write of him who was the light of my life—my own dear father.

I think I was blind in those days. I knew that he was altered, so much so that no one, not even his relations, would have recognised him either physically or mentally, and yet I did not perceive that he had already entered the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and that its mists were slowly, but surely, gathering around him. I thought that he was better, and so he was in some respects; and I persuaded myself that when we got into our little home the change and the fresh interests would work wonders for him. Personally I should have liked to have taken him abroad, to see what the sunny South would do for him, but he shrank from all contact with his fellow-creatures, and clung to Monk's Hollow with a tenacity that I could not gainsay.

And so we settled down in the dear little village which had proved such a shelter to me, and was now to be one to my dear one. Our days glided by peacefully, nay, cheerfully, for we were by no means left alone. All the kind people from a radius of ten miles round, many of whom had known my father in former days, came and called; old Mr. Danvers, who had arrived at Cappers the same day as we took possession of the cottage, was friendliness itself; whilst as for the Talbots, needless to say that we saw them daily. The fear I had entertained that my father, accustomed in former days to a life of perpetual excitement, would find Monk's Hollow dull, proved to be groundless. He was nearly always busy. His correspondence was very large, for, as by degrees people learnt his retreat, he was inundated with letters of congratulation from all classes and ranks: from some of the greatest people in the land down to clerks, jockeys, trainers—from every one, in short, to whom his generosity and kindliness had endeared him in bygone days. In addition to the writing this entailed upon him, he was carrying on an active correspondence on behalf of those ruined by the failure of Carey and Danvers, and at the same time with certain leading philanthropists concerning projects and ideas for the benefit of the criminal classes, engendered by his sojourn in Fastmoor. He was therefore fully occupied within doors, whilst he grew daily more necessary to his old uncle at Cappers, who could soon hardly write a letter or sign a cheque without consulting him or me.

In spite of, or rather because of, his many eccentricities and crotchets, he was a delightful old man: very agreeable, highly original, and whilst professing to be a misanthrope and a cynic, in reality blessed with the warmest and kindest of hearts. Once he had taken to any one, he or she could not do wrong. Fortunately, from the first I had been a favourite, and consequently he very soon spoilt me as much as did father.

And meanwhile, to our great delight, he had set to work, without delay, to repair Cappers. An army of gardeners and labourers had been turned into the place; the gardens trimmed, pruned, and stocked; fences, outhouses, and farm buildings built up; an architect sent for; and soon the roof and various other parts of the house, which had been a fruitful source of worry and expense to the Challoners, were being made thoroughly sound, whilst the old, tumble-down, but most picturesque stables were put into perfect order, both within and without. All this was a great amusement to my father, the Talbots, and myself. We were every one of us intensely interested in Cappers: my father, because he felt keenly that Sir John had been ruined by the failure of his bankers; the Talbots, because they loved the whole race of Challoner; and I—— ah! why was I interested? Why did I like to know the destination of each brick? I would not answer myself these questions. I put them from me, as day and night I strove to put from me all recollection of the Challoners, and of one of them in particular. And yet it was well-nigh an impossibility. The whole village, the very air, was impregnated with them. If I went to Cappers, his face met me in hall and corridor and gallery, for he was a complete Challoner; if I paid my daily visit to Mrs. Talbot, she was either writing letters to or receiving them from some member of the family; if I visited Mrs. Coles in her new home, her one theme was the Challoners; whilst once a week at least I would find on my own table a letter from Gwen, or Gerrard, or Sibyl, directed in very large and black letters, and beginning, "Dear, darling May," and ending with fervent expressions of devotion. I have kept every one of those dear letters.

They made me very happy, for they told me that Sir John had been to a celebrated physician, who took a hopeful view of his case, and had ordered him to the German baths in July; that Gerrard was going to school in the beginning of May, and that he and the

girls had already begun work under a good governess. They all—that is, the children—hated London, as right-minded children should, but "mother" liked it immensely, "and," added Gerrard, "is not as extravagant as I expected she would be."

This was excellent news, and forthwith Mrs. Talbot and I began planning how we would have the four elder children to stay whilst their parents were in Germany: two at the Rectory, and two at the cottage. Father was charmed with the idea. He was very fond of children, and had taken to the little Challoners, chiefly, I think, because of their affection for me.

And meanwhile Mrs. Talbot had frequent letters from Major Challoner (he was now), rejoicing in the success of his book, which had already reached a second edition, and shortly promised a third, and containing always some kind message for father and me. Those books! What bright spots they were to us at the cottage, and how eagerly we looked for them! They came out about every four months, to Mrs. Talbot's consternation, and with every fresh one his reputation rose. Mrs. Talbot and I invariably received a copy, sent us direct from the publisher, which copy I would devour ravenously at first, then lock it up in a drawer, vowing I would not look at it again, to pull it out probably within an hour for the benefit of father and Uncle Bertram. The latter, who was a most merciless critic of modern literature, was pleased to approve of Major Challoner's productions, and, as there were but very few things of the day that he did approve of, his opinion might be regarded as highly complimentary.

He, the Talbots, and ourselves lived like members of a happy family together, sharing each other's books, magazines, papers, &c. &c—Cappers contributing by far the lion's share—but, at the same time, taking care not to abuse our intimacy by falling into the mistake Lizzie Bostock had made, when she irritated Sir John by invading his house at all hours from morning to night. She was expiating her offences in this line now, by rarely setting foot within its gates. Indeed, her relations with the whole Danvers family might be said to be strained. She had so far done violence to her feelings as to pay us a solemn call at the cottage about a fortnight after our removal thither, proceeding from thence to Cappers, since when her intercourse with us had been marked by a reserve and stateliness of manner that showed that the hatchet was but very partially, if at all, buried. I was sorry for it. I bore Miss Bostock no ill-will, and I was sincerely desirous to be friendly with her. Not that her friendship could either detract from or add to my happiness, but that I wished to live pleasantly with all my neighbours. With the summer weather the children's old governess, Miss Hexham, had left the Manor, to be replaced by rather a pretty niece of Mr. Bostock's, who was engaged to be married, and was going out to India the following autumn for her wedding. She was a nice, gentle-looking girl, and I could not help feeling interested in her, for her destination was Ghuzareepore: and was not Jack Challoner stationed at Ghuzareepore? She would probably know him, talk to him, tell him all about Monk's Hollow; and every time I thought of this my heart went out to her, and I longed—ah! how I longed—to send him a message through her.

The summer came and went, and with it the four little Challoners: Gerrard and Sib with me, Gwen and Arthur at the Rectory. They made the place very lively with their high spirits and childish voices. Uncle Bertram gave them the run of Cappers, provided they did not disturb him; and Gerrard would spend hours watching the masons at work on the house, his keen, intelligent face lit up with joy at the restoration of the place he loved so well.

In its way, it was a sweet peaceful summer. We enjoyed the woods and the river and the fresh moorland air with the children, and I was happier than I had been for some time, for I was under the delusion that my dear one was really gaining strength. On his side, he was anxious that I should accept invitations, play tennis, and join in the amusements of the other girls in the neighbourhood. In this instance, however, I refused to obey him. Was it not a far greater pleasure to me to garden, or fish for trout, or drive with him, than to go to the most delectable entertainments where he was not?

And thus July and August passed away, and with the middle of September the children had to leave us for school and lessons. Monk's Hollow seemed dull indeed without them, so much that Mrs. Talbot and I used laughingly to observe that we should positively have to adopt a child, for now that the Challoners were gone, there was not one in either of the four houses of the gentry.

"We certainly want some young blood in the village," said old Mr. Danvers meditatively one day, as we sat under the big cedar-tree on the Cappers lawn, drinking our tea, "if only for the sake of that young lady," pointing to me. "But a child! No, no, Mrs. Talbot, defend me from a child. I have a much better idea. What do you say to a curate for your good husband?"

Mrs. Talbot flushed up, as was her way. Mr. Danvers had unwittingly guessed the desire of her heart, for Mr. Talbot did not grow younger, and she was dreading the winter for him.

"What do I say, Mr. Danvers?" she cried, in her impulsive manner. "Why, that your idea is an admirable one. I shall go home and tell my husband of it at once."

"Gently, my dear lady, please. I have some further remarks to make on the subject. You see, I am an old man, and not quite such an evergreen as your husband. I have a notion that when the winter comes I shall be shut up with my books within those four walls"—pointing to the house—"probably for three or four months. It seems to me, therefore, that I must have a vested interest in the curate, turn him into my domestic chaplain, in fact, and get him to give me and my household some services here in the chapel, as I understand Mr. Talbot used to for Sir John at the time he could not get out."

Did Mrs. Talbot desire anything better? She was literally speechless with delight, as my uncle thus delicately conveyed to her that the emolument of the curate would be paid by himself, thereby removing the last obstacle to his immediate arrival. Mr. Talbot also was very grateful for the timely proposition. The idea was not a new one to him. For some time past he had been turning it over in his mind, feeling that his strength was not what it had been, and that he must have assistance in the coming winter. Mr. Danvers' generosity simplified matters considerably, and now the only difficulty was to find a curate who should be the piece of perfection that we all wanted at Monk's Hollow. I had never seen dear Mr. Talbot at all anxious or fussy before, but he really was both when it came to this new departure. He knew how hard it is to get an unexceptionable man, such as he desired his new curate to be, to settle down in an out-of-the-way country place, with, comparatively speaking, little work, and remote from the great centres of civilisation. Nevertheless, after an enormous amount of correspondence, such an one was found at last. He was a cousin of the Russells, the son of their uncle, Sir Temple Meyrick, and, having overworked himself during the few years he had been in orders, was glad to recruit his strength in the mild climate and easy work of Monk's Hollow. This was more especially the case as he was inclined to be delicate about the chest, and his elder brother had died of inflammation of the lungs, leaving him the heir to the baronetcy.

Arthur Meyrick arrived one Saturday in November, and before a fortnight was out the whole village was ringing with his praises. He was, indeed, very charming—a perfect gentleman, an Oxford man—well connected, and accustomed all his life to that world to which we and the Talbots belonged; he acted on our somewhat hum-drum existences like a tonic. Fresh from the great centres of thought and activity, full of all the modern ardour for doing good, he yet never forgot that Mr. Talbot was an old man, or in any way set him on one side. On the contrary, he sought his advice on every occasion, appreciating fully his good luck in coming to work under a man who was a saint, if ever there was one. In a very short time he had made friends with every one, and every one with him. We all liked him, for he was boyishly enthusiastic; and enthusiasm is always delightful, even when it is tiresome. But to me, at any rate, Arthur Meyrick's was never tiresome, for its main object was my dear father. He knew his story—as who did not?—and it had appealed vividly to his imagination and to his heart.

"My dear," said Mrs. Talbot to me one day, about two months after his arrival, "he has done us all an infinity of good; he has made us ten years younger."

Certainly he had rejuvenated my father, as no one had hitherto been able to; whilst as for Mrs. Talbot, she was devoted to him. He took the Manor by storm. Mr. Bostock forgot his pomposity in that sunshiny presence; Lizzie became sportive and gracious; and even my uncle at Cappers would put down his book with a smile when Marshall, the butler, opened the door of the library to announce "Mr. Meyrick."

And thus the cold dark months glided by, and by the time we had reached the spring, and Monk's Hollow was waking up to a wealth of vegetation that took the northern-bred young man fairly by surprise, I had learnt to regard Arthur Meyrick as the kindest, the most unselfish, of brothers or cousins. I am afraid I was very much absorbed in those days, not so much in myself as in my father. He was the pivot round which all my thoughts revolved, and it was for his sake that I welcomed Mr. Meyrick so joyfully every time he showed his face at the cottage. I had all my life been accustomed to men's society, and to a large amount of fetching and carrying, if I may so express it, on my behalf; and when it was revived in the person of Mr. Meyrick, I heeded it no more than I should if Gerrard had performed the same offices for me. In short, he acted brother to my sister, and I thought no more of it than if he had really stood in that relationship to me. My heart was given away once and for ever. From henceforth all other men were indifferent to me.

But, ah! how little I seemed to know about Jack! Perhaps it was best so; but there would come times when I positively hungered to hear his name, and I would rush up to the Rectory—particularly on mail days—like some starving creature for a mouthful of food, to find—Mr. Meyrick there.

But at last, one day, when it seemed to me that I had not heard the name of Challoner for a month, I found Mrs. Talbot alone. She was not looking at all well. For some weeks past I had noticed that she appeared harassed and worried, whilst now and then she would look at me so wistfully that I longed to ask her what ailed her. But this I dared not. With all her outspokenness, she was on some points a reserved woman, and she had given me her confidence on so many subjects that I could not force it where it was withheld. To-day, however, that we were *tête-à-tête*, perhaps it would all come out.

"Oh, my dear child!" as I put my head in at the door, "how delighted I am to see you! You are come at the right minute. I am actually alone. I do not think we have had a real downright palaver for weeks, have we?"

"No, that we haven't, and I fear it will be but a very tiny palaver to-day. I have left father alone. I can only stay ten minutes, but we will make the most of them."

"Indeed we will. But I am dreadfully disappointed. I had a presentiment that you would come this afternoon—a strange one, wasn't it?—so I told Mr. Meyrick that he was to stay away, certainly till six, because I wanted you to myself. I am very fond of him, May," looking at me rather peculiarly the while. "I think he is as nice as he can be; but now and then, when the worst part of my nature gets the upper hand, I have a kind of insane wish that he would go away, just for a tiny bit. Do you understand what I mean?"

I looked at her in astonishment. She was not like herself at all.

"No, I don't think I do," I answered slowly; "and I am quite sure that if he were to go, you would wish him back here within twelve hours. See what he is to Mr. Talbot and you!"

"He is goodness itself," she replied, almost sharply, "but yet I suppose I could exist a few days without him. Couldn't you?"

"Oh dear, yes; but I should miss him dreadfully; and I don't know what father would do without him." She looked at me fixedly and wistfully.

"Well, never mind Mr. Meyrick," she said. "We see, and hear, and talk quite enough about him. He must not absorb our ten minutes. I have had a letter from Jack this morning." She brought out this piece of intelligence so jerkily and abruptly that for the moment I was taken off my guard. The next, I had turned away my head, so that she should not see the hot colour that rose to my cheeks.

"Have you?" I said, as indifferently as I could, although my heart was beating with delight. I was, indeed, rewarded for my race to the Rectory.

"Yes; dear boy!" she answered, with a sigh. "He writes in very good spirits. He seems to be doing the work of two men, but that he likes; and"—here she paused, and, raising her eyes from the letter which she had produced from her work-basket, looked at me long and searchingly—"he hopes to come home for a short time at the end of his two years."

"Oh! does he, really?" I cried, radiant with joy; then, afraid that I must have betrayed myself, "That is very nice," I added tamely. "How glad you and Mr. Talbot will be!" A shade of something like disappointment swept over her features, but she said nothing, continuing to turn over the sheets of foreign paper she held between her fingers.

"Yes," she said, "he does, indeed. For the present he is engaged upon another book, which is to be his *chef-d'œuvre*. Let me see; ah! here is what he says about it:—'It is costing me an immense amount of research, but I question whether it will please the public. Yet write it I must. I cannot help myself; I have no choice. Something within me impels me to it, even if it be a failure from an £ s. d. point of view; even with the vision ——'" Here Mrs. Talbot came to an abrupt conclusion, and elaborately cleared her throat. It is a very dangerous experiment, that of reading letters out loud; and she had evidently been on the verge of revealing something not intended for my ears. "Oh! by the way," she added, quickly recovering herself, "he has made acquaintance with Lizzie's pretty cousin—Mrs. Gardener she is now—and likes her very much. He agrees with us that she is very superior to any Bostock relation he has seen before. He and she have become great friends over the Monk's Hollow letters, although she does not tell him half enough of — of — those he cares to hear about, as he would like. There," folding up the letter and patting it lovingly, "that is a satisfactory budget, is it not?"

"Yes, indeed," I answered, "delightfully satisfactory. And yet, dear," noticing that the troubled look in her eyes was stronger than ever, "you seem worried about something. Please forgive me for asking you: is there anything bothering you? I have noticed lately that you look so harassed." She gazed at me for a second almost pathetically.

"No, nothing, dear," she said. "I believe it to be really nothing. I think that in my old age I am developing a talent for turning molehills into mountains."

"Then you have a molehill?"

"What is that to you, Miss Curiosity?" she answered laughingly; then taking my head between her hands, as I stooped to kiss her, "Good-bye, darling," she said. "It is very sweet of you to be anxious about my worries; but my molehill is a family one, and at present infinitesimally small. It may be it does not exist at all." With this explanation I was fain to rest content, and soon it and everything else was merged in the one entrancing recollection that "he" was coming home.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

LOVE LANE AGAIN.

I CANNOT write of the months that ensued; they seem blotted out of my memory. Only one event stands out in the misty darkness, and that one absorbs everything else.

My darling died: left me, just as I had him back again, in the prime of his manhood. He was only fifty—dying of a fatal disease he had contracted at Fastmoor. It came upon me like a thunderbolt when I first found that he was slipping away from me, and in my grief I could not believe it.

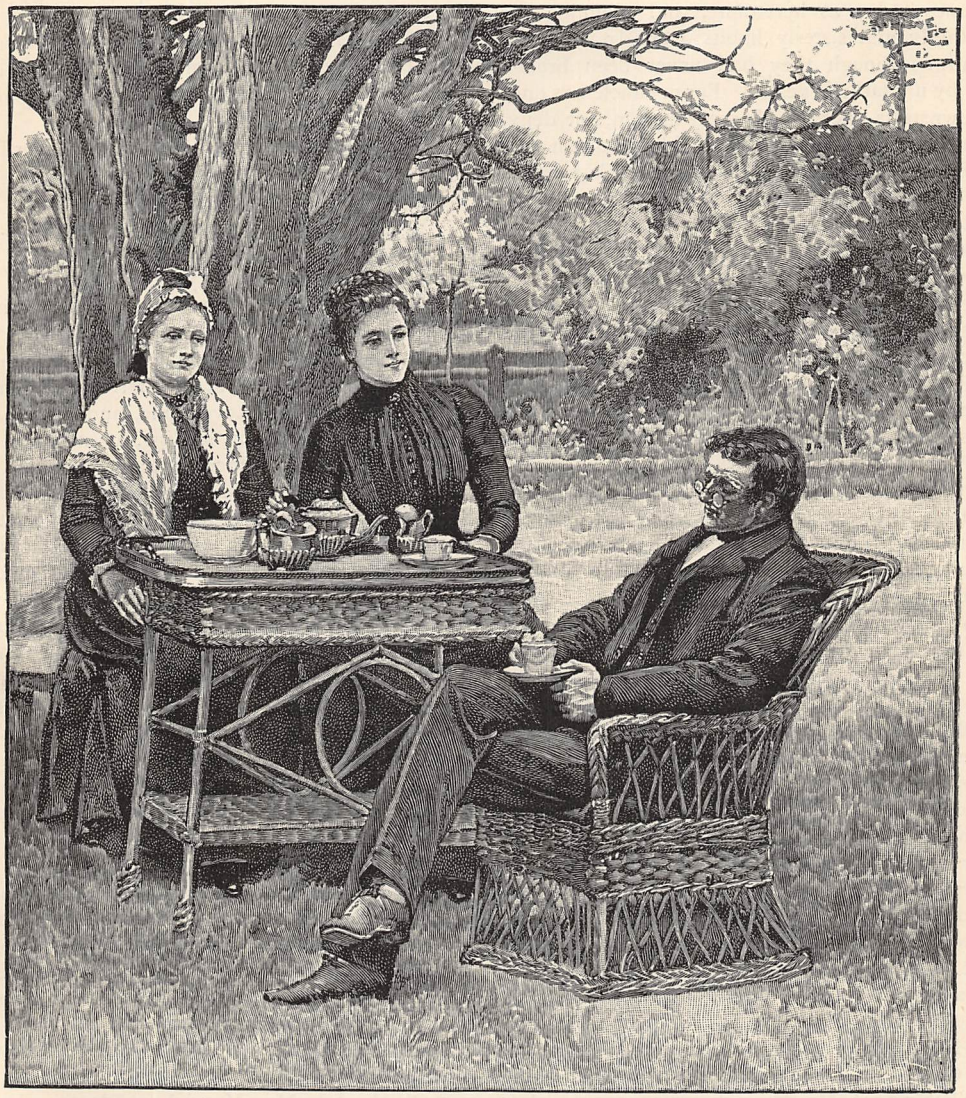
It was dear Mr. Talbot who opened my eyes to the truth, but gently and tenderly as he did it, it did not seem to mitigate the terrible news. For the time being I was completely stunned, until he reminded me that I must gather up all my strength for my father's sake. That was in March, and in June my dear one passed away with the first of the roses.

He was quite ready to go. If it had not been for leaving me behind, he would have been glad. His sore trial, which had assailed his honour, had, I verily believe, broken a heart once so light and careless that it had been said by one who knew him little that it was incapable of much feeling. He left me, as he had intended, surrounded by love, and with every provision made for my future.

The next few days are to me like some bad dream. I can look back on them calmly now, thankful that my dear one passed away so peacefully and painlessly, with a smile on his face and his hand in mine, but at the time I was quite prostrated, and I do not know what I should have done without Mr. Meyrick. He seemed to guess all my thoughts and wishes without even seeing me—for I saw no one but Mr. and Mrs. Talbot—and to carry out all my desires without hearing them. As to my uncle, he was physically incapable of rendering me assistance. The shock of my father's death had affected him very powerfully; and very soon—fortunately, perhaps, for myself—I was forced to collect my numbed and bewildered

senses in order to pass to his bedside, and once more take up the part of sick-nurse.

I was transplanted from the cottage to Cappers without delay, to be received with a delight which showed how much, in spite of his alleged hermit-like habits, Mr. Danvers stood in need of companionship.



"WHAT DO YOU SAY TO A CURATE?'" (*p.* 706).

The careful nursing that he required roused me from the stupor of my grief, whilst, at the same time, the quiet and seclusion of his sick-room were very grateful to my overwrought nerves.

I saw no one but the Talbots, Mr. Meyrick, and some of the village people, especially Mrs. Coles. It had been a painful effort to me, after Mr. Coles' revelations, to approach the family again. I had forgiven him, sent him my pardon ; but when, after his death, I had my dear one back with me, and I saw what his silence had cost, there were times when I felt I could never bear to hear the name of Coles again. But Mrs. Coles was ignorant of her husband's sin against my father, and, by some happy chance, remained so. Encouraged by Mr. Talbot, I, therefore, made the effort, as soon as I was strong enough after my illness, to visit her in her new home, and I was rewarded. All the bitterness I had felt passed away in the delight and affection evinced by the whole family at seeing me once more amongst them, and in the hearty congratulations, conveyed with a tact and delicacy worthy of the best breeding, on my having my father back again with me.

And now Mrs. Coles was fast following her husband

to the grave, her mind at rest about her children. Susie was in the Cappers household; George was serving his apprenticeship in Mr. Dawtrey's stables; whilst Hetty, growing daily prettier and stronger, remained with her mother, looking forward some day, as I had promised her, to living in my service.

As to Mr. Meyrick, after a few weeks he and I fell into our old familiar intercourse, meeting two or three times a day as heretofore, and resuming the old brotherly and sisterly habits over Mr. Danvers' arm-chair, as though they had never been broken through by my father's death. For my uncle was once more downstairs—very feeble, very broken, but denying strenuously that he was an invalid—going on with all the improvements and alterations at Cappers as though he meant to live for ever, and keeping the reins of government strictly in his own hands. Many were the long and interesting conversations he and I held with one another, but start from where they would, range over any number of topics as they did—for he was a man of most varied information—they always came back somehow to the one subject, so inexpressibly painful to me, so absorbingly interesting to him: namely, the failure of Carey and Danvers, and the consequent ruin of many of their customers. It seemed almost a monomania with him. He had discussed it with my father times out of number, and now he was for ever reverting to it with me, asking me the circumstances of this one or that who had been reduced to penury, murmuring their names to himself, and checking them off on his fingers. At last, in order to pacify him, I drew up a list, with the assistance of my father's papers, of those who had suffered through the failure, with their names, addresses, and circumstances, after which, to my intense relief, he never alluded to the subject again.

Tied as I was, I had not much time for the Rectory, but whenever I had half an hour to spare, I would run across to see Mrs. Talbot, for I was sure that there was something amiss with her; and I greatly feared that her molehill was swelling into a mountain. At last I resolved to speak to Mr. Meyrick on the subject, and I had not long to wait for the opportunity.

It was one lovely day in October. I had left my uncle at his own request: he was expecting the family lawyer, and had given me leave of absence for several hours. So after spending two of them with Mrs. Talbot, I thought I would devote the rest of the time to Mrs. Coles. As I was closing the front door of the Rectory behind me, Mr. Meyrick came running after me, having just emerged from the rector's study.

"Where are you going to, Miss Danvers?" he cried. "May I walk with you?"

"Certainly," I answered. "I am on my way to Mrs. Coles."

"Ah, yes! She is very ill, poor woman; I was with her this morning. My way lies in that direction, too, so we shall have time for a little chat together."

I smiled, for I had already had a long chat with him this morning. But I had no objection to a second, for I was glad to get him alone, to question him about what could be worrying Mrs. Talbot.

But, alas! he could throw no light on the subject. "Health and east wind," he said. "She is an awfully brave, plucky woman, but sometimes even she can hold out no longer against the constant suffering; and then—very, very rarely, I know—she cannot help being just a little bit irritable. I chaffed her the other day, and told her I was growing afraid of her. She actually gave me a downright scolding for spending so much time at Cappers."

"Did she?" I answered absently, for I was thinking about Mrs. Talbot's molehill. "What did she say when you told her you were growing afraid of her?"

"Went calmly on with her scolding, asserting that I wasted my time shockingly at Cappers. Do you think I waste my time there, Miss Danvers?"

"What a question to ask me!" I answered. "If I thought so ever so much, could I say so? But, on the whole, I don't think you do," I added, "for I know my uncle counts the hours to your arrival, and I have always a hundred things to ask you."

I had been speaking without looking at him. Now I suddenly raised my eyes from the contemplation of the sinuosities of Love Lane, and smiled at him. But I soon ceased from smiling, for never in my life had I seen a countenance so transformed as was his in the short space of time since I had last addressed him. It was literally radiant with a joy that sent a thrill of alarm like an electric shock through me. What had I said or done that he should gaze at me like that? Alas! I knew the look only too well. I had seen it so often. I had detected something of it in Captain Challoner's eyes through the darkness and my thick veil on that memorable evening, as I rode his horse home across the moor. I had seen it, brutalised and coarsened, on Captain Carey's odious countenance in this very Love Lane, where I beheld it again, pure and beautiful, shining out of Arthur Meyrick's blue eyes. I shrank away from him as if I had received a blow, but he did not see it: he was far too busy with his own thoughts.

"Am I a little, tiny bit of help to you, Miss Danvers?" he cried, his voice vibrating with suppressed emotion. "Waste of time? No, no: it was not waste of time if it has made you care for me ever so little. Miss Danvers—May—perhaps I ought not to speak just yet, your grief is but a few months old, but I cannot help myself: I love you; you cannot guess how much I have loved you——"

"Oh, hush! Mr. Meyrick. Please, please say nothing more."

He turned very white, then recovering himself, "I must say it out," he replied, with a kind of dogged quietness; "I must tell you that you are to me the one woman in the world—that from the first hour that I saw your sweet face I loved you; and my love has grown and grown until now it comes between me and my rest, my duty, and—" here his voice sank to a whisper—"my God!"

I felt the tears spring to my eyes. What had I done? And yet I had done it so involuntarily.

"Oh! Mr. Meyrick," I cried, "I am so grieved, so

sorry. I did not know, indeed I did not. I never thought that you—you—cared for me. I have been selfish, and self-absorbed, and blind. Forgive me; say you forgive me!"

"What am I to forgive you?" he answered. "I tell you I love you, and you ask me to forgive you. Perhaps I have not conveyed to you what I meant to say. May, I love you with all my heart and soul. Will you be my wife?"

I covered my face with my hands to avoid the sight of that honest, straightforward face working with suppressed emotion. Oh! the mischief I had done.

"Oh! don't ask me," I cried; "I cannot, indeed I cannot——" and then suddenly I broke down completely and began to sob. In a moment he was close by me.

"Hush, dear!" he said: "don't cry. I cannot bear to see you distressed. I have been premature; I forced myself on your great sorrow. I will not say another word. I ought not to have spoken now. All that has passed shall be as though it had never been said. Then, as my sobs ceased, "Some day," he murmured, "you will love me."

I shook my head.

"Yes," he continued, somewhat more loudly, "I feel sure that some day you will be my wife. Until then, all this is a secret between you and me."

Did he fear that I should tell my uncle or Mrs. Talbot?

"Of course it is, Mr. Meyrick," I whispered, for my voice failed me. "But indeed you are mistaken. I can never be your——"

But here I stopped short, brought to an abrupt conclusion. Coming round the corner—that very corner where Captain Carey had surprised me—at her usual brisk pace, who should meet us but Miss Bostock?

"Too busy to stop!" she called out to us, smiling and nodding. "Lovely day, isn't it?" and with that she had swept past us without waiting for an answer.

"How I hate that woman's smile sometimes!" ejaculated Mr. Meyrick savagely; then, as if ashamed of his vehemence, "Occasionally it is positively offensive," he added.

"I did not notice it to-day," I said; "I did not look at her."

In truth I was very grateful to Miss Bostock, whether grave or smiling, for having cut short the painful scene with Mr. Meyrick, more especially as by this time I had reached the safe haven of Mrs. Coles' cottage. Silently I gave him my hand, and as he took it, "I do not despair," he said gravely, raised his hat, and was gone.

As for me, my visit to Mrs. Coles was but a nominal one, for no sooner was Mr. Meyrick well out of sight than I bade her adieu, and returning home, gave way to the tumult of sorrow and indignation against myself that was overwhelming me. I was indeed grieved for what had happened, blaming myself severely for not having foreseen and averted such a catastrophe. I liked Mr. Meyrick so much; I esteemed him so highly; he had been so good to my dear father and to me; but, alas! there was someone I liked far better—esteemed even higher, and that someone was coming home very soon now; and moreover, if I was not grossly mistaken, that someone cared for me. It was therefore a great relief to me when I heard, a day or two later, that Mr. Meyrick had asked for a little holiday. He was going to take a fortnight's run across to France before the winter work began, and, strange to say, both Mr. and Mrs. Talbot were not only willing, but eager that he should go.

When he came back, he seemed to me to have grown older, more reserved, a trifle quieter, whilst nothing could be nicer than was his manner to me. He came rather less to Cappers than of yore, and he studiously avoided anything that might look like forcing his attentions on me; otherwise he met me as though nothing had occurred between us, behaving like the thorough gentleman he was. It was a great relief to me, for, much as I should have liked it, I could not get away. My uncle stood in daily, hourly need of me; he would not hear of any relative coming to take my place for a while, and therefore, whether we liked it or not, Mr. Meyrick and I had to make the best of circumstances which threw us constantly into each other's society.

It must have been about a month or six weeks later that Mrs. Talbot, for the first time since I had known her, left home for a few days. She had been very ailing for some time past, and at last Mr. Talbot had brought all his marital authority to bear to induce her to go to London, and stay a week with the Challoners for advice. She went very unwillingly. "I had better make my will," she said jokingly, "as people used to in the old coaching days before they went a journey. I am indeed a degenerate specimen of this bustling nineteenth century, to have actually remained at home for nearly three years." She only stayed her week, however, coming back full of news of the Challoner family, very reticent about her own health, and with the crease in her forehead perceptibly deeper—at least, so it seemed to me—than when she went away.

I went to see her the day after her return, and found her very tired, but, nevertheless, eager to hear all that had been going on in her absence, and to relate the latest tidings of the Challoner family.

"You would not know Sir John," she said. "He looks ten years younger, and walks—really walks. He rather drags one leg, but he has even hopes of that in time. It did my heart good to see him in something like his old spirits."

"And Lady Challoner and the children?" I asked.

"All improved. Gladys less bored, more tolerant with Sir John than she was, and honestly trying not to give way to her natural extravagance. As to the children, they continue to do well. Gerrard's reports from school are excellent, and it is the prettiest thing in the world to see and hear little Sib with her violin now. She really plays it quite marvellously, considering the short time she has learnt. If she were allowed to, she would play all day."

"I am so glad," I said. "It is worth while losing

you for a week if you bring back these charming accounts."

"But they are not all charming," she said, nervously clasping and unclasping her hands. "Where can I have put my pocket-handkerchief to? May dear, just look in that arm-chair over there, and see if you can find it." I rose at once.

"What news is it that is not charming?" I asked, as I searched the arm-chair in vain. "Is—is—any one ill?' It seemed to be my normal condition now that some one in whom I was interested should be ill.

"No," she answered, still hunting for her handkerchief. "No one is ill—I suppose it is not as bad as that. The morning I left—yesterday, in fact—arrived a letter from Colonel Challoner"—for the first time since he had left England she did not speak of him as "Jack" to me. "Look out of the window, will you, dear, and see if Mr. Talbot is coming; he ought to be home soon."

"Yes," I said, mechanically obeying her, "a letter from Colonel Challoner?"

"Saying that he has given up all idea of coming home at the end of the two years, as he had intended, and should stay out there until his time was up, as *he had nothing to come home for*, and it was a needless expense. Not a word of explanation, not an excuse; only a line as P.S.: 'Don't tell the dear Talbots; they will be so disappointed.' But it came too late; Sir John had already read the whole letter out loud."

How I stared out of that window, as if I had been turned to stone, with my face pressed to the cold glass pane, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, but those words, "as he has nothing to come home for"! How long I remained there I do not know. I fancy it was a few seconds; it seemed to me hours. At last I managed to conjure up my pride, and turning round, with a galvanised smile—

"Dear Mrs. Talbot," I said, "I am so very, very sorry for you. I know how dreadfully disappointed you and Mr. Talbot must be. I wonder why he does not come?"

She looked at me searchingly for half a minute, and then she followed my lead.

"He is in love with his work," she answered, shrugging her shoulders, "crazy about this new book of his. He forgets us poor people at home—No, no," she corrected herself, "I must not say that of him; no doubt he has some good reason, but oh! May," and here the tears welled up into her eyes, "probably neither Mr. Talbot nor I will ever see him again."

I do not know how I answered her; possibly I said nothing at all, but we kissed and fondled each other, as women do when their hearts are full, neither of us saying a word to break the ice of each other's reserve, and after a while I left.

"Nothing to come home for." How that sentence rankled in my heart! How fiercely my pride resented it! For seven years I had cared for this man; I had kept his image in my mind; I had compared all other men to him, and found them wanting, only to discover that I was less than nothing to him. Only a few months ago, when I had lost my dear one, what a letter he had written me!—so warm, so kind, so thoughtful. And yet he was not false. He had never spoken one syllable of love to me, never made me the vestige of a promise; and yet how I had believed in him!

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

MR. DANVERS' WILL.

IT was April, and moreover a brilliant April. Through the large mullioned windows at Cappers the sun was streaming with all the greater force that for five days he had been rigidly excluded. Only yesterday had the blinds been drawn up, for yesterday Mr. Danvers had been laid in his last resting-place, and the church bell had tolled for him and Mrs. Coles at the same time.

I was alone in the large house: alone with my double grief; for, comparatively short as was the time I had known Uncle Bertram, he had grown very dear to me. I must have been singularly ungrateful if such had not been the case, for his goodness and affection towards me could not have been greater if I had been his daughter. For the last month of his life he could not bear me out of his sight; he had absorbed all my time and attention, and now he was gone, leaving me doubly lonely.

Yesterday, the house had been full. Danvers from all parts of England had assembled to pay the last honours to their kinsman; and once more, after the lapse of nearly five years, I had met cousins and second cousins, and renewed friendships that had been suspended through those cruel years of doubt. They had all long ago made *amende* by letter: now we met again in person; old clouds were cleared away, old affections revived, and I was overwhelmed with kind invitations to visit my relatives in their various homes.

After the funeral came the reading of the will, and I found myself put in a prominent position by Mr. Hamilton, the family lawyer, to whose charge it had been confided. I thought nothing of this; indeed I hardly noticed it, taking it simply as a compliment to my character as mistress of the house for the time being. The will was long, and clothed in the cumbersome technical language that the law affects. Every one in the room sat up alert on his or her chair, and listened. And now I understood the reason of Mr. Danvers' interest in the sufferers by the failure of Carey and Danvers' bank. To every one of those whose names I had given him was a legacy left, large or small, according to their needs and circumstances; the largest of all to Sir John Challoner. It touched me to the quick. He had, as it were, taken all my dear father's liabilities on his shoulders, and in some degree made them good. Through a mist of tears I listened to the long string of names; no one was left out, no one forgotten. Every one of the Danvers in the room was mentioned, every servant down to Susie Coles remembered, and numerous charities, most of them those in which I was interested, benefited. So it went on until it came to the concluding clause:—

"The whole of the residue of my property, real and personal, I bequeath, unreservedly, to my beloved

great-niece, Mary Morton Danvers, for her and her heirs after her."

I heard it as in a dream, but I did not, in the least, take it in, until Mr. Hamilton's voice ceased, and some one came up and congratulated me. He or she, I don't know which it was, was followed by others—first and foremost, Mr. Hamilton. He was the family lawyer, had known my father and myself through all our vicissitudes, and had ever been our fast friend.

"I congratulate you, my dear Miss Danvers," he said, in his abrupt but kindly manner, and pushing his spectacles back on his forehead. "You have come into a large fortune—I know no one who deserves it more, or will make a better use of it."

It was foolish and weak of me, but I had the greatest difficulty in not bursting into tears; the irony of it all seemed so great. My good fortune had come too late: my dear one was dead.

All that had happened yesterday. This morning my guests had departed, some with renewed expressions of friendship, others with less warmth of manner than on their arrival, whilst my favourite cousin—once Alice Danvers, now Mrs. Macdonald—had insisted that I should come and stay with her in town for a change.

"You are nothing but the ghost of your former self, May," she said. "You must come to London, see a doctor, and be nursed yourself, instead of nursing others. I am sure if ever a girl needed it, you do." I laughed.

"I accept the first part of your invitation, the coming to stay with you, with pleasure," I answered—"that is, if you will be so kind as to let me be quiet, and go nowhere—but the doctor and the nursing I decline with thanks."

So it was settled, and I was to go up to London in two days' time, to every one's delight.

"I'm rejoiced to hear it, my child," said Mrs. Talbot, when I communicated the news to her. "Mr. Talbot and I have been very uneasy about you, I assure you, for the last three months, only as long as your uncle was alive we could not say anything. Go away and stay, and if any of your rich friends offer to take you yachting, accept the invitation. You want a most thorough and complete change. It is most disinterested of me to give such advice, for I shall be sighing every hour for your return."

"Well, a yacht is an improvement on a doctor, which is what my cousin prescribed for me. At present I am thinking of spending a quiet fortnight in Q—— Square with the Macdonalds, and then returning here to settle matters. I have a good deal to do you know."

"Of course you have, and it makes you feel very lonely. Well, a fortnight in town is better than nothing, and the yachting can come later. Q—— Square, did you say? That is in one of those outlandish new places near the Challoners. You will go and see them, shan't you?"

"I had such a kind letter from Sir John this morning," I answered, "thanking *me* for his legacy, as though I had anything to do with it. I am sure you would like to read it, so I have brought it with me. He says that Colonel Challoner is better."

I handed her Sir John's epistle, and whilst she was reading it my thoughts reverted, as they were always reverting, to Colonel Challoner.

He was very ill: had been so for the last three months: in fact, ever since he had written that strange letter to his father, saying that he intended staying out in India to the end of his time. A day or two afterwards he had been found by his servants lying insensible beside his writing-table, the pen still in his hand with which he had been correcting the last proof-sheet of his work. Since then he had been most seriously ill. Over-work the doctors called it, but it was a case that taxed their ingenuity to the utmost, and eventually it resolved itself into Indian fever. Whatever the nature of the malady might be, it was a very obstinate one. For three months the doctors had been trying so far to subdue it as to be able to put him on board and send him home, but without success. To-day, however, Sir John informed me in his letter that his son was better, and that he had received a telegram to say that he was at last on board and bound for home. No wonder Mrs. Talbot's eyes sparkled as she knitted her brow over Sir John's hieroglyphics.

"Then he will be home in a month's time!" she cried, throwing down the letter. "Oh! how I wish Ancaster were here to hear the news. How thankful I shall be when he is safe and sound in England! The sea-voyage will do more for him than anything else: it always works wonders with him. Of course they telegraphed from Bombay as soon as he was on board," and then, as she suddenly remembered that she was talking to me, the bright light died out of her eyes, and she abruptly changed the subject to something else.

The next morning I went away. At the station I found Mr. Meyrick. He made some excuse for being there, but I knew he had come to look after me, and my heart went out to this man, who was so faithful and kind and true. He seemed terribly out of spirits, and his manner with me was shy and constrained, as I had never known it before. I guessed what was the cause. It was my recently acquired money that was oppressing him. I did my best to put him at his ease, to restore him to his old self, and succeeded so well—my train was very late—that I left him radiant on the platform. As I steamed out of Marcombe my conscience smote me uncomfortably. Had I been too kind?

When I arrived in London it was some days before I could make up my mind to visit the Challoners, kind though Sir John's note had been. The fact that Colonel Challoner was better, and able to come home, thankful as I was for it, had nevertheless stirred up some of the old bitterness that had been swallowed up in anxiety as long as he was in danger. I had thought of him the whole way up to London; I had contrasted his conduct with that of Mr. Meyrick, and I had worked myself up into a state of smarting anger against my own imbecility in caring for seven years

for a man who cared nothing for me, until it had gradually expended itself upon the whole family of Challoner.

And meanwhile the Macdonalds were kindness itself. They let me come and go exactly as I pleased; they did not tease me to go anywhere, or to do anything; they just left me alone, telling me to look on their house simply as a hotel, and to use it as such. Nor did they even make any comment when, the third day after my arrival, I remained the whole evening immersed in Colonel Challoner's new book—*the* book—that had just been sent up to me from Cappers, whither it had been despatched by Boyd and Cuppage.

It was indeed his *chef-d'œuvre*. With it, in one bound, he had reached the top rung of the ladder. Its merit was such that the youngest girl in her teens, if she had cared to read it at all, must have discovered that it was an unusual work, whilst it was a book to make the wisest men think. I had been so proud of all his former productions; now I had no right to be proud any longer. I had neither part nor lot in him.

"Let's see that book, May," said Mr. Macdonald at last, from the depths of his arm-chair. "It seems to be something very engrossing. I don't think you've stirred for two mortal hours, and now it's bed-time."

"I have been atrociously rude," I answered, reluctantly shutting up my book. "I beg both yours and Alice's pardon, with all my heart. My only excuse is that I simply could not put it down."

"No need to beg pardon. This is Liberty Hall, you know. Alice and I have been reading too." Then, as he took the volume from me, "No wonder," he cried: "why, it's Challoner's last—*the* book of the year. I hear it is wonderful. I shall confiscate it whilst I smoke. Poor fellow! they say he is dying."

"No," I answered, "he is better, and on his way home from India. I know his people," I added, by way of explanation. "Cappers belongs to his father."

That book and its author kept me awake half the night. Towards morning I dropped off into an uneasy slumber, from which I was roused by the housemaid bringing in my letters. There were not many. Three or four on business matters; two or three London notes from friends and relations, and one, bearing the Marcombe postmark, from Mr. Meyrick.

"Parish, I suppose," I murmured sleepily to myself, as I lazily opened the envelope; then in sudden alarm, "I hope there is nothing wrong with the Talbots."

But no, there was nothing wrong at the Rectory, nor was there a word about the parish. From beginning to end, the letter was simply a renewal of Mr. Meyrick's suit, fervid, impassioned, and pathetic, inspired by "your exquisite kindness to me the other day at the Marcombe Station, and by signs of relenting that I fancy I have detected in you for a week or two past."

Throughout it was written in a gentlemanly, manly strain, with a slight reference to my recently acquired fortune, implying that I knew him sufficiently to guess that his love was above all mercenary considerations, and concluding with a touching allusion to my present loneliness that brought the tears to my eyes. It was the letter of a good and true man, that any woman might have been proud to receive, and in my wounded pride and bitter heartache I was strongly tempted for the moment so to answer it as to confront Colonel Challoner, when he did return home, with the news that I was engaged to be married to a man in many respects his equal.

Fortunate it is for us blundering mortals that we are sometimes saved from our own follies by the trifling circumstances of every-day life. No. 10, Q—— Square, was Liberty Hall in every respect but one. It was a deadly crime to be late for prayers or breakfast. I was therefore forced, after a second perusal, to lay aside Mr. Meyrick's letter, and to bestir myself in earnest about my toilet, unless I wished to incur the displeasure of the master of the house. At breakfast there were the newspapers and the plans for the day to be discussed, after which my programme was a morning's shopping in Sloane Street, to execute various immediate commissions for Mrs. Talbot. By the time this was settled I was in a calmer and more rational frame of mind than when I had entered the dining-room, and had arrived at the obvious conclusion that Mr. Meyrick's letter was not one to be answered in a hurry, but rather to be pondered over with much thought and consideration for a day, or even two.

Nevertheless, I was still in a state of some inward excitement when I set out on my errands. Mechanically I went about my business, executed Mrs. Talbot's commissions, did my own shopping, fitted on clothes, and conducted myself very much as usual, whilst all the time that letter was glimmering before my eyes, and my evil angel was whispering to me, "You will meet him as the affianced wife of a man in the same position as himself—a good man, too: one whom you can respect and esteem with all your heart—and respect and esteem are a better basis for matrimony than love; one whom your money will help to every good and noble work, one who loves you with all his heart, whilst the other has slighted and forgotten you."

Wearied out at last, and unable to find a hansom, I put myself into the train at the Sloane Square Station, and a few minutes later I was walking towards Q—— Square. My way led me through C—— Gardens, past the Challoners' house. Their number was 24, and I was already at 8. Sixteen houses more. Yes, there it was, painted a pale dull green; flowers blooming from every sill, and on the doorstep three little figures that I knew only too well. Before I had time to greet them there was a shout of delight; they had run down the steps, and forgetting their London manners, were pressing round me, throwing their arms round my neck, and kissing me as if we had been in the garden at Cappers.

"Oh, May!" cried Gwen reproachfully, "why did not you tell us that you were in London? Come in now, and see us; you must, you shall. Father and mother are out, but they will be in for luncheon, and

we shall have you all to ourselves until then. Come along."

Could I resist such an invitation? No, indeed.

Half dragged by the trio, Gwen, Sibyl, and Arthur, I entered the house, and was conveyed to the drawing-room, a pretty room on the ground floor, looking into the Square gardens, and, with its masses of primroses and violets, reminding one more of a country than of a London room. Here the three little creatures seated me on the sofa, then gathering round me, proceeded to smother me with kisses and hugs. In the middle of the ceremonies, which were by no means confined to one side, the door suddenly opened, and putting Arthur off my lap, I was about to rise to greet, as I supposed, Sir John or Lady Challoner, when I started back with a little half-smothered cry of dismay. For it was neither Sir John nor Lady Challoner who was advancing slowly and painfully into the room, assisted by a servant. It was Jack, my Jack; but looking, oh! so thin, so weak and ill, that the foolish tears started to my eyes.

"Oh, Jack!" cried Gwen, on seeing him, "you ought not to be here. You know the doctor said you were to stay in bed. Why did you get up? You are not fit for it. He only came home last night," she turned to explain to me; "and he has been so ill."

All this time Jack had been standing staring at me as if I had been a ghost, whilst I, all my nursing instincts reviving in me, bade the children get off the sofa at once, and make room for their brother. "You must not stand another minute," I said to him. "Come and lie down." At the sound of my voice he smiled his old smile, and the next moment, with the help of his servant, he was resting comfortably on the sofa, whilst Gwen and I were piling up the cushions for his support.

"I did not know I should find you here, Miss Danvers," he said at last, recovering his speech. "You can go, Hartley," to his servant. "I do not know if I am right in calling you Miss Danvers still?" he continued. I looked at him in amazement. What did he mean?

"Why, what else would you call her, Jack?" asked Gwen.

"I did not know," he went on, addressing me, and paying no attention to Gwen's interruption, but with a curious vibration in his voice, "whether you might not be married by this time."

"I? married?"

"What do you mean, Jack? May's not married, nor going to be. As though we should not know!"

"Not going to be married?" raising himself from the couch, and looking at me with a strange hungry expression. "Not going to be married, did you say?" he repeated.

"No," I answered quietly and soothingly, for I saw that he must not be excited, "I am certainly not going to be married." He turned round to the children.

"Leave the room," he said; "I wish to be alone with Miss Danvers."

"But, Jack——"

"Do as I tell you, that is a good child. I am all right; you need not be afraid. Go!" and the next moment they were gone. Then he turned to me again.

"May," he said, "I know, if I ask it, you will tell me the whole truth. Have you never been engaged to be married: never accepted a proposal from Mr. Meyrick, the Monk's Hollow curate?" How the hot blood mounted to my face as I thought of that letter lying in my pocket! Nevertheless, I could answer Jack's question with a clear conscience.

"Never!" I said.

"Then I have been grossly deceived. No, do not fear; I will not excite myself. If you will listen for a few minutes, I will tell you how. I will make it as short as I can, I promise you; but it will be better for us both to have it out."

I nodded my head, and he went on. "Last November I went, as I often did, to have tea with Mrs. Gardener, Miss Bostock's cousin. She and I had made friends from the first, for she knew Monk's Hollow, and she talked to me about you. On this occasion, therefore, the moment she saw me, 'I have a piece of news for you,' she said. I can see her now, sitting at the tea-table, and arranging the cups, as she brought it out. 'I have had a budget from Monk's Hollow this morning, and, what do you think? That lovely Miss Danvers, the ex-schoolmistress, is going to be married to Mr. Meyrick—the curate, you know—at last.'

"Imagine what I felt, May. If she had told me I was going to be married myself, I do not think I could have been more surprised. I stared at her like a lunatic or an idiot. 'Going to be married!' I said. 'Are you certain?'

"'Quite positive,' she answered. 'Here it is,' producing a letter, 'in black and white. It is only natural, for it has been going on for a long time, Lizzie says, and every one has seen how it would end. He simply lived at the cottage, when Mr. Hugh Danvers was alive.' I don't know what I said. I believe Mrs. Gardener gave me chapter and verse as to how Miss Bostock had heard Mr. Meyrick himself say you would be his wife, and then some other men came in, and I was able to slip away. I went home and hunted out all Mrs. Talbot's letters to me: that is, as many as I had kept. They were full of this Mr. Meyrick: his good looks, his charms, his virtues, &c. &c. You know Mrs. Talbot's style. In the last two she urged me very strongly to come home, and reading them afresh by the light of Mrs. Gardener's communications, it was easy to understand her reasons. For some hours I remained like one stunned; then I sat down and wrote off to my father that I had changed my mind about coming home. I should stay out my five years, as I had nothing to come home for."

He stopped, white and exhausted, whilst, with trembling voice, I begged him to take some of the beef-jelly his servant had left beside him.

"I will try and explain it all to you," I said, "only please don't get excited; it is so bad for you, in your weak state."

"AT THE STATION I FOUND MR. MEYRICK" (*p.* 713).

He consented to have some jelly, and then I began my story, to which he listened in perfect silence. I told him everything, from beginning to end: how blind and stupid I had been, thinking only of father, and forgetting my own individuality; of Mr. Meyrick's kindness and devotion to my dear one; of his offer to me, which had taken me so perfectly by surprise, and my refusal of it, down to the letter I had received this very morning. I kept back nothing. "I have been careless, thoughtless, intensely stupid and self-absorbed, but — but — until to-day — nothing more. You believe me?" I cried.

"Of course I believe you," he answered. "Besides, you were quite at liberty. There was nothing whatever between us. I told Mrs. Talbot so when I left. I purposely would not bind you, not knowing how matters might turn out. But I loved you, May, with all my heart and soul, and I thought and hoped that you loved me too. It is all that——woman," he added; "carrying the same game on to the last, and very nearly succeeding in destroying two lives. When next I see her I shall tell her what I think of her, and in very plain English too. She will not like it. She must have written Mrs. Gardener a deliberate falsehood."

"Wait," I said. "I think I see daylight." And then I told him how Mr. Meyrick and I had come upon Miss Bostock just after he had proposed to me, and how she must have overheard his concluding words: "You will be my wife. Until then, all this is a secret between you and me."

"That's it!" he cried, "that's it! However, she has

come to the end of her tether now. Clever and unscrupulous as she is, she will not step between us any more. Thank God, the children saw you to-day, and brought you in. There are to be no more misunderstandings between us, are there, my sweet love?"

I put my hand into his, and he drew me to him, whispering words of deep passionate love, that filled me with an exquisite joy, that seemed to render me dumb. I could not speak. I could only listen.

How long it was before we recovered from that first rapture I know not. We were recalled to ourselves by a ring at the door bell, which sent me flying to the further end of the room.

"There they are," I cried: "your father and Lady Challoner."

"No," he said, "it is the servants' bell. Come back, darling; I have not said half my say yet, and they will be in directly. Tell me, my sweet, you do not fear India or life with a poor man? I think you know pretty well how I am pledged to my father, and all my pecuniary difficulties. They will disappear in time, now that I have made my name and am sure of the money coming in, but it will take some years yet; and meanwhile, can you make up your mind to be poor, and to help me scrape and screw?"

He smiled as he spoke, a smile of perfect confidence—he knew I did not fear poverty—whilst I gazed at him in astonishment. Then my heart leapt for joy. Of course he did not know, and I should have the pleasure of telling him.

"Do you not know, dear?" I cried. "Have you not heard?"

"I have heard literally nothing," he answered, "since the day Hartley found me insensible at Ghuzareepore, two days after I had sent off that letter to my father, saying I was not coming home. I was off my head, delirious for nearly three months, since when there has been a conspiracy to tell me nothing, for fear of exciting me. I came home last night, and was put straight to bed. This morning I took the law into my own hands, disobeyed orders, and got up, with the result you know. What is it I ought to know?"

"I must ask you one question first, dear. How is it you are home so soon? You only telegraphed last week from Bombay, to say you had started."

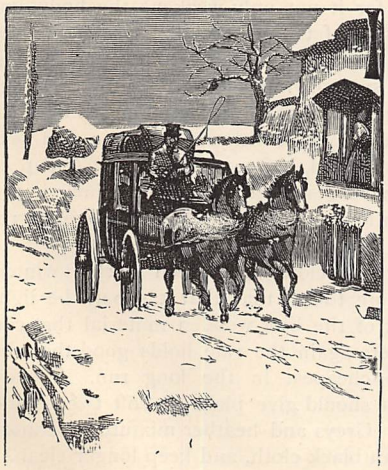
"Not from Bombay, dear. They got me off all in a hurry, and I did not telegraph till I got to Gib. It gave them plenty of time to make ready for me. Now for your news." I nestled up close to him.

"Jack, dearest," I whispered—"Uncle Bertram died about ten days ago. He was very rich indeed, far more so than any one knew. He left your father a large legacy, and me his residuary legatee. Oh, Jack! dear Jack! I am so glad that you did not know, for I have lots of money, and now it will be yours—all yours."

THE END.

THE WINTER DRESS OF MEN AND WOMEN.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



IN this perfidious climate of ours we are supposed by our neighbours across the silver streak to "enjoy" six months of winter and six months of cold weather. We ourselves even sometimes laughingly admit that an English summer consists of three hot days and a thunderstorm. But all facetiousness apart, I think, as a rule, the weather breaks some time in August or even in the end of July, and is succeeded by a week or two of wet and gloom, after which it may clear up again, and permit us to enjoy a long bright autumn. Bright it may be, but the heat of summer returns not; the mornings are chilly, and towards evening we find the need of a top-coat or wrap of some sort.

I am writing these lines by the seashore at Deal. It is within a week of August, and one hour of sunset, but so dismal is the sky that it might be the latter end of October itself. The clouds are *cumuli*, heaped and piled upon each other, banked upon the land horizon, and hanging low over the zinc-grey sea. Thunder has been muttering about all day long, and at present the thermometer stands at 59°. Well, not a month ago it stood at 81° for two days running, and did not sink to 70° even at midnight. There is no doubt about it: this is a vicissitudinary climate. No, I do not like the word "vicissitudinary" any more than you do, reader, and I do not like the climate. But when a medical man sits down with the view of instructing people how to dress in order to avoid its dangers, then indeed his difficulties begin.

It may be new to many to be told that the winter climate of the far north of Scotland is much less inimical to the general health than that of mid-England is. A Scotchman, or for that matter a Canadian either, is said never to feel cold until he comes to England, and there is much truth in this.

I have never been to Canada, and have sojourned in the States only during the summer, but many a winter I have passed in the Highlands of bonnie Scotland, and many a spell of the most healthful weather do I remember. Snow on the ground, hardest of frost, bluest of skies turning pale green towards the horizon at night, and never a breath of wind for weeks. This is the weather for thorough outdoor enjoyment: for skating, for sleighing, for curling, or wandering through the snow-clad heather, gun in hand, after the white hares. With what an appetite one returns in the evening, and how inviting the dinner-table looks, and the big fire of blazing logs, peat, and coals combined!

Compare this with the murky miserableness, with the fog and the drizzle and the dripping trees of your English winter, and guess which is the more healthy of the two, and which the more likely to favour the development of chest complaints of every sort, from simple colds to this country's curse—consumption itself.

With dress in its relation to fashion I shall have little, if anything, to say in this paper. My object is to show how best we may clothe ourselves for safety, with comfort, and to avoid illness. To colds caught one way or another an incalculable number of ailments owe their origin. Many of these are speedily fatal, others after long months, or it may be years, of suffering, while some cause merely temporary pain or discomfort—sufficient, however, to cause us distress for the time being, and seriously to interfere with our business arrangements or our enjoyments.

Without going so far as to say that every article of a man's apparel ought to be woollen, it is an undisputed fact that this material is the best suited for under-clothing, either in winter or summer. And the reasons are not far to seek. Neither linen nor cotton is capable of protecting the body from external heat in summer, nor of conserving the warmth of the body in winter, because, being good conductors of heat, they permit it to permeate. Wool, on the other hand, is a non-conductor; and there is little doubt that the death-rate in this country would be greatly reduced, and the wards of hospitals for diseases of the chest less crowded, were woollen garments to be worn by young and old.

But, to parody the words of an ancient advertisement, when we ask for wool we should see that we get it. Two kinds of articles will be placed on the counter before the intending purchaser: a cheap and a dear. The latter, however, will be the cheaper in the long run, for ten to one the former is a well-put-together mixture of cotton and wool. It is easy to show any one how to tell such a mixture at a glance almost, but difficult to describe on paper, so the novice in this matter should take some one with him or her, when going to shop, and should pay a fair price and deal only with respectable tradesmen.

Beware of wearing dyed flannels next the skin. I know there is a great run upon red, but this colour is just as likely to contain poisonous matter as any other. Silk for the under-garments of men with tender skins has much to recommend it, though it takes but second place to wool. Then, in point of cold-resisting qualities, comes merino. This may be worn next the skin by men when wearing the time-honoured linen shirt. The under-vest or semmet must not be of dyed material.

Another thing may be said in favour of woollen under-clothing: it keeps up the healthful action of the skin far better than any other material can.

Hear what an eminent authority remarks on this subject:—"During perspiration the evaporation from the surface of the body is necessary to reduce the heat generated by the exercise. When the exercise is finished, the evaporation still goes on to such an extent as to chill the frame. When dry woollen clothing is put on after exertion, the vapour from the surface of the body is condensed in the wool, and gives out again the large amount of heat which had become latent when the water was vaporised. Therefore a woollen covering from this cause alone at once feels warm when used during sweating. In the case of cotton or linen the perspiration passes through them, and evaporates from the external surface, without condensation; the loss of heat then continues. This makes it plain why dry woollen clothes are so useful after exertion."

We all of us know that a certain amount of daily exercise, carried almost to the boundary-line of fatigue, is necessary to maintain the body in health. But the perspiration engendered by this exercise forms no small amount of the good that accrues from the practice, matter being thus carried away by the pores, which if retained would keep the blood impure, and cause extra work to both liver and kidneys. Overmuch exercise in winter may notwithstanding render the perspiration too profuse, and there is a double danger in this, for it not only weakens the body, but increases the risk of taking a chill. Cycling is my own favourite form of exercise, and after getting indoors from a spell of riding, I retire to my dressing-room and change my damp under-clothing, as often as not rubbing the body first with a wet sponge, and next with a roughish towel, before re-dressing. A cup of tea or coffee, and a rest of a quarter of an hour in the horizontal position, make one feel like a giant refreshed.

As for the outer clothing of men during winter, I have little more to say than that it should be light and warm, and of the best woollen material that can be bought. Here again the rule holds good that the dearest is the cheapest in the long run. Shoddy cloth and twills should give place to soft tweeds and honest serges. Greys and heather mixtures are more satisfactory than black cloth, and keep longer clean.

If braces must be worn, they should be thin and elastic, but a belt is far more healthy, and better still is the American plan of simply having a buckle and strap behind the trousers.

Hats should be light, soft or yielding, and very well ventilated, for every medical man admits that the head should be kept cool. The little Scotch Glengarry,

now almost universally used as a fatigue cap by soldiers, has many advantages for either summer or winter wear. Being made of the best wool, it is cool or warm, as the case may be, and it never blows off.

I have before given my opinion as to shoes and stockings. Both ought to be strong, but not so much so as to render the feet damp, for this is unwholesome. Goloshes for the same reason should be avoided.

The neck should never be too much covered in those who are healthy. But if driving against the wind, by all means let a woollen comforter be worn.

The best of all storm coverings or top coats is a Highland plaid. Unfortunately it is not fashionable in England, but stick to it, O Scotland! and defy every cold blast that can blow. For travelling by train nothing beats an ulster or Inverness cape for either lady or gentleman.

Although it does not strictly belong to my subject, I may be forgiven for reminding my readers that illness may be caused or weakness induced by lying in the cold nights of winter under too great a top hamper of clothes. The blankets should be light and warm; even night-dresses and sheets should be of wool, but nothing should be so thick as to cause sweating. The insensible perspiration goes on at night, but the visible should not. Infants and children often have their constitutions quite ruined from the over-zealousness of the mother, who errs in half smothering them in bed-clothes.

The greatest mistake, I think, that women make in their winter dress is one of over-weight. What a sermon one could preach on this terrible evil! Let it suffice to say that over-weight in clothing results in over-fatigue, prostration, and debility, and opens the door to a hundred ailments which might have been avoided.

But the greatest error that *young* ladies can possibly make is that of over-pressure, especially of the chest. The female body grows in strength, shape, and contour till the twenty-third or even twenty-fifth year. Surely, therefore, it ought to be left free from restraint. Apart from this, serious injury is caused by pressure to the most vital internal organs. It is not by tight-fitting corsets alone that the evil is created, but by the bands of skirts, &c., being drawn too much in. Constraint of this kind makes healthful exercise all but impossible, either in summer or winter.

Can we wonder then that a girl, subject to such unwholesome pressure of garments during her earlier years, should grow up delicate, weak in heart and lungs, and subject to all sorts of ailments, not the least of which is dyspepsia?

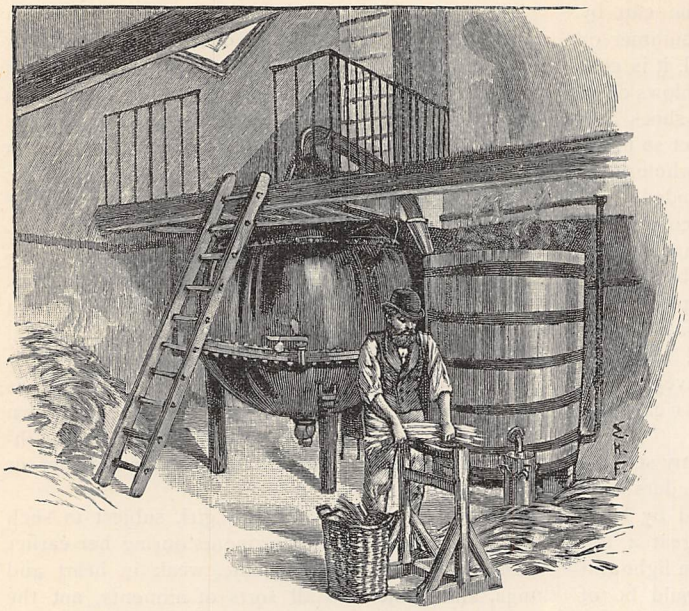
In conclusion, let me recommend winter dress to be donned even before winter makes its appearance, and that winter clothing should be chiefly of wool. So shall we be healthful even amid the vicissitudes of our changing climate.

IN LAVENDER LAND.

"GROUPS OF SLATTERNLY PLAITERS."

THERE are two very distinct districts of England to which the term "Lavender Land" is applicable. The one is Mitcham, in Surrey; the other is Hitchin and its neighbourhood, hard upon the northern borders of the fine corn-growing county of Hertford—a shire dear by reason of boyish associations to Charles Lamb, and uniformly lauded by Elia of the silver pen for its sylvan beauties and its hearty homeliness. It is of a ramble in the latter that the present paper will speak.

If the journey to Hitchin is made by rail from the south, there are several places *en route* that sorely tempt the traveller to tarry before reaching his destination. Such is Hatfield, with its historic home of statesmanship; such is Knebworth, identified with the name and the fame of the Lyttons; such are simple, rural, delightful Welwyn—the typical English village—with its memories of Izaak Walton and Edward Young, and Stevenage, in the close vicinity of which lived for a considerable term of years Lucas, the hermit, who was brought into very wide notoriety through Dickens's Christmas story of "Tom Tiddler's Ground." But resisting these persuasions to descend into Bypath Meadow, enough is revealed by the passing panorama to make it clear that praise of Hertfordshire for its pastoral beauty is abundantly deserved. It is a county smiling in summer time with the fruits of the earth, a county of rolling, verdurous slopes, of pleasant trees most happily massed, of quaint old-world farms and hamlets, where, surely, Rip van Winkle might have slept. Let us not, however, sheathe anything even remotely resembling a jeer in our compliment. The reference is merely to the ancient houses that abound, and to the idyllic peace that prevails. The spirit of the age is here. You shall see agricultural machines of newest pattern—and newest, startling colours, too—in frequent use. And the distinctive modern villa, in all its aggressive crudity, is planted like an exotic here and there.



A LAVENDER-STILL—REDUCING THE STALKS.

It was mid-August when the writer, bound for Lavender Land, crossed this golden belt of the central shires. Coming but lately from the bare grassy slopes and scanty leafage of Dumfriesshire, the contrast was one in which the eye simply revelled. It is no wonder that a well-known literary man, a native of the bare and rugged north, coming casually into the midst of this prodigal profusion of foliage, developed an enthusiasm as prodigious in its way as the size of many a Hertfordshire tree, and declared this without exception "the pleasantest of counties."

Hitchin is entered through a deep chalk cutting. Few highways can change in character so completely in so short a space as the one which gives access from the railway station to the town. At first it is fresh, trim, and inviting—Welcome in its mien. To the right equally alluring side streets open out. But treachery is ahead. Appearances seem to show that to keep straight on is most conveniently to approach the goal. And now the road curves to a shady hill-top, there is a curious pillar-supported thatched house at a corner, and Hitchin is in sight. So squalid and poor and dismal a town — with beetle-browed buildings, and grimy shops, and unkempt children, and groups of slatternly plaiters—is far from being the bourn of our expectation. But the sense of humour is not absent. "Which is the principal street in Hitchin?" we ask, a little perplexed, of one whose home seems to be fixed in this slum-like neighbourhood. "This is, ain't it?" the man addressed inquires in turn, stolidly enough, of a second *habitué*. "Yes," is the unflinching answer, given with not so much as a twinkle in the eye. Incredulous yet, we strike off at an angle and follow the next turning, into a very different *quartier*. Here are fine open streets, comfortable and prosperous business thoroughfares, a spacious market square. The town redeems its character when once we have succeeded in penetrating to its heart.

Hitchin has a history and antiquities upon which, in this place, we can but lightly touch. It lies very near to the famous old Roman road, the Icknield Way, and some have tried to solve the enigma of its name by supposing a corruption from Ickening to Hitchin. But Norden's "Hertfordshire," speaking with reason as well as with the authority of age, says on the latter point :—

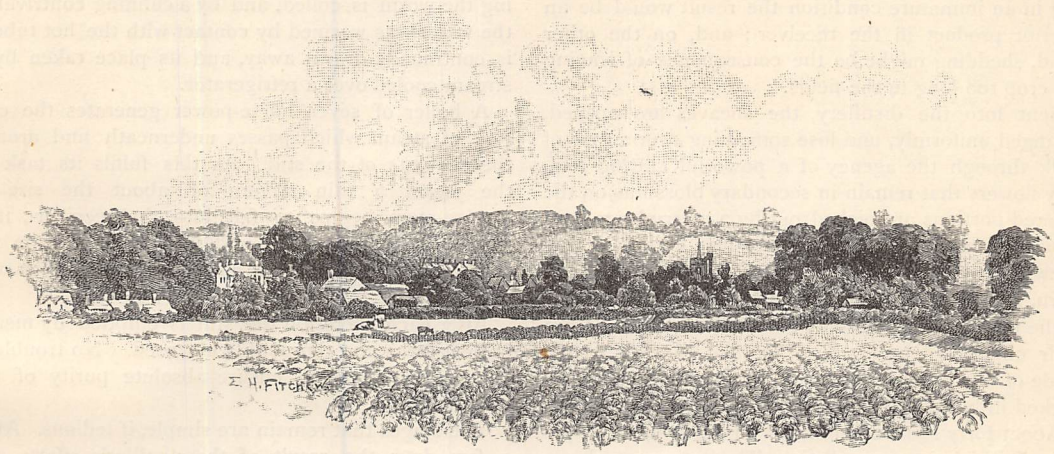
"Hitching, or Hitchine, more rightly Hitch-End, because it lyeth at the end of a famous wood called 'Hitch,' of which also the Hundred of Hitch takes its name. It cannot be 'Hitching,' which soundeth *de-pratis*, unless it be in the sense, as *lucus* is, a thick wood, *de-lucendo* of yielding light, being altogether dark, so Hitching of meadow ground because it hath no meadows, and yet standeth in a valley between the hills."

The derivation seems to rest betwixt the one favoured in this extract—*i.e.*, from a wood called Hitch—and one from the name of the river which flows through the town. To the Saxons the place was known as Hiche, or Hicce, which perhaps would tend to bear out the former theory. King Offa of Mercia kept his court here during the building of the great palace which has left the monarch's name behind it at the neighbouring village of Offley. One annalist says that in this king's time Hitchin was the

STRIPPING THE STEMS.

equal in splendour and importance of St. Albans. Offa's son Egfrith dedicated here, about 792, a religious house of very considerable dimensions. Stow tells us in his "Chronicles" that "in the year 1525 Henry VIII. visited Hitchin, and stayed several days a hawking." And bluff King Harry bestowed the crown manor of Hitchin upon two of his Queens in succession—to wit, upon Katherine of Arragon and Anne Boleyn. King James I. followed suit by granting the manor to his consort, Queen Anne, with reversion to Charles, Prince of Wales. Stray vestiges yet remaining of conventual buildings show that at one date ecclesiasticism flourished here. Henry VIII., in his warfare with the monasteries, suppressed at Hitchin a Priory of White Carmelites and a Priory of Gilbertine Nuns.

To proceed into Lavender Land proper. Again



LAVENDER LAND, HITCHIN.

threading a succession of narrow by-ways, we come out upon the open hill-side. There is exhilarating width and not a little beauty in the view. In the fair valley lies, amidst its friendly trees, the heterogeneous cluster of multi-shaped, many-coloured roofs that make up almost anywhere the presentment of an English town seen from an eminence. To the north the horizon widens even to Sandy; and wave-like undulations of rich and fruitful land, crowned on every rise with the dark green of trees, roll into the distance on either hand, while immediately at our feet are fields literally one mass of glorious colour. There is nothing like it in the ordinary landscape. The charm is that of strange and alien beauty, for the lavender plant is not indigenous to Great Britain. It is said to have been introduced here in the reign of Elizabeth—an innovating period, which brought Englishmen also the potato and the dried leaves of tea and of tobacco. Its native home is amongst the hills of Southern Europe. And even there the impression could never be produced upon the observer which is made by coming suddenly upon a great expanse clothed with the lavender in full blossom, the plants set in serrated ranks, cultivated to the extreme height of floral productiveness, and with no other tint to break the broad, level, rich blue-grey blaze. The sight is striking indeed when the lights and shadows of a day of mingled sunshine and cloud flit over the fields, and deliver it most completely, by the wonderful effects of varying intensity of hue so occasioned, from any possible charge of sameness.

Great is the amount of forethought, care, and pains which goes to the culture of the plants and to preparation of the yearly harvest. The method of propagation is from cuttings. When these have proved their vitality by a year's life and growth, they are divided into two at the young root. The embryo plants are then set in a kind of field nursery at distances of half a yard apart. From this, a year later, they are planted out for stock purposes, and begin to yield. As every other plant is simply taken up and re-set on vacant land, the labour at this point is reduced to a minimum. The plants when thus finally left for flower-bearing are isolated from each other by exactly a yard—just double the previous distance; and nine thousand plants go to the acre. With the second year cropping begins; plants are considered at their best in the third year; at the expiration of the fifth year they have grown very bulky—running rapidly to wood—but are usually voted past service, and, being grubbed up, are consigned to the flames. This sacrifice is an annual thing, and so Brobdignagian are the bonfires, and so powerful is the aromatic fragrance given thus to the winds, that Hitchin is to its last court and alley for days together a town of sweet smells. It is generally a November experience.

The plants whose time is not yet are subject in the Hitchin fields to an operation termed "clipping in"—that is to say, the spare growth is very largely reduced, the pruning being believed to improve the prospects of the next season's yield. All this implies a large employment of industry; and during winter and spring the fields are never neglected for long together. Hoe and fork are often at work.

The cultivation of lavender for commercial purposes

in Hertfordshire began in the year of Waterloo, and for nearly half a century its history was one of steady and quiet development, subject to no special peril; but about 1860 a formidable disease made its appearance, not unlike the potato disease which had produced so much mischief and misery in the sister isle; and from thence onward there has been a hard and persistent warfare with this treacherous enemy. Planting out on entirely new soil is found the best preservative. The disease comes with a whitish-green appearance, spreads stealthily if not at once checked, and kills off the plants at the very centre.

It is a pretty scene when (as on the occasion of our visit) the reaping has begun, and men are in the fields with sickle and rope, cutting and binding into tight, compact sheaves the odorous swathes of lavender. The flowers require to be at the acme of their development, and yet not over-ripe. If put into the still in an immature condition the result would be an inferior product in the receiver; and, on the other hand, shedding might be the consequence of leaving the crop too long in the fields.

Sent into the distillery, the sheaves are opened, arranged uniformly, and lose something over a foot of stalk through the agency of a powerful cutting tool. Any flowers that remain in secondary blossoms on the severed portions are picked out by a merry brigade of Hitchin youngsters, and in due course find their way likewise into the still. Although, so far as we can learn, no use is made of the discarded lavender stalks at the present time, it would certainly seem that from their undoubted aromatic properties they might be made of worth and service. Why should they not be packed in bundles and sold for fumigating purposes?

About forty sheaves suffice to fill the still, the capacity of which is 550 gallons. Three times a day a still will absorb this quantity, and the manipulation of an entire harvest will take at least three weeks. An untrained eye would, perhaps, observe little or no difference in the character of the contents of a still, even if by any possibility a sample of two several years' produce could be exhibited side by side. Nevertheless, there is variation as wide as from thirty to fifty per cent. in value, as estimated by the yield of essential oil.

The work of distilling demands incessant watchfulness. Pressed into the very shoulder of the still, the lavender must not be allowed to rise, even as it swells, an inch beyond. If it does, what is known as the "black liquor"—the crude oil—will be forced through the worm, and enter the receiver, instead of the purified essence. After the flowers are covered with water the head of the still is cemented on with a composition of linseed-meal—a veritable poultice. This is to prevent the steam from escaping. In a vast tub adjoining the worm is coiled, and by a cunning contrivance the water—as warmed by contact with the hot tube—is continually drawn away, and its place taken by a stream cooled over a refrigerator.

A boiler of seven horse-power generates the current of steam which passes underneath and around the contents of the still. As this fulfils its task in the jacket a thin stream of about the size of a pipe-stem begins to fall into the receiver; it is essential oil of lavender, and it floats lightly on the surface of the water with which the receiver is two-thirds filled.

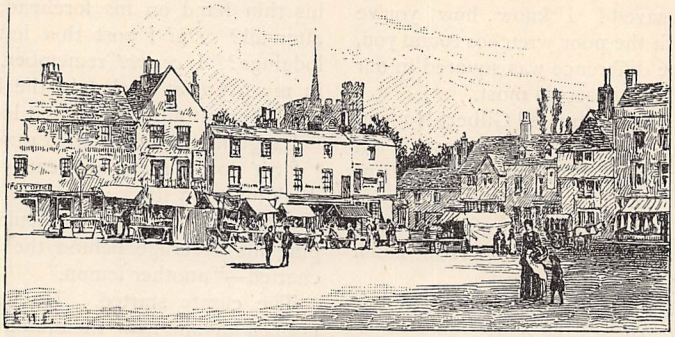
After each operation the still is emptied by means of bent forks and thoroughly cleansed. No trouble is deemed too great to ensure absolute purity of the product.

The stages that remain are simple, if tedious. After a few days the result of the distiller's efforts and anxieties is filtered, and the trifling quantity of water

CUTTING LAVENDER, MOUNT PLEASANT.

which may have settled at the bottom of each vessel is patiently eliminated. Then for three months more it is stored in *uncorked* glass bottles to divest it of the strong empyrematic odour, colloquially spoken of as the "still smell." It is now fit for manufactured lavender water by the addition of spirit at a ratio of from twenty to forty times its own bulk, or for sale as essential oil of lavender.

W. J. LACEY.



MARKET-PLACE, HITCHIN.

A VERY STRANGE AFFAIR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHO IS SYLVIA?" "MISS HILARY'S SUITORS," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

NOON was just two hours past, one bleak November day, when in the luncheon-room of a West End club much favoured by University men, sat a gentleman, impatiently tattooing on the arm of his Chippendale chair as he carelessly scanned a daily paper. Once he rose, strolled to the door, and told the porter—a new man, he noticed—that he, Mr. Francis, was there, if asked for. Then returning to the fireside, "Careless fellow," he commenced mentally; "lunch at two sharp, and he not here. We shall have no time for gossip first," and he watched enviously sundry punctual members at the other end of the room discussing their chops slowly and silently.

The door opened—only to admit disappointment: A stranger, who, glancing round, took the table next to Mr. Francis, and requested a soda and lemon.

The modest order attracted the first-comer's attention. He looked at the speaker, a man of forty, full habit, tawny moustache. "Wise," thought he, approving professionally, for he was a doctor, "just what I'd prescribe him; although," smiling, "I shan't treat Nugent the same way. Hang it, how I do wish—oh! here he comes. Why, old fellow, what makes you late?"

"Late! Please pardon me, Francis," said the last arrival. "I," dropping wearily into a chair, "wouldn't have kept you, but I had a world of things to do this morning. A choir-lad broke his thigh, and wanted me——"

"Ugh!" grunted the doctor. "I'd have suited him better."

"Then I'd lost your post-card, and couldn't remember what time you fixed."

"Ah!" laughed the other man, "you high-pressure curates never have a moment to spare for your own concerns. But now, as lunch will be on in five minutes, what's the news I've come to hear? Out with it, quick!"

Thus urged, Gilbert Nugent—he and Francis had been of the same year, pulling in the same boat at Oxford—leaned forward, his spare frame all aquiver with suppressed excitement.

"Why, this is it," his voice clear though low: "I've actually had a good living given me. I'm going to be married the day after to-morrow, and I want you to come down and see me through."

"Whew!" whistled John Francis softly. "There's a budget! Why, *I'm* as pleased as if a thousand pounds had dropped into my pocket. What must you be?"

"Dazed," confessed the curate, his pale face kindling with emotion. "It has come with such a rush, I don't know what to make of it. Why, I thought so much of writing to you about it that when I did sit down, pen in hand, 'No,' thought I, 'I must have written all this to Francis before now.' And I puzzled ten minutes to get sure of the point. Funny, wasn't it?"

"Overdone," said the doctor. "You've been going the pace, young man! I've heard of you with classes and services and schools, and all work and no play, and I've said often to myself, 'If he won't slacken speed, that person will come to a full stop *nolens*

volens.' Why, how many years have you been at St. Cyprian's?"

"Six."

"Ah, the year before I got to our Hospital. Now, here am I almost a man of means, and here are you—dear old boy, without being rude, I don't suppose you've five shillings saved! I know how you've shared your stipend with the poor wretches round you, and I think it's time the difference was squared in our conditions, for I know who deserves most."

"Don't talk of deserving," entreated Gilbert Nugent. "I seem to have done nothing! Even now, I am ashamed to leave my post. Ought I really to grasp at such happiness, such wealth?"

"Don't be an ass," said his friend gruffly. "Take the goods provided, and be thankful. How much does it amount to, pray?"

"Five hundred a year, house and piece of glebe."

"E-nor-mous! And where's the place?"

"Birch Hampton—thirty miles from town."

"Are you diplomaed—what do you call it?—yet?"

"No; that muddled me. At least, not that, something else. Oh! dear, though," with a perplexed frown, "I ought not to say so!"

"Well," laughed John Francis, "make up your mind what you ought to say, for here is lunch. You are not a rector yet, then?"

"No. The induction was to have been to-morrow. The squire of the place, Sir Archibald Vesey, very kindly wrote fixing that time. He's patron, and a friend of my vicar's: churchwarden too; and the Suffragan Bishop of Clewe is his cousin, and he was to be there to-morrow. Then, when this was settled, came the upset at Helen's, and—and *now* you see the induction has to be put off."

"No, I don't see. You've missed a point. Eat your soup, and recover the lost thread."

Gilbert Nugent obediently bolted his mock-turtle, then broke out again.

"Why, oddly enough, our marriage, that I've hardly dared hint at hitherto, is actually now pressed on by Helen's people."

"Natural effect of living, house, and glebe," murmured his friend.

"Partly," said the curate simply, "but not altogether. When they first heard of that they agreed to February for our wedding. But ten days ago Helen's father had bronchitis again. Their doctor ordered him to Cannes directly. Cannes makes Helen ill, so you see the best thing seemed for us to marry at once—very quietly, no fuss; it was all arranged in a twinkling. It's to be on Wednesday. I must be there some time to-morrow, and the induction can't be till we return from Torquay."

"So! And you've told them at Birch Hampton they must wait?"

"Yes. I ought to have written last week, but it—escaped my memory. However, I've done so to-day; and sent Sir Archibald my papers of induction, too, to keep safe while Helen and I are travelling. I'm rather careless about papers. Clever of me, wasn't it?"

"Masterly! But——" with a gleam of fun—"shirking your responsibility, sir; and driving your notice of changed plans rather late, surely!"

Up started the curate.

"You think so! I never looked at it in that light, or I would not have sent them. Oh! by the way," his thin hand on his forehead, "*have* I sent them, after all? *Did* I post that letter in the box by my lodgings? I *cannot* remember. If I didn't, they are in my overcoat pocket in the lobby, and I need not send them at all. I'll go and look."

Laughing outright John Francis held him back.

"Sit down, man, and eat your fish. The papers don't matter a straw; that was only my nonsense."

"Waiter," said the gentleman who had been sipping his beverage behind the *Times*, as the friends chatted—"another lemon."

The curate started. He was very shy, had not noticed anyone near them, and had been talking unreservedly of his prospects and his marriage. He coloured with annoyance, then dashed into a change of topic to cover his confusion.

"Beautiful place the Veseys have, I hear: Hampton Grange."

"You've not seen it?"

"No; nor him, nor any of them yet."

"Vesey!" repeated John Francis. "Why, I read that name somewhere just now. Let's see," picking up his paper—"Oh, here it is. 'County gathering. Town Hall, Hampton. H'm, h'm—This is the bit. 'Sir Archibald and Lady Vesey arrived with large party. Lady Vesey's superb diamonds were the admiration of the whole room.' So you are to be among the rich by way of a change, Nugent."

"And I hope they'll help with my poor," said the curate fervently. "The church is, I am told, beautiful. The i—de—a of *my* having such a one!"

"Ah," said Francis. "Isn't there anything else too good for you, you reprobate?"

"Well!" apologetically, "I believe the church plate is unique. You must run down and see it when we're settled."

"Agreed. What, no fowl? Why, you've forgotten how to feed! You won't say no to Gorgonzola and celery, eh?"

These the curate did not reject. While discussing them the gentleman close by rose and handed to a waiter a card on which he had pencilled a line.

"When Canon Maxwell comes, give him this, and say his cousin Colonel Grey waited as long as he could. Put the card on the chimney-piece yonder. The canon always sits there, I know."

The man obediently went off to the end of the room. The tall stranger walked away very erect.

"Military—retired—has to be abstemious, or he'd get fat," commented Francis. "Well, to business again. I wish I could see the knot tied on Wednesday; but we've an important operation on, and I can't get away for pleasure. So take my congratulations to Miss Helen. Cruet-stand to follow in due course."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE next day assuredly confirmed John Francis's dictum on his friend's vacillation. For there at Hampton Grange were bluff Sir Archibald and comely Lady Vesey, and their pretty daughters, and home guests, and the cousin bishop, and the people's churchwarden, and sharp little seven-year-old Jack Vesey, and all were met to welcome the hero of the day—the Rev. Gilbert Nugent.

His host had just said how "the bishop, coming for family festivities at the end of the week, made them choose that day, so they were particularly pleased it suited," and this naturally rewarded the clergyman for any effort made to keep the engagement.

"I am most fortunate," he said modestly, to the suffragan, "in being honoured by your presence. I am very grateful for it, my lord."

Bishop Maxwell bowed pleasantly, but said, smiling, "I must not take what is not mine, Mr. Nugent. We sub-episcopates are not diocesans, you know."

"Pardon!" exclaimed the young man, crimsoning, "I forgot I was not at Fulham."

"Ah! you knew the kind people at the Palace?"

"Intimately. The sympathy I have received from them has often refreshed me inexpressibly when I was getting down-hearted with our poor, poor parish."

Then Bishop Maxwell had politely extracted enough information about the young rector's recent work to justify his approving remark to Sir Archibald as they went into the dining-room—"Got the right man in the right place! This parish will be a refreshment after the East End. He's a clever young fellow, Vesey. You're lucky to secure him."

So the impression the curate made, despite a not unbecoming shyness, was favourable. To be sure, Miss Vesey laughed covertly at the confusion she threw him into by asking when the Rectory was to have a mistress, but on retailing this bit of fun to a gentleman later on, he promptly asked—

"Pray, if a stranger enquires when you and your humble servant mean to get married, will you tell him right off, Clara *mia?* If so, imagine me the stranger, and confide accordingly!" At which Miss Clara blushingly had told her *fiancé* he was a goose, and changed the subject hastily.

"'LATE! PLEASE PARDON ME, FRANCIS'" (*p.* 723).

Lady Vesey good-naturedly helped the curate out of his embarrassment.

"I'm sure," she said, "we shall be delighted to have a lady at the Rectory. I only wish you and she could be with us at the end of this week. Our eldest boy comes of age then, and we have a tenants' fête on Friday. I hope you won't mind these festivities, and won't object to—to—your wife sharing our little amusements."

"I shall wish—er—her—to follow her own inclinations entirely, Lady Vesey."

"How very nice of you! My girls both like a party so much."

"And so does mother!" broke in little Jack, seated between Mr. Nugent and his hostess. "Mother went to one at Hampton, and looked, oh, splen-did! Wif all her diamonds on—and they sparkled—oh, me! Jones let me peep at them this morning in the leather box on your dwessin'-table. And Jones says I shall see you in them on Fwiday; and then they'll all go away again and be shut up at the Bank. And Jones——"

"Hush! said the little lad's mother; "Mr. Nugent will think you a shocking chatterbox, Jack."

"Not at all," said the young man benignly. "I'm not attending to his information as I ought, though. Do I not hear Sir Archibald speaking of the church plate to the parish warden?"

"Very likely. Much more congenial topic! Mr. Holding was telling me, too, how his wife had cleaned it so beautifully for the new rector to see."

"Then Mr. Holding keeps it? Is it at his house always?"

"Oh, never! It is locked up in the church, in an 'aumbrey' that was uncovered during some repairs. My husband had it fitted with doors and locks. The Holdings have one key, and you will have another. Jack dear, sit still. Mr. Nugent, you are taking nothing."

"Far more than usual," answered the curate. "Spare diet suits hard work."

"Yes, yes, if you don't let your strength down," said Bishop Maxwell. "Strikes me you've been doing that, though. Let me advise a glass of this lovely milk."

This Lady Vesey poured out herself, remarking that they were treating Mr. Nugent *en famille*, but they always lunched unattended while the servants dined.

"It is nearly three now, though," she added, "and is not that the hour for the church ceremony? The official party are all here, I think."

"Not quite, your ladyship," said the churchwarden. "There's little lame Peter, the clerk's son, sir;" to the new rector, "afflicted in his joints, but able to sweep about the church. He'd have been hurt if left out, so I bade him be up there in his best clothes."

"Quite right," said the young clergyman. "Lady Vesey, are we to have your presence, too?"

Well, the day, though dull, was not cold. Lady Vesey thought she would go. Wearing her bonnet, her cloak hanging in the hall, she was ready whenever they chose. If Mr. Nugent *must* leave at four o'clock he should return with them for early tea and then be driven to the station.

Time was getting short. Sir Archibald and the farmer were deep, however, in surface-drainage. Mr. Nugent appeared to be growing nervous, when something occurred to make him more so.

"May I have some gwapes, please?" said fidgety Master Jack, and stretching out his little paw for these, somehow it came into collision with the clergyman's hand, and the still full glass of milk rushed in a creamy stream down his coat-sleeve.

"Oh, my boy!" he exclaimed; then checking himself, "Never mind, Lady Vesey, don't be vexed with him. A sponge upstairs will mend matters in half a minute."

"How good of you to make light of it!" protested his hostess. "Jack, take Mr. Nugent directly to papa's dressing-room. Get your own hat, too; and show our visitor down again."

So, with a serviette twisted round his dripping cuff, the clergyman hurried upstairs, reappearing dry and neat in a very short space of time. But his hand shook as he helped Lady Vesey on with her cloak.

"Bad Jack to give you such trouble just now!" she said kindly to him. "But the church ceremony is short and simple, is it not?"

"Oh, very. Still the day is an epoch in my life, and—I shall be glad when it is over."

"Then suppose we start," said she practically, and off went the procession towards the church.

This stood on the brow of a hill, Birch Hampton on the western, the town of Hampton on the eastern slope. Its small Norman nave ended in a sturdy tower. Here hung the bell, whose rope dangled just within the round-headed doorway. Further, it had an Early English south aisle, a frescoed apse, and a priest's door beautifully carved. On these features Lady Vesey descanted during their short walk, and the clergyman listened attentively.

By the church now waited little lame Peter, on whom the new minister bestowed a kind word, and Mrs. Holding, to whom he also spoke, and all being grouped about the west entrance, then did Bishop Maxwell take the young rector's hand, and by virtue of the archdeacon's mandate did "induct him into the real, actual, and corporeal possession of the church of St. Michael," and then opening the door, bade him enter and conclude all by tolling the bell.

"Lock yourself in, you know," said Sir Archibald.

"And toll plenty of times," put in Lady Vesey. "The last rector only tolled seven," she whispered to a young lady near her; "and he died in seven years."

"Good gracious!" said the young lady, who was superstitious; "tell him to toll seventy, then!"

"And pull hard, sir," said Mr. Holding; "the rope runs stiff."

The new rector seemed getting confused.

"I've never tolled a bell in my life," said he. "Suppose I can't manage it?"

"Let me help," cried Jack. "*I* can pull."

The rector caught at the suggestion.

"Might this little fellow come?" he asked, patting Peter. "He could give me a hint."

"Certainly," said Sir Archibald. "This is the key, Mr. Nugent. Next size for the little door. Smallest for the 'aumbrey.' Now, in you go."

The bishop held the door open. The clergyman entered. Peter hopped after him. The key was turned within. Then followed soon a feeble clinking of the bell.

"First attempt!" said the bishop benevolently.

A second clang; still weak.

"He'll get the knack presently," said the parish warden.

Four more wavering strokes.

"Up to six now," said the sentimental young lady.

"Twenty more and we'll be content," said Sir Archibald cheerfully.

"He does look a nice gentleman," said Mrs. Holding.

"So he is, my dear," said her husband.

"Ten, eleven! Come, that's steadier!"

"Means to show us what he *can* do," said another. "Nineteen, twenty."

"First-rate," said Sir Archibald; "but," stamping about, "this ground's rather damp. Got thick boots on, my lady?"

The bishop shuffled uneasily. "Chills are nasty things. I wonder how long he'll go on. That must be forty."

"Oh, Fred, tell him to stop!" burst in Jack, irreverently quoting a stable song.

"Oh, poor thing," pleaded the gushing young lady, "let him live as long as he can."

"He means to be a patriarch then," said Captain Jeune; "Lady Vesey, may Clara and I go and see if tea is ready for the rest of you?"

"Do. Fifty—fifty-one! Oh, and order the dog-cart too, or Mr. Nugent will be late. I wonder if we might just say through the keyhole *how* late it's getting?"

"And how cold," chimed in Sir Archibald; "I *wish* he'd leave off."

They might wish! On clanged that bell through the sixties, seventies, eighties; on up to a hundred.

Then they all waited breathless. No; it was silent at last. That was the end.

With a sigh of relief they beamed upon each other. Cheerfully Sir Archibald lifted up his voice—

"Now, Mr. Nugent, we're ready for the next move."

Were they?

A thin little squeak answered through the keyhole—

"Please, sir, let me out."

"Why!" they all cried, "that's Peter!" And some added, "Ask the clergyman to unlock the door."

The scared reply flung all the party into intense bewilderment—

"Please, I can't ask him, 'cause he's gone!"

Gone!

They stared at each other in amazement. Why—where—when had he gone? What did it mean?

"Be quick and let the child out!" cried the bishop. "I don't understand this at all."

The second church key, however, had been left by Mrs. Holding at the clerk's as usual that morning. Thither after it fled the fleetest-footed of the puzzled party. The period of his absence was spent in perplexed speculation.

"What made him leave without bidding us 'Good-bye?'" said Lady Vesey.

"Why, yes; though the actual induction was over, I had the certificate to sign yet," grumbled the bishop. "He ought to have waited for that."

"Perhaps he felt ill," suggested the sympathetic young lady. "He looked very white."

"Wilson said he was delicate when he asked for the living for him," said Sir Archibald. "Still——"

"Oh! here comes Harvey back," cried two or three, and the nimble messenger reappearing, the door was quickly opened, and all thronged into the gloomy tower, pouring out question on question.

"Nay, one at a time," ordered Sir Archie. "Bishop, speak first."

"Ahem!" said that dignitary. "Peter, when did Mr. Nugent leave this church?"

"A'most as soon as he comed in, sir."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed all. The bishop proceeded sternly—

"Little boy, little boy, that cannot be correct. How could Mr. Nugent toll the bell if he were not here?"

"Please, sir, he worn't a-tollin'. It was me."

"You!" cried all; the bishop could only add faintly—

"Proceed, child."

"Go on," said Mr. Holding, translating into the vernacular.

"The gentleman give a few pulls, sir, and then he says, 'Can you toll?' and I says, 'Yes;' and he says, 'Then take and toll,' so I took and done it."

"What did the gentleman do next?" asked honest Sir Archie, frowning.

"Had a look round, sir, at yon cupboard" (meaning the aumbrey) "and then he come back and say"—hesitating——

"Well?" All listened eagerly.

"He say, 'Go on tollin' till you get to a hundred. I have to ketch a train, so I'll go by the little door.' And then—then—he took and went."

"Most extraordinary thing I ever heard!" exclaimed the bishop. The kind young lady could find no excuse for such conduct. Lady Vesey felt hurt, and her husband emphatically declared such manners far from those of a gentleman.

"I hope they're the worst thing about him," said Mr. Holding bluntly, coming back from the chancel; "but it's odd that he has taken the keys away. I think, Sir Archibald, it's our duty to see if the plate——"

"Oh!" broke from everyone in various shocked inflections; but Mr. Holding stood to his point.

"I'm sorry to cast a slur on anyone, but what we've charge of we ought to see safe," said he.

"So we ought," agreed Sir Archibald. "Who will run for Mrs. Holding's key?"

"Here it is," said the careful guardian. "It's in my pocket by day, and under my pillow by night, sir. Now, Peter, go and get a match."

A vestry candle soon lighted the party to the further end; a minute later it gleamed on faces of horror.

The aumbrey was empty. The priceless plate—like the new pastor—gone! All at this were overwhelmed. Bishop and wardens held hasty consultation. Sir Archibald was for hurrying them back to the Grange, for his wife was completely upset. And she had more to distract her presently.

Hurrying up through the churchyard came Clara Vesey and her *fiancé*, distress upon their features.

"Mother dear," cried the girl, "we bring you bad news. Your diamonds are stolen!"

"My diamonds!" repeated Lady Vesey. "Impossible! I saw them just before lunch. No one has been in the room since except Jones——"

"And Mr. Nugent," piped out Jack, "I saw him go in out of the dwessin'-room fro a crack in the door, as I was waiting for him to come down."

"Stupid boy!" cried his father. "Why didn't you say so before?"

"'Cause I thought he'd only gone for the soap," said Jack. "I go for Jones's sometimes, and Jones scolds me. I thought you might scold him. Besides, mother doesn't let me tell tales; besides, I forgot it."

"Oh! Jack," cried the rector's one defender, "if you hadn't spilt that milk——"

"Ah! but I didn't spill it," burst out Jack. "He did it himself. I saw him twist his finger round the glass, I did. Only he was father's visitor, so I couldn't say so."

Alas! that a daring double robbery had been committed by this unfortunate clergyman appeared only too evident, and darkness descended on the troubled conclave at the Grange before any course of action or of punishment had been decided on.

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CHAPTER THE THIRD.

LATE that November day Gilbert Nugent reached the home of his lady-love near Croole station, a junction for Southern counties on a Western line.

Of Croole the Rev. Octavius Wood had long been rector, and here his curate and his daughter had lost their hearts to one another.

The Woods had opposed the match energetically, for the young man—though one of the Cumberland Nugents—was not wealthy, nor were they rich, and Helen was charming enough to do far better for herself.

But Helen was firm to her lover, and when an unexpected fortune gave her father means to resign his living and nurse his health—about which he was ever nervous—and talk big about the portion he could dower his daughter with, when all these advantages failed in inducing Helen to give up her impecunious lover, then her people yielded, and merely deferring marriage till Mr. Nugent had preferment, let the engagement run on.

Well, that was something gained, but Helen's spirits sank when she noted how fagged Gilbert was getting with his London work, to which she could see no likely end. Five years they waited. Five more they might have to wait, both feared, when suddenly their probation was ended. One month back came news that the living of Birch Hampton had been given to the curate of St. Cyprian's. Then had followed all he told John Francis, and the patient pair were to be married to-morrow!

Imagination can best paint their meeting under such conditions. The first half-hour together either would have been puzzled to give account of afterwards. Then proud, glad Helen sat next her lover at dinner, and that pleasure satisfying both, they contributed but sparsely to the conversation.

Reginald Wood, a prosperous lawyer, was there to give his sister away; the air of St. Benedict's, at nine a.m., being unsafe for his father. With him was Mrs. Reginald, a lady of property and decided opinions, one being that Helen was throwing herself away matrimonially. A bachelor brother, "best man" on the morrow, no friend of Gilbert's being available at such short notice, completed the party.

"Got your 'presenting' over, Nugent?" asked Mr. Reginald, when dessert was being trifled with; "read yourself in yet?"

The question was natural enough, but the young clergyman changed colour as he answered. A moment his glance of mingled fear and tenderness rested on his betrothed, then he said—

"Read myself in? Why—no. That's impossible till—that is to say before—oh, I'll explain to you presently if you can give me ten minutes."

"Willingly. I'll walk with you to the 'Crown'"—the hotel where Mr. Nugent was located.

"I depute my son," put in Mr. Wood, "to act for me, Nugent. He will see to the sufficiency of your arrangements for my child, now that your living gives you means to make such."

At this Helen blushed; her lover turned paler. Mrs. Reginald fixed a stony glance on him.

"What's the matter with him?" she thought. "Looks as if he were in a quandary, or going to have brain fever!"

"I hope," hesitated Gilbert, "you will be content with what I have done. I ought to have written fully; but—but—may I say now——"

Mr. Wood shook his head and began to cough. His wife interposed.

"Oh, your father has an attack coming on! Don't speak, Octavius. Come, dear, to the fire, and have the steam-kettle brought in. The young people will leave the dining-room to you, I know."

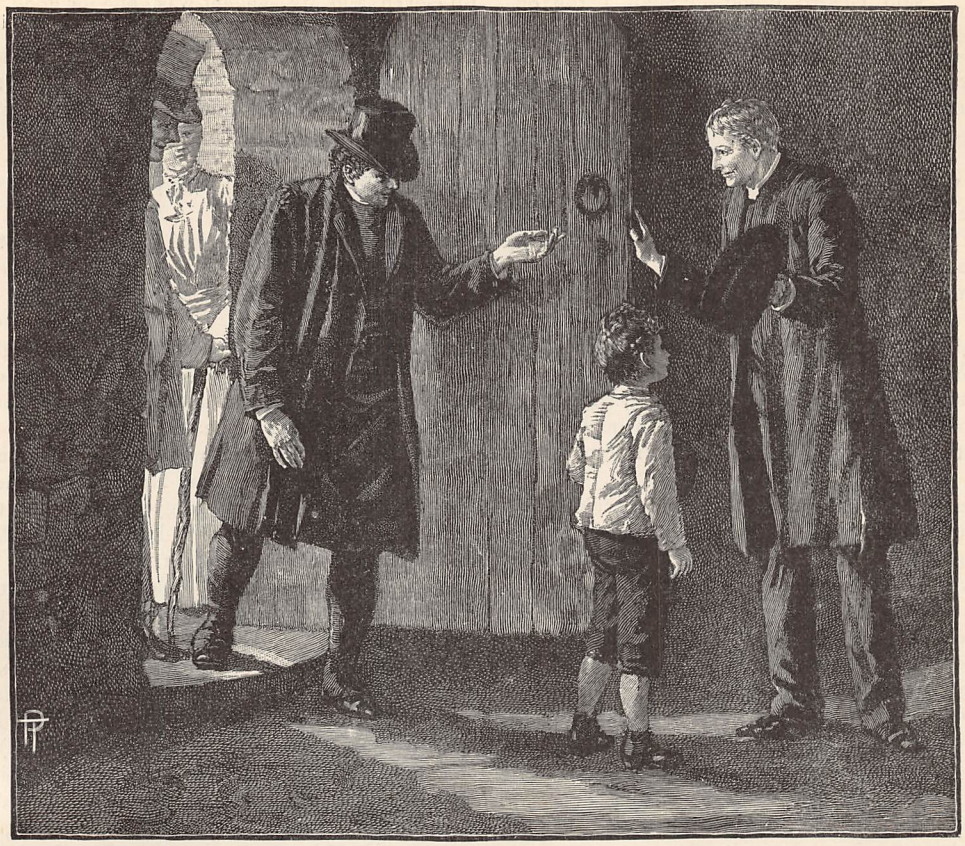
"I'll go and see Helen's boxes labelled," said Mrs. Reginald promptly. She never spent pity on her father-in-law. The sons tarried more sympathetically before retiring to cigars in the study. Helen lingered longest to kiss this *malade*—if even half *imaginaire*, still the father she was leaving—and then the lovers had an hour in the drawing-room alone.

"You do look tired, darling," said the girl tenderly. "Why, what have you been doing to-day to weary yourself so?"

"What doing? Oh, more than I can tell. Is it not wonderful, sweetheart, that we are to have a whole month together?"

"Gilbert," her bright face all pink and pretty, "that's an evasion! Now why could you not get here earlier? Tell me directly."

"My dearest," looking oddly again as at the dinner-table, "I'll talk business with Reg. presently. I've something else to say to you. See," taking forth a tiny parcel, "I gave you no engagement ring. Will this be too late?" And he slipped on her finger an old-fashioned lustrous half-hoop diamond ring.



"THE BISHOP HELD THE DOOR OPEN" (*p.* 726).

"Gilbert, how lovely! But, rash man, how could you afford it?"

He looked uneasy at her caressing thanks.

"Don't fancy me too generous. It has not cost—perhaps—what you think."

"But it is worth a great deal, Gilbert."

"Yes! Of course—I mean—but one remembrance of our engagement you must have. So I should think I was right to—to get it."

"Dear Gilbert, where did you buy it?"

"Some time you shall know. Not to-night. I had a little—bother—over it. Let me forget it now, and let us be quite happy, darling."

So then another golden hoop more mystic still had to be brought out, and thus, laden with tremulous gladness, the minutes flew away till Reginald Wood was heard whistling in the hall, and good-bye had to be lingeringly said till next morning.

Presently Helen went back to the dining-room and showed her lover's gift. Mr. Wood dismissed it with a careless "very pretty." Mrs. Wood "was glad Mr. Nugent had thought of it *at last*." Mrs. Reginald was dissatisfied with the offering. "Of course," she said later to her husband, "it's handsome; but then it's antiquated! Second-hand, I suspect. I call that very mean. I don't like the young man. He looks wretchedly ill. I shan't be a bit surprised if Helen is soon a widow!"

* * * * *

Happily ignorant of this unpropitious prophecy, Gilbert Nugent repaired next morning to St. Benedict's, duly accompanied by his groomsman.

At the church they found themselves first, though, as Gerard Wood whispered, the others would soon be there, for it was striking nine now.

Quiet as the wedding had been kept, some few friends had found their way to it, and now drew near with congratulations for their former curate. These over, the bridegroom started to hear the first quarter past chiming above.

"The lady is always a little late," said the officiating vicar consolingly. "Step into the vestry till the clerk says they are coming, Mr. Nugent."

But all began to feel the bride's tardiness strange. "Particularly," blurted out her brother, "as your train goes at ten o'clock!"

Excitement now turned Gilbert Nugent as white as a ghost. No longer able to take part in any small talk, he stood, with folded arms, watching the entrance by which Helen should appear.

"Don't you think I'd best go and see what they are after?" said Gerard Wood. "Shall I run off, Nugent?"

Before reply was spoken, Reginald Wood hurried into the church, his face lowering and flushed. In the vestry he took Nugent by the arm, then turning to the vicar—

"I am sorry," he said, "but our wedding must be put off. Will you let us out by this door? Nugent, you come home with us."

What this meant the little congregation, scattering in astonishment, could not divine. As for the bridegroom, in that brief drive his brain seemed on fire. He was conscious of naught till he found himself in the Woods' house, the whole family confronting him.

Mrs. Wood was crying bitterly; Mrs. Reginald flashing suspicion and mistrust upon him; Mr. Wood coughing and gasping. Only Helen was quiet. She came instantly to his side, spite of restraining signs from all.

"Gilbert," she said, trembling as she clasped his hand, "don't—don't mind, dear. I—believe—nothing against you."

"We wish we could say the same," Reginald added: "but this came just as we were starting for church. Can you explain it, Nugent?"

He held out a telegram :—

"From Sir Archibald Vesey to the Rev. Octavius Wood.—Pray delay wedding. Bridegroom thief or insane. Detain him till I come."

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

THAT was a terrible message, but Sir Archibald was in a terrible state when he sent it off.

The conclave at Hampton, after the catastrophe recorded, only resulted in intensified confusion.

The groom who had driven the clergyman over was cross-questioned. "The gentleman," he said, "had been wunnerful pleasant: asked about the country, see'd where the Hampton road joined the Lunnon highway, and seemed took with the easy short cut down to Hampton station, through the wood behind the church."

"By that short cut he got off while we were cooling our heels outside," cried Sir Archibald; "now someone must go after him. Who's it to be?"

"I really hardly think I can," said the bishop: Archie, would you mind?"

And it being considered business less *infra dig.* for a baronet than a bishop, away went the former by the 7.20 up train, laden with instructions and advice from all.

Mr. Nugent's address Sir Archibald had on his last letter. From Euston he drove straight to where the young pastor had dwelt in the thick of his unwashed flock.

"Faugh!" said the baronet, as the hansom pulled up and he picked his way over the greasy pavement. "Nasty unwholesome place! Should think kleptomania and every other mania must thrive here." Then he gave a rattling knock which fetched up only a mite of a maid, who cautiously opened three inches of door, and knew nothing except that "missus was out till eleven, and Mr. Nugent was gone for good."

This was a full stop. Sir Archibald had promised not to set the police astir till he had somehow got light on the proceedings. "We don't want to ruin the poor wretch," said kind Bishop Maxwell, "and it *may* be aberration, you know."

So now the pursuer was at a standstill.

A flash! Off he drove to the Vicarage. Wilson might tell him something.

"Oh, dear me, no, sir!" said the servant. "Master's up at the working men's service. He have to take it now Mr. Nugent's gone."

Whether this service lasted ten minutes or two hours Sir Archibald had no idea, but he thought he'd better keep out of it. Re-entering his hansom, he ordered the man to drive slowly round and put him down at Inkerman Terrace at eleven.

Lucky at last! There was the landlady ready to talk with anyone about Mr. Nugent, who, she said, was "the hard-workingest clergyman that ever stepped, and, sorry though she was to lose him, yet glad she was he dropped into a good berth."

Politely cutting short her eulogiums, Sir Archibald set to work not unskilfully. "He was so vexed to miss Mr. Nugent. Pray, when had the clergyman left?"

"Well, sir, half after ten this morning, he paid me up to the uttermost farthing, and then he dressed himself careful, and went out, I think, to catch a Euston bus" ("*en route* to us," thought Sir Archibald), "but he come back soon after five, to fetch his portmanteau. He wouldn't stop, though, to drink the tea I made bold to offer him (he did look bad), 'for,' says he, 'don't make me late, Mrs. Jex. I'm off by Paddington to get married early to-morrow morning."

"Married! To-morrow! You don't mean it!"

"Yes, sir," charmed at surprising the gentleman; "to Miss Wood at Croole, the daughter of the clergyman there. They've had a long waiting, poor dears; and she's the nicest of young ladies. I've seen her once. If I'd known they were marrying so soon, I'd have made them a pincushion, or something. I said so, and Mr. Nugent he laughed, and showed me what he'd got for her. A ring of real diamonds. 'I've been after this to-day,' says he" (Sir Archie jumped). "'Twas a beauty, too. A real good old sort. Nothing gimcracky. With stones as close as peas in a pod."

Poor Sir Archibald! Here was confirmation of their worst suspicions. The young man's mind *must* have given way with work.

"Mrs. Jex," he said impressively, "do you think Mr. Nugent was right in his head?"

"Sir!"—quite affronted—"If it's sane you mean, he was as right as you or me!"

Sorry Sir Archibald was to hear it. Stopping only for the address of the Woods, he hastened off, drove to the nearest telegraph office, which, of course, at that hour was closed; infinitely bothered, sought a central hotel, bolted an indigestible supper, never thought of visiting Scotland Yard till next morning, but betook himself to bed with strict orders to be called at six.

Alas! he tossed about wakeful till nigh that hour,

then fell into a deep slumber that resisted the waiter's knocking, and lasted till eight o'clock. Rousing as the clock struck, Sir Archie tore into his clothes, dashed off his gruesome telegram, rushed to Scotland Yard, and there, burning with desire to be concise, gave such an all but incoherent account of what had occurred, that the calm official who listened felt compelled to send to Inkerman Terrace on his own account before proceeding further.

When confirmation of part of the tale was received, and arrangements for pursuit made, the noon train to Croole had gone. The next one started at four.

At that time, then, as the sunless day was waning into dark evening, the train moved out of Paddington bound for Lypmouth, making but three stoppages, the first at Sibcoat, next at Croole.

In a second-class carriage were Sir Archibald and his companion from Scotland Yard: a man whose plain face was redeemed from commonplace (like a mongrel terrier's) by most intelligent eyes.

The baronet took the furthermost corner seat, back to the engine, tucked his rug round him, remarked that they gave them very good lamps on that line, and began to study his newspaper.

Till two minutes before starting they had the carriage to themselves; then a passenger came up at great speed, and sprang into the seat opposite the detective.

This stranger, a youngish man, appeared preoccupied, unnoticing, till about thirty seconds before the train started, two men went quickly by and entered the next (till then empty) compartment. As they passed, his brows drew together, with a look as of trying to recall something. Curiously enough the detective's eyes gleamed viciously at the same instant. But neither spoke, and silence reigned for some ten miles, when the latest arrival moved opposite Sir Archibald to avoid a draught.

Now the baronet had been grunting over his paper for five minutes, and at last broke into speech.

"I declare," said he to the officer on his right, "they've got all our business in here."

"Indeed, sir," said the man shortly, and looked out of the window.

Answer and action might have hushed some people, but not Sir Archie. On he went.

"Curious, is it not, to find one's own affairs in print?" said he to the stranger.

"Very," was the answer absently uttered.

The detective coughed, but to no purpose.

"Can't think how they get the news so fast. My name wrong, though. Not 'Algernon'—'Archibald.' Hampton Birch, too, instead of Birch Hampton. Haven't got the parson's name at all. Call him clerical scamp. So he is."

"Pardon me," said the traveller opposite, now suddenly attentive, "do you speak of something occurring at Birch Hampton? May I ask what?"

"Read it if you like," said Sir Archibald, passing over the paper.

The stranger quickly scanned the account of the previous day's theft. Agitation and amazement swept over his face.

"It—can't—be true!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, but I can swear to it," said Sir Archibald, "for I'm the owner of the stolen jewels—or my wife is—and I gave the living to this Reverend Gilbert Nuge—— ahem! Forgot the name wasn't in. However, a rare reverend he is! Oh, never mind"—to the annoyed detective—"every one will know everything to-morrow. I can talk of it if I choose now—that is if the affair interests any one."

This pointed at the stranger, who had turned abruptly to the window, so concealing the astonishment on his features.

"Indeed," he said, "I am extremely interested. Your loss is heavy then?"

"Very. Our family diamonds were noted." (They were just passing through a two-mile cutting, where a chalk bed gives a wall as white as snow to the right of the down trains. On this the train was shadowed by the light of its own lamps as it swept along: the profiles, figures, movements of the occupants on that side all faithfully reproduced.) "Lady Vesey's necklace of single stones is worth two thousand. Then there's the pendant, and a pair of bracelets to match, besides rings and so forth. All gone, sir, I do assure you."

"Infamous! And the church plate too?"

"Every bit! A chalice"—positively stamping—"beg your pardon, was that your toe?"—as the stranger gave a hasty exclamation—"yes, an ancient chalice with a Maltese cross on the top, worth no end to collectors. But I bore you, perhaps?"

The chalk cutting was ended. The stranger leant back as if dazzled with staring at it so long.

"Not at all. And you are on the felon's track?"

"Exactly. The poor wretch was to have married this morning. I stopped that, though. Now we are going down to arrest him."

While Sir Archie still rambled on, the younger man seemed to think hard. Then he pencilled a few words carefully in his note-book, moved his place, and, unobserved by the baronet, handed his book to the detective. Quick as thought this person scribbled two lines, tore out the page, noiselessly dropped the window, caught the guard at Sibcoat, and gave him the *billet*. Next minute, that functionary, re-passing, responded with a nod slight but sagacious. Then the train flew on, and not another syllable was uttered till they neared Croole.

As they ran into the station, up sprang the baronet.

"Follow and wait by Mr. Wood's door till wanted," said he to the officer; "good night, sir," to the fellow-traveller, and directed on the platform, he strode quickly off to Helen's home.

There ensued a scene he would gladly have escaped; for then he had to tell the luckless parents how their child had barely escaped marriage with a felon or a madman.

"It must be the last!" groaned poor Mr. Wood; "he *must* have lost his reason."

"My husband has been in such a fearful state since

morning," wept the wife; "I couldn't even let our sons talk to him."

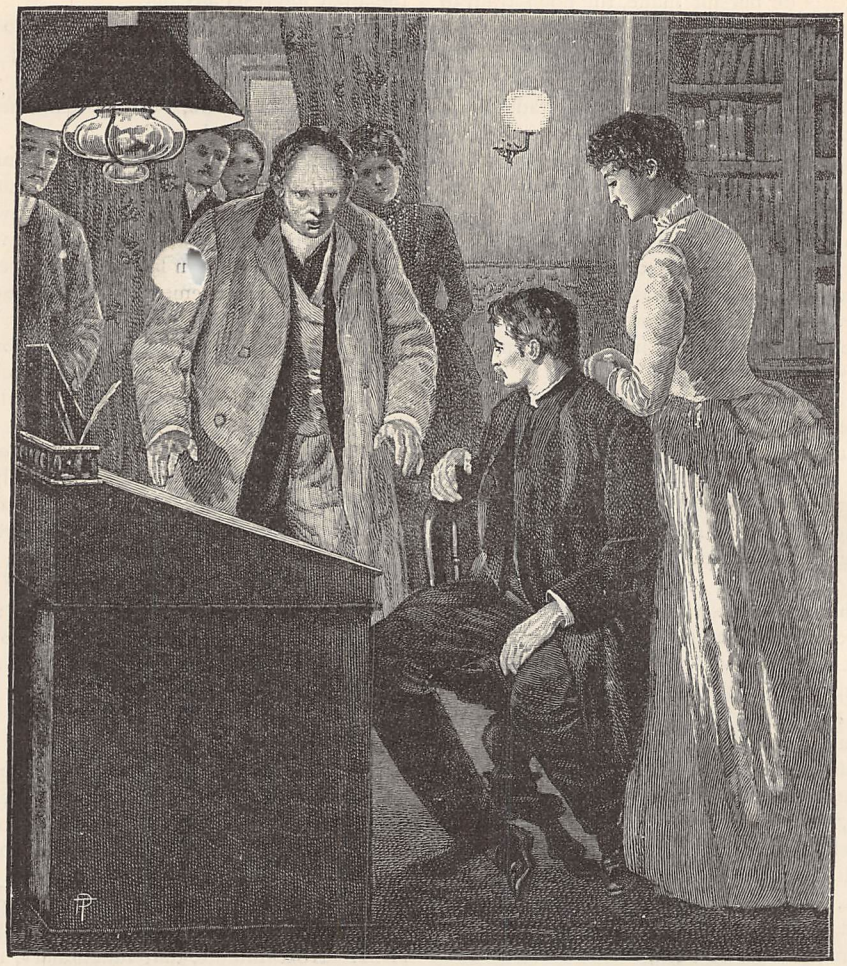
"My dear daughter—" said Mr. Wood, and then coughed till he nearly choked.

"Octavius! don't! She *will* remain with that unhappy man, Sir Archibald. He seems stunned; incapable of speech: indeed we have attempted no explanation till you came."

gazed blankly at him one whole long minute. "Mr.—Nugent!" he gasped, "why—why—I must have got the wrong man!"

"Ah, ha! but I've got the right one," said a cheery voice; and the stranger of the train, John Francis, telegraphed for at noon by Gilbert's earnest desire, came briskly into their midst.

"Hold your tongues and listen!" he cried, waving



"'MR.—NUGENT!' HE GASPED, 'WHY—WHY—I MUST HAVE GOT THE WRONG MAN!'"

"Perhaps I'd best see him, then," said the baronet, and feeling rather as if going to execution himself, he followed the stricken parents to the lamp-lit study, where the culprit was informally imprisoned.

Sir Archibald's first glance here fell on Helen's sweet sad face. Quivering, she stood up shielding her lover's form: the good angel of his darkest hour.

"At last!" she exclaimed. "Now, sir, will you tell us of what you accuse Mr. Nugent?" And she moved aside her hand upon his shoulder.

Sir Archibald felt awfully queer as he turned slowly upon the young clergyman; queerer still when he had down the hubbub of inquiry. "Now, Sir Archibald, you saw me staring out of the window while you talked of the robbery in the carriage yonder? Well, the thieves were next to us, sir!—bound for the Continent, *viâ* Lypmouth. They examined their booty as they went along, and the lamp and the chalk printed everything off for me plain as a pikestaff! I'll demonstrate on a whitewashed wall presently. I saw the fellows get in; recollected one after a bit: he was at the 'Lichfield' when Nugent lunched there with me on Monday. I gave your officer the clue. He and the guard wired up two brace of police to catch our gentle-

"I TURN WITH SILENT REVERENCE
ITS UNKNOWN PAGES O'ER."

"*THE OLD MUSIC-BOOK*" (*p.* 733).

men at Croole, and by now they're in gaol, 'wanted' on several counts. As for the beginning of the mischief: Gilbert," grasping his friend's hand, "next time you get preferment, mind what you do with papers of induction and so on. Our swell-mobsman, who slipped in past our new porter and was looking out for a job, heard you say you forgot if you'd posted them, neatly abstracted them from your coat, and by help of a confederate played out this little game. But it's all right now. There, then, Miss Helen, don't cry. Hallo, Gilbert, hold up! Somebody open the window, sharp! I declare the poor old chap's fainted!"

* * * * *

I think most of the party felt pretty bad except that callous detective, and he was grinning with joy over the neat way in which he'd bagged two of the cleverest swindlers in town.

When Gilbert Nugent was allowed to speak he cleared up what little mystery was left. His unwillingness to tell Helen how Tuesday had been occupied was merely because, suddenly remembering that by postponing his induction he had nothing whatever to bequeath a wife should accident of any sort happen to him, he had visited doctor, insurance office, and lawyer, thereby making arrangements, with which Reginald Wood the night before professed himself satisfied for his sister. But the doctor had so gravely insisted on the immediate need for rest that he dreaded to alarm Helen by mention of the matter. Hence solely he avoided it.

"And that ring?"

Well, a lady of the old French *noblesse*, half-starving now in St. Cyprian's parish, had been nigh parting with this last dear relic of lost riches to a pawnbroker, who offered for it about one-twentieth of its value. Telling her tale to the young *pasteur*, it struck him he could afford her just ten times as much, and more when his purse was fuller. By-and-by Helen should know the history of her *souvenir*, but it should not mar their happy evening together.

Whether by mischance this purchase bore on the horrible charge against him, Gilbert could not tell. Six years of such work as his, the one month of tense excitement, joy dashed from his lips at the moment of tasting, had played havoc with his nerves. Through all that wretched day he had felt simply stupefied into almost disbelieving his own identity.

"But now, if you'll promise to sleep from ten to-night till ten to-morrow, why, I'll let you get up and be married," quoth John Francis; "and we'll trust to Miss Helen to doctor your memory and patch up your character, young man."

The prescription answered admirably. Having got back his property, Sir Archibald easily forgave his young rector's share in its almost loss. Having got his wife, Gilbert Nugent freely pardoned Sir Archie's uncomplimentary misconception of his character. And before long all the actors in that grotesque romance (save two enjoying ten years at Dartmoor) were able to laugh right heartily over the startling incidents of that most strange induction.

THE OLD MUSIC-BOOK.

I TURN with silent reverence
Its unknown pages o'er.
The dusty lines inspire a sense
Of something heard before,
In days long past, in other lands;
Of ancient melodies;
Old harpsichords, and gentle hands
That touched the ivory keys.

The book a hundred fancies wears
On every yellow page,
Sonatas quaint, forgotten airs,
The notes all dim with age.
And variations long wound out,
And faded songs and old,
With trills and turnings all about,
And graces manifold.

Perchance in those old bygone days
My lady sat and played
In broidered stomacher of maize,
And flowered blue brocade.
Her lissom fingers dancing ran
Through many a florid strain,
Till Mistress Bell behind her fan
Begged "that sweet piece again."

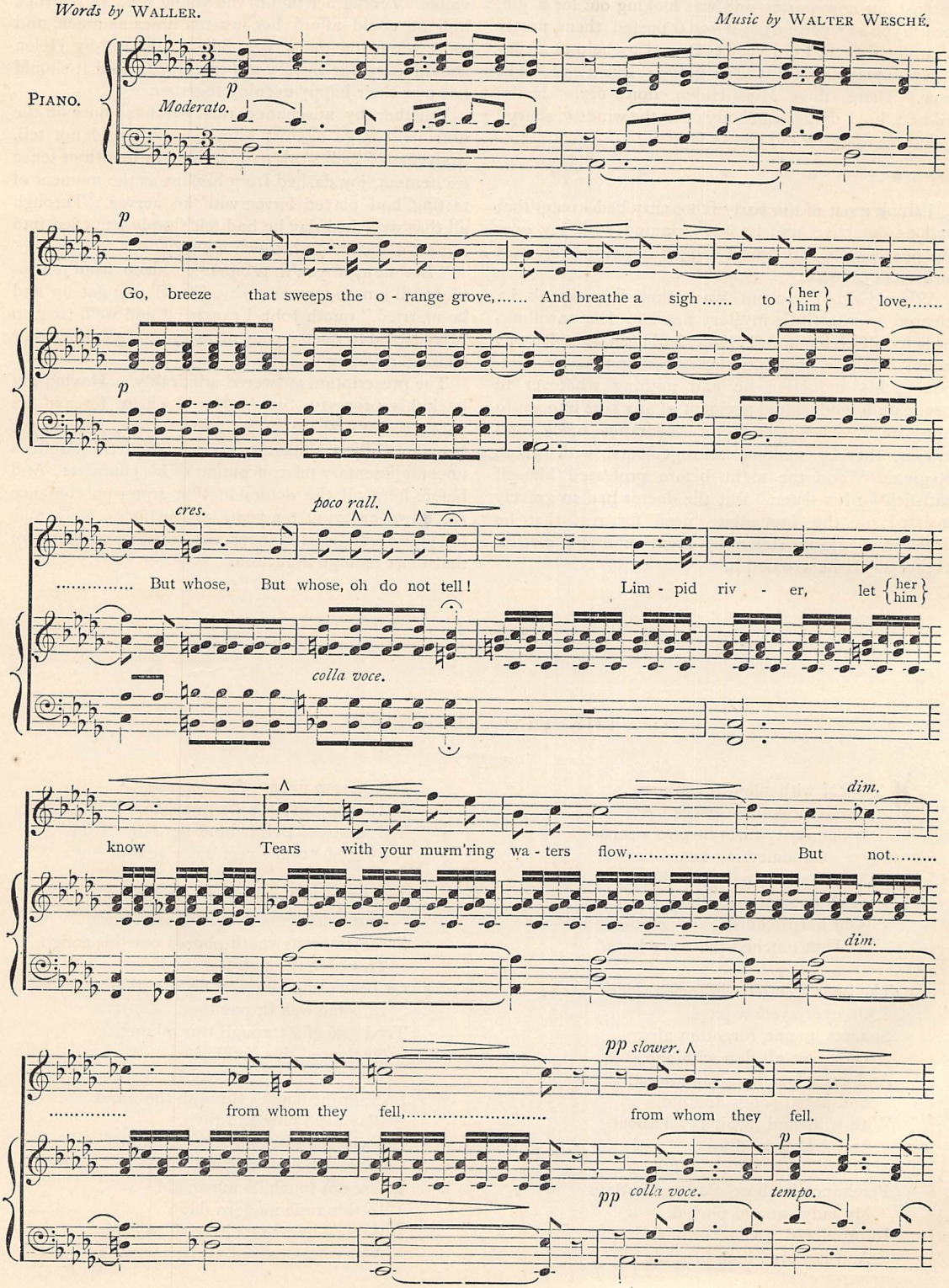
Perchance, when summer nights were long,
And soft winds swept the meadows,
Some amorous youth poured out this song
To Chloe through the shadows.
Or beaux and belles of higher state,
In some well-lit pavilion,
Trod graceful through this minuet,
Or figured this cotillon.

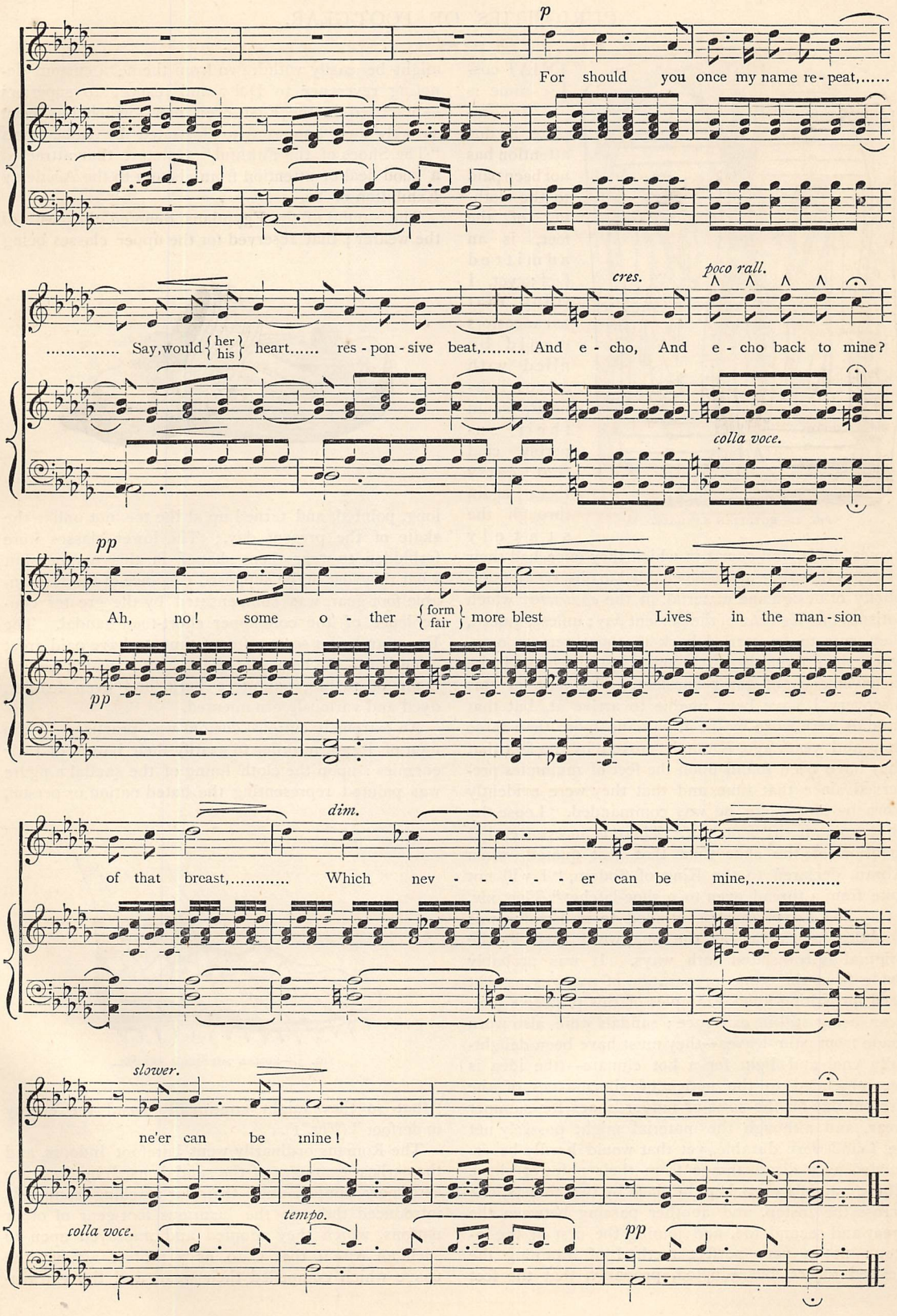
So vagrant fancies through the mind
Play fitful now and then,
As, with a smile and sigh combined,
I close the book again.
I dare not touch its music old
In this rude modern day;
Hallowed by fingers long since cold,
And voices passed away.

M. C. G.

Go, Breeze that Sweeps the Orange Grove.

Words by WALLER. *Music by* WALTER WESCHÉ.




p
For should you once my name re-peat,.....
cres.
poco rall.
..... Say, would {her / his} heart..... res-pon-sive beat,..... And e-cho, And e-cho back to mine?
colla voce.
pp
Ah, no! some o-ther {form / fair} more blest Lives in the man-sion
pp
dim.
of that breast,..... Which nev-er can be mine,.....
slower.
ne'er can be mine!
colla voce.
tempo.
pp

CURIOSITIES OF FOOT-GEAR.

FIG. 1.—EGYPTIAN SANDALS.

THAT costume is incomplete if due attention has not been paid to the clothing of the feet, is an admitted fact; yet, I think that our ancestors would be filled with astonishment, could their superbly clad feet carry them again through the stately homes, halls, and courts in which they once had their place, so that they might be enabled to observe the simplicity of design and material, in the *chaussure* which satisfies the *élégantes* of the present day; unless, indeed, they were to be carried back to those remote ages, when their forefathers had only just discovered the inconvenience of going barefoot. The date of this discovery I have been unable to arrive at, but that sandals were worn by the Egyptians more than three thousand years ago, is amply proved by the fact that they have been found upon the feet of mummies preserved since that time, and that they were evidently worn by Moses, for he was commanded, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot," &c. There is an even earlier mention of the shoe than that just quoted, when Abram declared to the King of Sodom, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet" (Gen. xiv. 23). The Egyptian shoe alluded to in Exodus was doubtless a sandal, as the one word used in the original is translated both ways. It was probably made from the same preparation of papyrus as that used for writing upon, examples of this primitive foot-gear being still in existence; sandals were also worn made from palm-leaves—they must have been delightfully cool and light for a hot climate—(the idea is recommended to the notice of shoemakers of the present day for the soles of indoor shoes for summer wear, and although the material might possibly not be found very durable, yet that would hardly be regarded as a disadvantage from their point of view). These sandals were kept in place by two thongs, one across the instep, and another passing between the great and second toe, and joining the first at the instep: not a very perfect method of attaining the desired object, but adopted, probably, that the feet might be easily withdrawn from them: a custom denoting reverence to Deity and respect to superiors—practised in the East even now—which has been so ably and humorously illustrated by Robertson's "The Shoes of the Faithful," a picture that attracted a good deal of attention from visitors to the Academy Exhibition of '82.

The sandal of the Egyptians denoted the caste of the wearer; that reserved for the upper classes being

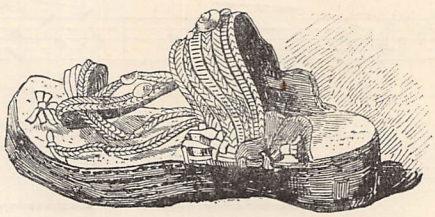


FIG. 2.—ROMAN SANDAL.

long, pointed, and turned up at the toe, not unlike the skate of the present day. The lower classes were forbidden to wear them shaped in this manner, but what they lost in the supposed elegance of the fashionable foot-gear, was compensated by the greater convenience of the commoner short-toed sandal. The Egyptian belles seem, after a time, to have paid great attention to the beauty of their sandals, which we find made of rushes, palm-tree bark, and even leather, dyed and variously ornamented.

An extremely curious custom was practised by the men of Egypt in order to gratify their hatred of their enemies; upon the cloth lining of the sandal a figure was painted representing the hated nation or person,

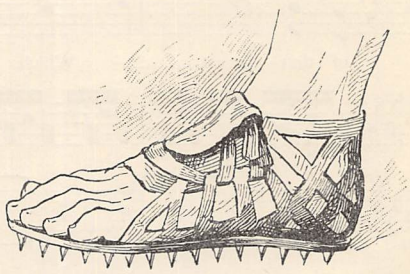


FIG. 3.—ROMAN SOLDIER'S SANDAL.

"that so they might continually tread the enemy underfoot" (Fig. 1).

The Romans ordinarily went barefoot indoors, and the earliest examples of the sandals used by them are extremely simple, until their far-reaching conquests introduced them to the luxurious foot-gear of other nations, which they adopted and improved upon to such an extent that Cato, as a protest against the usage which compelled their wear, and the extrava-

gance of decoration his countrymen indulged in, often went barefoot. The ancient Greeks, as well as the Romans, shod themselves with great simplicity, except in time of war, until they, too, advanced as they increased in riches and luxury, to an elaboration of style, and richness of decoration in their foot-gear,

FIG. 4.—ROMAN PATRICIAN'S SHOE.

(*From an Iron Statue of Hadrian in the British Museum.*)

which raised shoe-making to the dignity of an important and artistic handicraft.

Amongst them, as well as the Egyptians, the foot-gear indicated the class of the wearer. Slaves were not allowed to wear anything on their feet. Priests and philosophers often adopted the foot-gear of the lower orders as a sign of humility. One of the kinds in use amongst rustics was called the *crepida*, on account of the noise (*crepitus*) made by the wearers in walking. Fig. 2 represents a very curious kind of sandal belonging, it is supposed, to the period of the conquest of Britain; the high soles are of cork, and the straps are most wonderfully elaborate. In the time of Caligula, the Roman soldiers wore a kind of shoe, the sole of which was studded with spikes, to give them a firm foot-hold when marching over rugged ground, or climbing steep places: a device the value of which cricketers of the present day can appreciate (Fig. 3). It was because he wore a lighter and more elegant variety of this kind of shoe (*caliga*) while with the army of his father Germanicus, that the soldier gave to the young Caius the surname of Caligula.

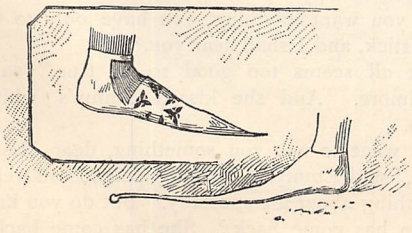


FIG. 5.—PYKES.

The shoe was so called from the number of straps (*ligulæ*) used to fasten it round the leg.

The *campagus*, a sort of half-boot not unlike the *caliga* in shape, was usually worn by the Emperors, but it was adorned with the embroidered figure of an eagle, and enriched with jewels. Heliogabalus is said to have worn exquisite cameos on his shoes; and as it is related of him that he never wore a pair twice, it is to be hoped that the costly adornments of the cast-off shoes were sometimes transferred to the new ones. Cyrus, the great Persian monarch—who, by the way, must have been rather a fop—advises short men to wear something between the sole of the sandal and the foot, in order to increase the dignity of their appearance; a hint which was adopted, centuries later, by the Roman ladies, who also copied the example set them by Heliogabalus, of adorning their *chaussures* with gold, silver, and precious stones, some having even the soles made of gold. It is difficult to understand why they were at length forbidden by him to ornament their shoes in this costly fashion, unless he wished to establish a monopoly of the privilege.

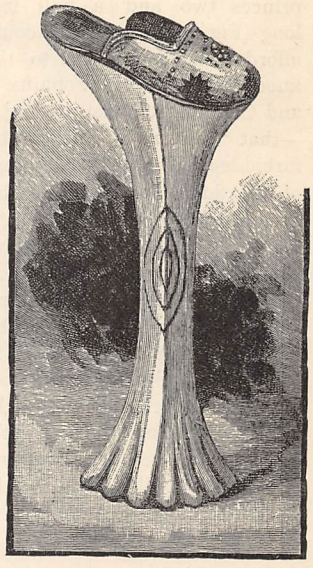


FIG. 6.—CHOPINE.

When luxury and extravagance in the adornment of the feet had arrived at its greatest height, the wealthy and fashionable Romans began to prefer half-boots made of purple leather, to those enriched with gold and precious stones; but these were by no means inexpensive, on account of the enormous cost of the dye used to give the desired tint, and the time taken to produce the exquisite embroidery with which they were embellished. It is said that the shoes of the Roman maidens were so ornamental, that lovers preserved the soles of those worn by the beloved one, in the same manner as they now treasure locks of hair, ribbons, &c.

I have said that the foot-gear indicated the wearer's rank; this indication was made decisive by sumptuary laws, the senators wearing black shoes, with a crescent of gold or silver, or other elaborate ornament on the top (Fig. 4), the patricians being allowed shoes with four straps, while the plebeians were forbidden to wear more than one.

We must pass on to the eleventh century, when the Normans began to wear long, sharp-toed shoes—a fashion which was carried to such an extent, that Archbishop Anselm deemed it necessary to preach furiously against it. His eloquence seems to have

been wasted, for we find one of the courtiers of the day improved upon the prevailing mode, by stuffing the toes of his shoes with tow, and having them twisted like rams' horns. Amongst the eccentricities of the Plantagenet period, was the fashion of wearing a differently coloured stocking on each leg, the shoes being adorned with designs cut from the upper leather, to show the stocking, each shoe itself being of a different colour; thus the right leg and foot would be clothed with a red stocking and a white shoe, while the left would display a purple stocking and a green shoe. The long-toed shoes then reappeared, the common people being permitted by law, to wear "pykes on their shoon" half a foot, rich citizens a foot, and princes two and a half feet long (Fig. 5); those who could afford it fastened them to the knee with gold or silver chains. It was in vain that Popes and Councils remonstrated against this absurd fashion —that "persons of any condition whatsoever" were forbidden, "on pains of being mulcted in a penalty of ten florins," from using the "long-peaked shoon, as contrary to good manners, and a mockery of God and His Church," until Parliament in 1643 prohibited shoemakers from making them with "beakes" more than two inches long, enforcing their prohibition with heavy fines, and the curse of the clergy. Fashion then ran to the opposite extreme, requiring the shoe to be a foot in breadth across the toes. One of the greatest follies ever perpetrated by the *beau monde* was the adoption, during the sixteenth century, of the "chopine," a device for increasing the wearer's stature. Shakespeare alludes to it when he makes Hamlet address one of the lady actors thus: "Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last by the altitude of a chopine." These chopines, as worn by the ladies of Venice, were "made with wood covered with leather of various colours . . . many of them curiously painted . . . some gilt. . . . and by how much nobler a woman is, by so much higher are her chopines. All . . gentlewomen . . that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported either by men or women, when they walk abroad . . . otherwise they might quickly take a fall." Raymond says they wore these "wooden scaffolds" as "high as a man's leg." One writer says that "one being asked how he liked the Venetian dames," he laughingly answered "that they were *mezzo carro*, *mezzo ligno* (half flesh, half wood), and he would have none of them." (Fig. 6.) During the seventeenth century high boots were worn, the tops of which were turned down when walking, to display the costly lace with which they were lined. The top of one style of boot worn at this time was so broad as to compel the wearer to assume a most ridiculous "straddle when walking." (Fig. 7.) Then high red heels, and buckles of an enormous size, became fashionable, which subsequently were worn richly ornamented, sometimes with real diamonds. After a time the heels became lower, and were slanted towards the middle of the foot; the discomfort of this mode was probably the reason why heels for a time almost vanished. Then came a period which was marked by nothing very remarkable in the history of foot-gear, until the introduction of machinery for the manufacture of boots and shoes.

FIG. 7.—CAVALIER'S BOOT.

ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By L. T. MEADE.

"'Tis love that makes the world go round."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

MISS PHILLIMORE received her favourite Emmy with a little cry of delight. A delicate pink flushed all over her pale and suffering face. She stretched out her arms and folded them round the young girl, kissing her many times on her forehead.

"My child, my dear child!" she said. "This is good—I did not even know you were in the house."

"No; I meant to surprise you," said Emmy. "You got my letters, of course? I wrote to you whenever I could. Now I have come back to stay, and I shall probably occupy my little room next to yours to-night, so if you want anything, you have only to tap with your stick, and I shall hear you."

"It all seems too good to be true," said Miss Phillimore. And she kissed Emmy's white brow again.

"I want to ask you something, dear Miss Phillimore," said Emmy. "All my people are well, and it is nothing about me specially. But do you know that Helen has come back? She has come back all the

way from America; she arrived to-night, and Dorothea is not downstairs. We found her room deserted and her letters unopened. She must have been away for some days, for the room looked so deserted and dusty."

"My dear, did you not know? Dorothea Channing has been absent from home over three weeks."

"Dear Miss Phillimore, can you tell me nothing about her?"

"Not much, dear. She is a beautiful and winsome creature; her visits were always like rays of sunshine, but they simply flashed and were gone. She seemed to me like a lovely, weak, unstable soul, caged in a body which it could hardly endure. Restlessness was no word for her, and yet I could not look at her without loving her."

"She told you nothing of her story, then, did she?"

"Nothing, dear; she made me no confidences—she looked at me with those shining eyes of hers, and her bright head seemed to lighten up the room, and her radiant smile to make it almost gay. But, as I said before, dear, she flashed in and out, never remaining two moments at a time with me."

"She did not tell you how she was getting on with her art?"

"No, but as she was absent from home all day, I conclude she was industrious and busy."

"Used she to go out in the evening?"

"I think so; and sometimes some one called for her, for I have heard her gay laugh floating up to my window as she walked away. Why do you ask me so many questions, Emmy dear? Dorothea never seemed at all ill."

"Listen," said Emmy. "I am very—I am terribly anxious about Dolly. Can you tell me anything—even the smallest thing, about the last day you saw her?"

"That was about three weeks ago," said Miss Phillimore. "Yes, I will certainly tell you all I know. It was a lovely day, and Dorothea came into my room early. She opened the window to let in the sweet breezes, and pulled back the curtains, and was more attentive to my comforts and less restless and eager to go than she generally was. She looked so bright and beautiful that it was a pleasure even to glance at her. She was all in white—a very simple dress; I had seen her wear it before—and a little bonnet, mostly made up of white roses, which nestled into her bright hair, and which I could not help admiring. 'I made it myself,' she said carelessly, 'and I am afraid it is rather shakily put together.' Then she paused, and drawing on a pair of white gloves, said suddenly, 'Miss Phillimore, I am going away on a visit. I shall not be back for a week or a fortnight, but I have asked Mrs. Stack, the caretaker, to look after you, and she has promised to be very attentive.'

"'I hope you will enjoy yourself, dear,' I said.

"'Yes,' she answered, still in that brusque little way of hers. 'It was quite my turn for a holiday, was it not? Good-bye, Miss Phillimore. Wish me joy, wish me happiness.'

"'Of course I will, dear child,' I said. And I stretched out my hands to her.

"She stooped down and kissed me.

"'God bless you, you beautiful child!' I said. Then she coloured all over her face, and looked half inclined to cry, and ran out of the room.

"I have not seen her since, dear, nor has she written, although sometimes I hoped she would send me a line. I cannot help it," added Miss Phillimore. "Although I have seen so little of Dorothea, I have taken a great fancy to her. Why, Emmy, my dear child, what is the matter? You look quite stunned."

"I am afraid I am a little bit," said Emmy, rising to her feet, for she had been kneeling by Miss Phillimore's sofa. "Your news has made me very anxious—very anxious. I won't betray Dorothea's confidence, if I can help it, but I can do something at once. Will you help me with this?"

"Oh, my love, need you ask? That is, if a poor helpless woman can do anything."

"You can, most truly. I want you to send for Helen, talk to her about Dolly, about anything: keep her attention, keep her occupied and engaged for an hour. While Helen is talking to you, I will go out, for I think I know where I can find Dolly."

"Send her to me, dear, and I will do my best. She must be a very altered Helen Channing if she can sit quietly in my room for an hour, but I will do my best, my very best, to occupy her attention."

Emmy kissed Miss Phillimore and ran downstairs.

"Well?" said Helen, as she entered the little sitting-room.

"Dolly went away three weeks ago, Helen, and Miss Phillimore saw her the morning she left. Miss Phillimore is so glad you have returned—she would so much like to see you. Could you go and sit with her for a little?"

"Not to-night, my dear Emmy; I am so tired, and good for nothing. This news about Dolly is most strange. Fancy the child absenting herself for three weeks and leaving no address!"

"Miss Phillimore took a great fancy to her," continued Emmy. "I think she could tell you a good many things about her, Helen, and it would give her great pleasure to see you again."

"Well, I will go to her," said Helen, rising wearily to her feet. "I must say I'm greatly perplexed about Dolly."

The moment Helen went upstairs, Emmy put on her hat, jacket, and gloves, and went out. She hailed the first hansom she met, and desired the driver to take her to the Marstons' address in Bayswater. Her heart was beating fast, her cheeks were burning, but now that she had really started on her search for Dorothea, she ceased to tremble or to be afraid. Her one desire was by some means to avert a threatened grief for Helen, which she felt might wound or break Helen's heart.

The hansom drew up at the Marstons' door. The whole house was gaily lighted, and streams of brilliant light fell across the street. The hall door was instantly opened by a servant who wore white ribbons in her cap, and who smiled when Emmy asked if Miss Marston was at home.

"Oh, yes, miss! Miss Marston is in the drawing-room—there's some company, miss, and I thought as you was one of the guests. Mrs. Marston is at home, too, miss; this is the first party given in honour of our bride's return. Only a few friends, miss—not many. Would you like to come up, or will you call again?"

"I want to see Mrs. Marston," said Emmy. "She was Miss Channing, was she not? She is a friend of mine. Yes, I want to see her at once."

"Then you'll come this way, please, miss."

"Up to the drawing-room? No, they have friends there. Is there no study, no quiet room where I can go? I will wait for Mrs. Marston there. Tell her I have come—that I am Miss Thorn—Miss Emmy Thorn."

The girl looked bewildered, Emmy's face was so white, her dress so unfestive; other guests were beginning to arrive, however, and she had no time to consider.

"Come this way, miss," she said, and she conducted Emmy to a tiny closet of a room just at the back of the cloak-room.

"Wait here, miss, and I'll do my best. But Mrs. Marston is very much occupied receiving her guests."

Emmy sat down, covered her face with her hands, and waited.

Then the blow had fallen! Dorothea had taken her own way. She had never written to Helen, never waited for her consent, never consulted her own people about her marriage. She was now Marston's wife. For good or evil, the deed was done. This was the explanation, then, of that white dress, those flushed cheeks: that eager, agitated, half-repentant manner. Dorothea wanted the blessing which should rest on every bride, but was she likely to have it?

The house was a small one, and the sounds of mirth and gay voices fell painfully on Emmy's ears as she waited in her tiny shelter behind the cloak-room. She was feverishly anxious to see Dorothea, for she knew that Miss Phillimore could not long engage Helen's attention, and she wanted to tell Helen her story, whatever it was, without delay.

Fresh arrivals came, and Emmy heard remarks made about the beauty of the bride, and considerable surprise expressed at Edgar Marston's hasty marriage.

A morose kind of fellow, the girls who chattered together considered him; they never thought he would fall suddenly in love or suddenly marry. They rather pitied his sister Nellie, and they wondered how things would be kept going, for although clever, he was scarcely a popular artist; and they were given to understand that the bride had nothing, and was but a *débutante* in art.

Emmy clasped her hands tightly together—would Dorothea never come? Must she go away, and tell her story to Helen, and confess that she had not even seen her sister?

Just then there came a hurrying eager footstep—somebody swept through the cloak-room, opened the door beyond, and Dorothea, radiant and all in shining white, stood before her.

"My dearest Emmy, how delightful it is to see you! And you have come to crown my party? Oh, yes, you must come up and join us all—you really must. You shall come to my room first, and I will rig you up fit to be seen; just a touch here, and a touch there, and my dear little Sister of the Red Cross will be perfect. Emmy, love, how grave you look! almost stunned. Has my happiness benumbed you, dearest? Do you think me very, very naughty to have taken my own way in this matter, and to have stolen a march on you all?"

Dorothea's tone, although gay, had a certain recklessness in it. She was as beautiful, perhaps more beautiful than ever; but a certain bloom, a certain indescribable charm had left her. Emmy knew when she looked into her eyes that Helen's sister, the old impulsive, dreamy, bewitching Dorothea, was no longer anywhere to be found in this world.

"Wish me joy, Emmy," said Dorothea, taking her hand. "And come upstairs at once, darling, and let me make you smart. All our guests are waiting, and I must hurry back to them. Come, Emmy, shake yourself, wake up—don't look at me with such dazed eyes."

"I have come," said Emmy slowly—"I came home to-night, and you were not at home. Miss Phillimore said you had been away for three weeks, so I came on here. Helen wants you, Dorothea."

"Helen?" said Mrs. Marston.

She stepped back a pace or two and clasped her hands.

"Yes, Helen, too, came home to-night. She is most anxious, most miserable. Dolly, Dolly, you never told Helen of your engagement! I know you never told her—and now you are married—and she has come home looking for the old Dolly—the old Dolly who was part of her life, and she has gone away for ever. How can I go back and tell her that her sister is gone, Dorothea?"

Dolly's face had grown whiter and whiter, her large eyes were misty with tears, her childish pouting lips trembled.

"Helen has come home! Helen has come home! I am frightened," she said, and she looked round her as if for someone into whose arms she could fly for shelter. That look of childish fright and emotion did more to re-assure Emmy and bring her to herself than anything else could have done.

"Come, Dolly," she said, going up and taking the limp long fingers between her own. "Never mind your visitors—never mind anyone now but Helen. Come back with me at once, just as you are, and tell her all—all. You can leave a message with the servant for your—your husband, but come now, this minute, to Helen—it is the one chance left of saving her from a broken heart."

Dorothea hesitated and trembled.

"My visitors!" she said; "my first reception!"

"What are they in comparison with Helen? Leave a message with your husband, and come with me just as you are. Come and tell her the whole story from beginning to end. This is the only chance to save her from a broken heart."

"What stern words you use, Emmy Thorn," said Dorothea, almost petulantly. "Well, I will obey you; I will come. I shall get into an awful scrape by doing so, and Edgar won't like it. I have never vexed him before; but I know he is terrible when he is crossed. Not to me—he loves me more than his life; but I saw

Dorothea ran up the stairs with her old light step. She showed not the slightest emotion—if she was afraid, she said nothing more about it; but a gas-lamp which hung above the Channings' door showed her face ghastly white.

Emmy opened the little hall door with her latch-key,

"DOROTHEA, RADIANT, AND ALL IN SHINING WHITE, STOOD BEFORE HER" (*p.* 740).

him once with Nellie. Never mind, however; I will come." She swept out of the room, and taking up a white shawl, wrapped it round her.

"Call a cab," she said to the servant, "and tell Mr. Marston that my sister has come back unexpectedly, and that I have gone to see her. That is all. Emmy," she added, turning round to her companion, "such a message sent at such a time is enough to vex any man. Well, I will go to Helen, to save her, as you say, from a broken heart."

The cab was called, and the two girls got in. In a moment or two they reached the little flat, and and the next moment Dorothea found herself in Helen's presence.

Helen had thrown herself once more into the old arm-chair by the fire. There she sat crouched up, her face grey, and the look of haggard disappointment very visible round her eyes. But at the sight of Dorothea coming in, in her radiant white, the whole noble expressive face changed as if by magic. She sprang to her feet, a light as of the brightest sunshine illuminating and softening every feature.

"Oh, my darling!" she said. And she strained this beloved young sister to her heart.

Helen, with all her nobleness, was not often soft or caressing. When she did allow her whole nature to unbend and open wide, the effect was almost magical. At such moments Helen Channing was irresistible.

"You have come back, Dolly," said Helen. "You were at a party—how beautiful you look, my dearest! And this good, kind little Emmy went to fetch you. Of course, I did not really mind your being away—I always longed for you to enjoy yourself; but when my hopes were raised so high, and when I so longed for you, it seemed a little flat coming home, and not finding either you or a message from you. Never mind, however, now—here you are. Let me turn you round to the light—let me look at you well, my treasure."

Dorothea's face grew whiter than ever. Emmy, glancing at her, forgave her on the spot for that hasty marriage and all its accompanying concealments.

"She is punished now," she said to herself. "Oh, how can she—how can she ever bring herself to tell Helen what she has done? Poor Dolly! Well, no one can help her now."

Emmy went very gently out of the room. The moment she was gone Dorothea opened her lips, but the light and airy words she longed to speak would not come—she bent her head and kissed Helen on her forehead twice.

"Dolly, darling, you are very pale—and—I don't know this dress. White silk?—oh, you extravagant girl!—but no matter. I have done so well in New York, dear, and I have been offered a splendid appointment there. We can both go, but I did not decide until I had consulted you. America is *the* place for young artists, Dolly, and you will like the people and the life—I did. They were so fresh, so energetic—they would suit your restless nature, darling. Yes, I think I may truly say that our times of anxiety are at an end. The home we have so often pictured together is within our grasp, Dolly—that home in which we may lead the higher life, and show other women what two girls can achieve. Yes, it is ours now. Why, what is the matter, dear? Oh, my darling! you are trembling—you are not at all well, Dolly."

"Give me some water," said Dorothea, at last finding her voice with a gasp. "I am not ill, Helen, and yet the words I have to say are choking me. Don't come near me; don't touch me—you would not if you knew. I wrote to you, Helen—yes, I *did* write to you, and I thought you would know all long before now. Now I must tell you, and I have got no words—no words. Oh! how can I put it?—how can I say it? Emmy tells me it will break your heart. There, Helen, we are divided—we can never have the home you talk of together. *You* may belong to the women who can live alone, who can be self-reliant, and all-sufficient to themselves; but I am weak, and I must have somebody strong to cling to. I cannot live the impossible life, Helen; and now, now I have shut the door on it by my own act. See—*this* divides us," and she held out her slender white finger with its wedding-ring.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

THERE are some wounds which can never be healed. We can cover them up, and not talk of them, and wear smiling faces over all the anguish they cost us; but the wounds remain, and when we are alone we look at them, and clasp our hands, and feel that we must ever and always go maimed through life.

Such a wound had been dealt to Helen Channing—her idol, her dearest treasure, had given it her. Hers, however, was a brave and loyal nature. When Dorothea showed her the wedding-ring, she placed the glass of water quite steadily by her sister's side, and then, without uttering a word or exclamation, she went into the little bedroom which the two girls had occupied together. She stayed there for about half an hour; then she came back again, and sat down by Dolly on the sofa. Her face had changed in that half-hour—all the warmth and joy which had shone through her eyes, and softened her voice, and had made her a glowing, strong, rejoicing woman, had sunk back and disappeared. The grey eyes were quiet and almost cold, and the voice in which she said, "Now, Dorothea, tell me everything—don't keep anything back from me, my poor sister," fell like ice on that wilful, sensitive sister's heart. Dolly told her story, and Helen listened without making any comments. Now and then she asked a pertinent question; now and then she drew the eager speaker's voice away from the subject of Marston's many fascinations; but otherwise she listened in grave silence, her cold face expressing neither approval nor the reverse. Once Dorothea burst into tears, but even these did not move Helen; she waited until the brief distress had exhausted itself, and then asked her sister to resume the story.

At half-past eleven that evening Marston called for his wife. He looked perturbed, and Helen noticed that he had a fretful face, and that the mouth, which was partly hidden by a long moustache, was weak in outline and vacillating in expression. Dorothea introduced her husband to Helen, who said a few words to him, and then the pair went away.

"You will come and see me to-morrow, Helen?" said Dolly, her lip quivering painfully.

"Not to-morrow, dear. I think I shall be particularly busy, and I shall have to report myself to Mr. Russell."

"Oh, but I thought—I thought you would give that up now you are going to America."

"I am not going to America, dear. That dream is quite at an end."

"I cannot bear it," said Dorothea, with a choking sob.

She rushed out of the room, and, wrapping her shawl tightly about her, without even waiting for her husband, ran into the street.

"Will you walk or drive, Dolly?" he asked.

"I will walk, please—don't speak to me; I am choking."

She gave one or two violent tearless sobs. Marston particularly disliked hysterics, and he was afraid Dorothea was going to favour him with a scene.

"Control yourself," he said, almost coldly; "or at least wait until we get home, and you can tell me quietly what is the matter."

Dorothea turned upon him with a piteous appeal.

"Don't speak to me in that voice, Edgar," she said. "Oh, love me—love me with your whole heart, or I shall die!"

The lamp-light fell on the exquisite face which had so bewitched him. He was touched, and drew her hand tenderly through his arm.

"Poor little girl!" he said. "And so Helen grudged us our happiness? Never mind, Dorothea; we are all in all to each other."

"All in all," repeated Dorothea, but her heart was very sore.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

HELEN was not a woman to show her wounds to the world. When she met Emmy the next morning, she did not avoid speaking of Dorothea; she neither praised nor blamed her, but she thanked Emmy in a quiet matter-of-fact voice for bringing her over.

"I am not going to America now, Emmy," she said, and her face for a quarter of an instant wore a wistful expression.

"Why?" asked Emmy.

"I could not do it. We won't discuss the subject, please. Have you any idea what Mr. Marston's means are?"

"He cannot be very well off," replied Emmy. "He has a small house, and it is just the sort of house that people who have very little money would keep. I cannot describe it to you, only you feel it somehow in the air."

"Pretentious?" said Helen, knitting her brows.

Perhaps that is it. I find it difficult to tell you. I had a meal there once, and went away so hungry."

Helen sighed. "Poor Dolly!" she said. "I must look into all these matters—I have a good deal to do. Emmy, I will not blame my sister, but I must be allowed to say one thing to express to you one poignant fear—Dorothea's chances of happiness are not very brilliant."

"Oh, I hope she'll be happy," said Emmy.

"Her chances are not great. I do not trust the man, and Dorothea is not suited to the petty cares which small means involve."

"But you have never been rich, Helen."

"What of that? My poverty never touched Dolly. She will know now what it means to be the wife of a poor and selfish man. Well, I must not linger any longer here. I must do what I can for them both. There is no doubt whatever of Dorothea's genius; her paintings ought to bring her money."

"So they will," said Emmy, with sparkling eyes. "Oh, Helen, if you only saw her 'Sister of the Red Cross'—if you only heard what those artists said of it!"

"Don't!" said Helen, her face twitching again. She hurried out of the room, and a moment afterwards left the house.

Helen was all vigour and energy, and the next fortnight was scarcely an agreeable time for Edgar Marston. He was subjected to more than one severe ordeal, and had to answer plain questions, not only to Helen, but to a very astute lawyer whom Helen employed. His affairs were certainly not in a satisfactory state. If he was an artist, the school whose style he had adopted was not a popular one, and his admirers were few. His chance of earning a living by his profession was but small, and Helen, having sifted matters to the very bottom, declared that it was absolutely necessary for Dorothea to continue her artistic career.

"You must return to Mr. Arbuthnot when he reopens his studio," she said to her sister. "I will pay the necessary fees."

Dorothea sprang forward to thank Helen in her old impulsive way, but Helen's quiet, cold manner, and the penetrating glance with which she seemed to measure Dolly's very soul, repelled her. She bit her lips, and turned away to look out of the window of the tawdry little drawing-room which she called her home.

Meanwhile, Emmy having come back to London to work, resumed her occupations in earnest. The mysterious gift of White Rose Cottage, with its accompanying legacy of £200, had lifted her out of immediate want, had enabled her to make her mother and young sisters and brothers comfortable. Nevertheless, she knew that even a cottage rent free and £200 in cash represented a very limited horizon, and that the need for her to work was nearly as great as ever.

She was glad of this, for there is no such balm for a perplexed and waiting spirit as work. Emmy's heart was less sore about Frank when her hands were busy and her brain fully occupied.

She went every day to the British Museum and wrote hard, throwing a great deal of energy and a great deal of human nature into her book. At last, one short November day it was finished, and she came back to Helen with a bulky manuscript under her arm.

"It is done, Helen," she said; "the book is finished. I don't want you to laugh at me too dreadfully, but I am most anxious for you to read it."

"What matter if I do laugh?" said Helen; "my laughter won't crush you, Emmy. I begin to think nothing would crush a spirit like yours."

"Yes, one thing would," said Emmy, her cheeks growing pale; "one thing would."

"My dear, it must be something tremendous; pray mention it."

"If my faith died, for instance." Helen looked at her earnestly.

"You are all faith, Emmy Thorn," she said. "You believe both in God and man." Then she paused, and looked again at the young and sweet face.

"Do you ever hear from Captain Redfern, Emmy?"

"I have not for some time. Will you read the manuscript after tea, Helen? and will you give me your advice about it?"

Helen glanced at Emmy again, and a very brief

sigh escaped her own lips; she was contrasting the steadfast, nobly reticent nature with her own brilliant Dorothea's.

"I feel that I should like to move heaven and earth to get that girl's lover back for her," she said to herself.

Aloud, she remarked, in a cool voice, "You will find me a severe critic, Emmy; the fact is, I hate novels and fiction of all sorts."

"You are the critic I want," said Emmy, smiling, as she placed the manuscript in Helen's hands

"I will read it after you go to bed," said Helen. "I wish to have no witnesses to behold either your defeat or your victory. You may wring tears or smiles from me; you may, on the other hand, awaken my utmost derision. In any case, I shall laugh or cry in private, so go to bed early, my dear; or, rather, go and pay Miss Phillimore a visit—you are the sunshine of her life."

"Do you know, Miss Phillimore," said Emmy, half an hour later, as she sat by her dear old friend, "that at this very moment Helen Channing is deciding my whole future for me?"

"My dear child, your whole future?"

"Yes; she is reading my story. It is finished at last, and a great deal depends on her verdict."

"She could give a severe one," responded Miss Phillimore. "If she dislikes your story you will be discouraged, my dear little Emmy. What a pity you did not read it to me!"

"You would have been too indulgent to me," answered Emmy. "I must learn the truth, and Helen will not scruple to tell it."

The next morning, however, when the two girls met at breakfast, Helen's comments with regard to Emmy's manuscript were brief.

"I have read the entire story, Emmy. It has, at least, the advantage of brevity, and your plot never flags."

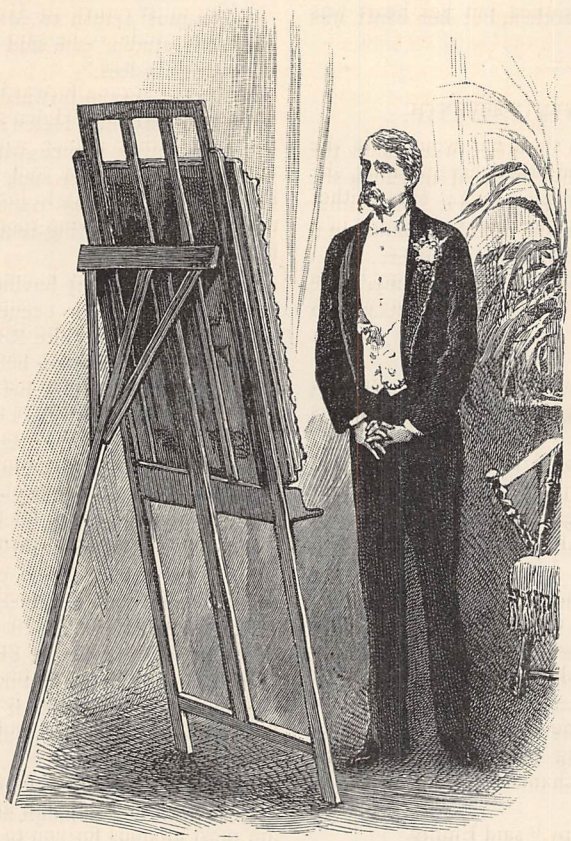
"You—you think it will do?" said Emmy, her cheeks growing pale.

"I don't know whether it will do or not. I am not prepared with any opinion, but I should like to show it to Mr. Russell."

"To Mr. Russell? Then you cannot think badly of it, Helen. How good of you! how can I thank you?"

"I reward myself if I help you, Emmy," said Helen, with a smile which but rarely now softened her young face. "I may take the manuscript, then?"

"Oh! with all the heart in the world, only I hope the great critic won't keep me long in suspense."



"CAPTAIN REDFERN REMAINED BEHIND" (*p.* 747).

The great critic turned out, however, surprisingly accommodating. A few words from Helen induced him to take an interest in the author, and to transfer that interest to her clearly written pages was no difficult matter.

"The girl writes a legible hand, for a wonder," he said; "by so doing she has won half her battle already. Well, Miss Channing, I will read the book to oblige you. It is sure to be intensely silly; but I will give you my verdict and put that young thing out of her pain to-morrow."

The next day Mr. Russell came into Helen's room, rubbing his hands.

"The wonderful and extraordinary thing," he said, as he put Emmy's manuscript down on the table, "is that this chit of a girl, this inexperienced country lass, has actually managed to write a sensible book."

"Then you think well of it?" said Helen, springing to her feet, and looking quite excited for her. "You believe that my dear little Emmy Thorn has genius, after all?"

"I don't know that she has a scrap of genius. It may develop; but it is impossible to prognosticate anything so great at this early stage. But she has what half the writers of the day would give much to possess—a pretty style of her own and a story to tell. In short, she has something to say, and she knows how to say it. This little book will go down, Miss Channing, because it talks of real flesh-and-blood men and women. It is an every-day tale

enough, but the larger portion of the human race belong to every-day life, and like to have their experiences put on paper. The book will do, and its author ought to be well paid. I should advise her to take it to Farman and Pratt."

"Theirs is a very big house," observed Helen, "and Emmy has no introductions."

"I will write a line with it, and promise an early notice in my papers. They are certain to accept it; it is miles better than half the trash they publish."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

EMMY'S book, as Mr. Russell had predicted, was accepted by Messrs. Farman and Pratt. The terms offered to its young author were not large, but the book, under the auspices of so great a firm, would appear before the world in a favourable light, would be sure to get good notices; in short, if it had anything in it, would have a fair chance of success.

Emmy felt bewildered. She was not without a modest faith in herself, but she had never expected to come before the world in so dignified a fashion. That a book of hers should bear the imprint of one of the greatest firms of publishers in London, had been a hope to dream of from afar. That it should have been so speedily realised, exceeded her wildest dreams.

She lay in bed at night and dreamt, as many young writers do, of fame. Suppose she, who was so humble and insignificant in every way, should awake some morning to find the great censorious, and yet withal fickle and good-natured, world talking about her? A rosy flush came into her rather pale cheeks at the very idea, and a tender light filled her soft brown eyes—for Emmy knew that fame, empty enough in itself, would bring her more substantial blessings. The money which her mother needed would accompany this fickle goddess, Bertha and the boys could be educated, and life altogether would be full and sweet. "Perhaps Frank also will read the book," thought Emmy Thorn, with the softest, prettiest blush. "Oh! if he does, he will see through all its pages the heart of his own Emmy, and he won't be able to doubt me, even though that dreadful Sir Percival has got back my engagement ring."

It was some months now since Emmy had ceased to speculate on the absence of all letters from her lover. Even when he did not write, she had blamed others, not him. She had made excuses for him; she had invented reasons without number for that unaccountable silence, but she had never said to herself that the man who had given her his sacred troth could be false to her.

From the moment, however, that Sir Percival had got possession of her ring, her thoughts had been turned into an altogether fresh channel, her faith and confidence had been disturbed; but she now blamed herself, and not Frank. "If he marries another now, I have not a word to say," she would whisper to her sore little heart. "If he thinks me false, not I him; I have only myself to blame. Fate has been against me, but it is better to quarrel with fate than with Frank; it is better to lose him because life is hard and difficult than to lose him because he himself has become untrue. The latter I could not bear; the former shall never crush me." Emmy argued in this way with her own perplexed heart, but nevertheless the advent of the book which must succeed, and which Frank must read, cheered her not a little.

As the modest little one-volume book was not to be illustrated, it was passed very quickly through the press, and before Christmas "Esther Drayton's Cross" was advertised as ready for sale. Mr. Russell, who had taken an interest in the fresh and *naïve* pages from the first, now did the book the extremely good turn of writing a preface to it. For that reason, and that alone, the trade subscribed liberally for it, and from the first the little volume went well.

It was about this time that Helen Channing was troubled by a report which reached her from more than one quarter. She heard of it first in a very characteristic letter from Bertha Thorn. Bertha had managed to become acquainted with Helen's business address, and she had written to her there in much perturbation of spirit:—

"DEAR MISS CHANNING,—I do hope you will forgive my worrying you, but I know you are fond of Emmy, and you will counsel me and tell me whether you think she ought to know what is making us all very unhappy at White Rose Cottage. You know, of course, that she has been engaged for a couple of years to Frank Redfern, who is very nice and handsome, although he is the son of the horridest old man in the world. We have had letters from our old home, and they are full of Sir Percival and of Frank. Sir Percival is making Corcastle perfectly splendid. You know he was the most awful old screw, but he is now spending oceans of money on the old place, and Frank has come home from India, and Percy, the eldest son, is very ill, and they say he won't live long; and Frank is to be the heir, and he is engaged to be married to Sir Harry Hotspur's daughter, who has lots of money, although she must be an odious thing to steal Frank from Emmy, and I should like to serve her out if she came in my way. I am miserable about all this, for you know it has been partly my doing, for I gave Emmy's ring back to that *detestable* Sir Percival—I sold it to him for £10 when mother was so very ill, and we had scarcely any money. Emmy did not say much, but if you had seen her *look*; and I think it just broke her heart. Of course, now it will be quite smashed into bits, and she'll be sure to die, and we'll all every one of us be ruined, for we depend on Emmy more than on any one in the world. Please forgive me for troubling you, Miss Channing, and believe me, your sorrowful friend, "BERTHA THORN."

This letter of Bertha's, Helen might have regarded as not in itself absolutely reliable, but its story was confirmed from more than one fashionable quarter, and Helen wondered that the news of Frank Redfern's engagement to the wealthy heiress had not already reached Emmy's ears.

Emmy was very bright at this time, and Helen hesitated to tell news which must bring a shadow to her face. The report, however, of Frank Redfern's engagement grew and strengthened, and Helen at last felt that it would be kinder to tell Emmy news which she must certainly soon hear in a less tender way from other lips.

She and Emmy were going to spend the evening at the house of a certain Mrs. Martin. This lady dabbled in literature, and was fond of bringing young genius to her doors. Helen considered that Emmy had received quite a distinction when one of Mrs. Martin's cards of invitation reached her. "She is certain to take a fancy to you, and if she does, she will show you off, and get you talked about," said Helen. "There, if you crave the thing called success, it is yours. Mrs. Martin piques herself on never having admitted a literary or artistic failure inside her doors. Come with me to her house, my dear Emmy, and dress to please her, and your reputation is secure. She took up Dolly long ago; she was the first person to introduce her to Mr. Arbuthnot."

"Is Dorothea coming with us?" asked Emmy.

"I don't know—I fancy not. Mrs. Martin would have to break through her established rule if she admitted Edgar Marston into her select circle. Dolly naturally will not come out except with her husband. Poor child! she has lost much; for Edgar Marston will never be a success."

Helen Channing had, however, for once, made a mistake; for Dorothea was far too beautiful and bewitching not to be coveted by any hostess who wished to attain social popularity. For her sake, Marston, looking bored and languid, received an invitation to this gathering of wit and renown, and the first person Helen's eyes lighted on, on her arrival, was Dorothea in her shining white. Her colour was brilliant, her animation extreme; but her silvery laugh, as it floated to Helen's ears, gave the elder sister a queer sensation of emptiness and pain.

"Yes, I've asked Mr. Marston here," whispered Mrs. Martin to Helen. "I have hopes of him with such a wife, and I would not drop her for the world."

Just then, Dorothea, catching sight of Helen and Emmy, came up and drew the former aside.

"Helen, the most exciting thing is about to happen. Captain Redfern is in the room—he knows Edgar a little, and came up to speak to him a moment ago. He came here ten minutes ago with Sir Harry Hotspur and his daughter. He and Emmy may come face to face at any moment. I am so excited, I scarcely know what to do."

Helen, too, looked excited at this news. Her pale face flushed, and her grey eyes grew dark.

"But they must not meet," she said, clutching Dorothea's arm. "Captain Redfern is engaged to Miss Hotspur. It would be too cruel—too cruel to Emmy Thorn that they should meet here."

Dorothea knit her brows and looked puzzled. She was taller than most of the women present, and had the advantage of looking over many heads.

"That is Captain Redfern," she said: "over there, with his back to the wall—that rather fair, distinguished-looking man. He is talking and laughing with that dark, handsome girl—Miss Hotspur, of course. Oh, no, they are not engaged to each other; you have made a mistake, Helen."

"My dear Dolly, it is a mistake in which every one shares. I have heard of it already from many quarters, and Bertha Thorn wrote to me herself on the subject."

Dorothea stamped her foot impatiently. Her eager eyes travelled again across the room.

"Those two are not engaged," she repeated; "they are only friends—they are good friends—great friends, but not lovers. I can soon put it to the test, Helen."

"How, Dolly? Oh, do be quick, and be careful. Emmy may see him at any moment. Do be careful what you are about."

"It is all right," answered Dorothea. "I have a very simple test. I forgot to tell you, Helen, that Mrs. Martin has bought my 'Sister of the Red Cross;' it is in the next room. I mean to show it to Captain Redfern. I can tell in a moment then if he cares for Emmy."

She nodded to her sister, and moved across the room. Helen found a chair, where she sat, feeling cold and trembling. Mrs. Martin had borne off Emmy, who was nowhere to be seen.

Dorothea, being much the most beautiful person present, attracted attention wherever she appeared. Her golden waving hair, her brilliantly coloured face, and above all, the fire and glow which filled those wonderful deep grey eyes of hers, could not but attract favourable comments on all sides. The genius in Dorothea was always of the speaking and sparkling order, and the very fact of her imprudent and hasty love-marriage but added to the charm which surrounded her to-night. Edgar Marston might well feel proud as he stood a little apart and watched her every movement.

"What a lovely creature! Who is she?" asked Miss Hotspur of Captain Redfern.

"She is a Mrs. Marston, a bride—the wife of that dark man over there. He is an artist, and I believe she is one too."

"Do you know her? What a face she has! Oh! I hope you can introduce me."

Frank Redfern laughed. "I can make you happy," he said, "for I was introduced myself half an hour ago to Mrs. Marston by her husband—he was an old college chum of mine—not that I particularly cared about him."

"Oh, no matter; let us come and talk to his wife. I love her more every time I look at her."

Captain Redfern laughed again, and the two approached Mrs. Marston, who exercised all her charms for their benefit.

"You paint?" said Miss Hotspur. "Captain Redfern tells me you are an artist as well as your husband."

"I am fond of it," said Dorothea, slightly arching her eyebrows; "I suppose I may say that I love it—at times it absorbs me utterly."

"But not always?"

"By no means always. Many days come to me when I could not touch a brush."

"But on the days that it absorbs you?"

"Then I cannot lay it down."

"Ah!" said Miss Hotspur, with a sigh, and an expressive glance first at Captain Redfern, and then at Mrs. Marston. "I know what you mean. You are a true artist. You have your moods and tenses."

Dorothea laughed. "And they conjugate a very irregular verb," she said. "Would you like to see something which I painted with my whole heart, when the mood was on me never to put the brush down? I took the face from a girl I know—a great friend of mine. She has the sweetest face in the world, and I was able to transfer it to the canvas in such a way that I made a little success over it. Would you like to see it? Would you, Captain Redfern? The picture is in the next room."

"With pleasure," answered the captain. Miss Hotspur said something enthusiastic, and Dorothea lifted aside a curtain which hung before the door of a small room which Mrs. Martin was fond of calling her own very special and particular sanctum.

It was a pretty room, furnished with modern taste, and in æsthetic fashion. The picture of "The Sister of the Red Cross" stood on an easel in a prominent position. A lamp burned above it, throwing a strong light on the girlish figure, and on the patient, steadfast, beautiful face. At the time that Dorothea had painted this picture she had, to a certain extent, idealised Emmy Thorn; but as she glanced at her own work to-night, she knew that the patient lines so sad to see on the face of "The Sister of the Red Cross" had also come to Emmy. They were pathetic, but they ennobled both faces.

"That is my work," she said, and she stepped back a pace or two in order to give Captain Redfern a full view of it. Miss Hotspur clasped her hands in ecstasy.

"What a little saint!" she exclaimed. "Oh for the touch of those cool purposeful hands on my head when it aches! Frank," she added, turning suddenly to the man by her side, and motioning him to come close, "is not this a sweet and noble face? You must forgive me, Mrs. Marston," she continued; "but work like this excites me. I cannot think at all of the painting; my thoughts are all with the original. How I should like to know her! How I should love her! Would not you, Frank?"

Captain Redfern had made no comment, but Dorothea's quick eyes, as they watched his face, saw it turn white under all its sunburn. She noticed how he clenched one hand, and how the bright, animated expression left his face.

"The original is in the other room," she said, impulsively taking Miss Hotspur's hand in hers. "Come, we will bring her here. We will compare her with the picture."

In a moment she and Miss Hotspur were out of the room. Captain Redfern remained behind—Dorothea doubted if he had heard a word she said.

"I want to ask you a question," she said, facing round and looking full into Miss Hotspur's face. "It is an impertinent question; but you will forgive me, for this is no moment for ceremony."

"I will certainly forgive you," said Miss Hotspur, in some surprise. "You are an unusual person, and must have unusual privileges."

"Then tell me quickly—are you engaged to Captain Redfern?"

Rosamond Hotspur laughed in a very heart-whole manner.

"I?—no," she said. "What could have put such an idea into your head? Frank and I are great friends: indeed, I look upon him as a dear elder brother; but anything of *that* sort—oh, no! Poor Frank has his own love-story, and I fear the course of true love does not run very smoothly with him just now."

"That is delightful!" exclaimed Dorothea, "that is heavenly! I cannot tell you how happy you have made me, Miss Hotspur. Now you and I will send his true love to him, and he won't be impatient even if we take a few moments finding her, for all this time he is looking at her picture."

When Emmy Thorn, in her soft white dress, came hurriedly into Mrs. Martin's boudoir, where Dorothea had sent her on the pretext of finding a fan which the capricious young lady had dropped there, she was much startled, and drew back with a shocked exclamation. She saw a man on his knees in the act of passionately kissing her own pictured face. Her little cry made him start and turn round.

"Frank! Frank! oh, Frank!" exclaimed the girl in a tremulous voice.

"My little Emmy!" he answered. And now many and fervent kisses were showered on the living, not the pictured face.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

OBSTINACY is, after all, a most unreliable quality—it may appear hard as adamant, firmer and more solid than any rock, but just at the most unexpected moment it often collapses utterly.

Never was there a man more truly and scientifically obstinate than Sir Percival Redfern. Obstinacy declared itself in every line of his thin and haggard face, in every bend and curve of his shrunken figure; it spread its wings over his establishment, and made his dependants fare scantily, and the home of his ancestors crumble to ruins about his head. Nevertheless, when Frank, after his interview with Emmy, sought Sir Percival, and told him, with some very steely and angry gleams in his blue eyes, and some scornful and measured words, what he thought of the sorry part Sir Percival had played towards him, his favourite son, and towards the girl he loved, the old man seemed to quite shrink up into himself, and his obstinacy fell from him like a mantle.

"Have her if you please," he said. "Marry her if you care to make a fool of yourself, but for pity's sake don't look at me like that, Frank. I am an old man,

and not long for this world, and when I'm gone you'll know what a good father I've ever been to you. Marry the girl if you will marry her, only don't worry me about it."

"But you have to receive her, sir—you have to hold out the right hand of fellowship to Emmy Thorn: that is, if you care to have anything more to say to me."

"Pooh, Frank!" said old Sir Percival, and with an effort he managed to scramble out of his chair and to pace up and down the room. "I never said I found any fault with the girl herself. She's well enough, and has a fair little bit of spirit of her own; only I wanted you to marry money, my boy, and to restore the old place. Rosamond Hotspur would have been more to my taste; but I'll welcome Emmy Thorn—oh, yes! I'll welcome Emmy Thorn, although she has not a penny to bless herself with."

At these words the faintest ghost of a smile flitted across Captain Redfern's face; his anger vanished, for having just made a complete victory he could afford to be generous.

"You will never regret having won my Emmy as your daughter, father," he said. "As to Rosamond, she would never have had me, nor I her, so there is an end of that. She is very fond of me, however, and is going to be very fond of Emmy, so you can ask her to Corcastle whenever you like."

After this interview Emmy's difficulties were supposed to be at an end, her crosses were all supposed to have vanished, and her skies to have become blue for evermore. She married Frank early in the following spring. Sir Percival was present at the wedding, and he gave the bride back, in an almost shame-faced and an almost affectionate manner, the diamond ring which he had once so meanly deprived her of.

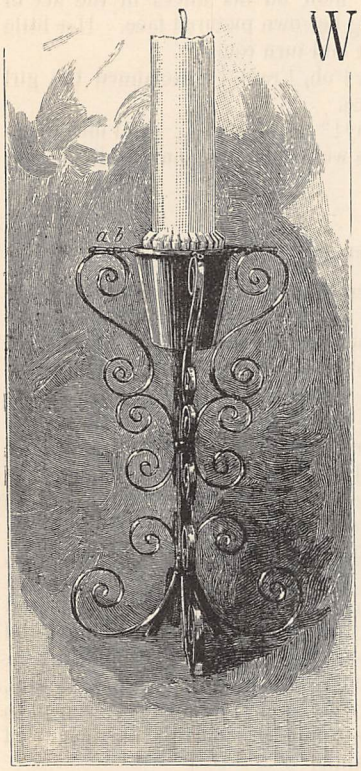
Of course Emmy was very happy, as she deserved to be; but no skies in this world are cloudless, and if she has to bear and forbear, and even to suffer, too, in days to come, such suffering, so applied by such natures as hers, but leads to perfection.

Dorothea has a harder lot than Emmy, but she, too, will find joy in conquest, and victory in what looks like defeat.

Helen Channing has ceased to be called by anyone a strong-minded woman; and Miss Phillimore no longer complains that she watches the clock when she comes to visit her.

THE END.

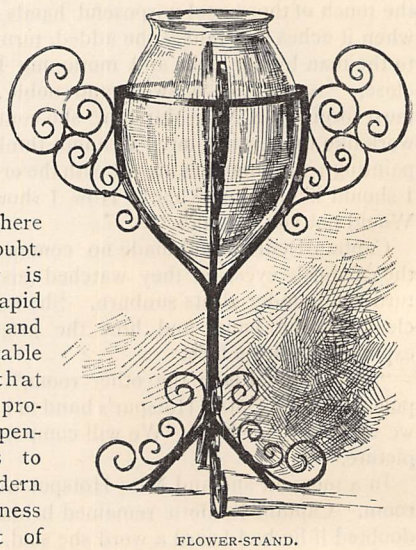
BENT IRON WORK.



DESIGN FOR A CANDLESTICK.

WROUGHT iron work has always had its admirers amongst those who love true art in any and every guise. This could not fail to be the case when we consider the scope an iron worker has for displaying his artistic knowledge and skill in producing decorative effects. On form and proportion he must depend alone, I acknowledge, for producing a fine piece, but form is the backbone of art. Good art work never fails to attract, though it may not invariably be popular. Fashion has much to answer for in this direction. However beautiful a thing may be in itself, if it is unfashionable there are thousands of persons who will scarcely allow that they see in it any beauty whatever. Only of late years has iron work become thoroughly popular in England. One reason may have been that the people had but little opportunity to see much of it, still we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that when there is a demand a supply is sure to follow rapidly.

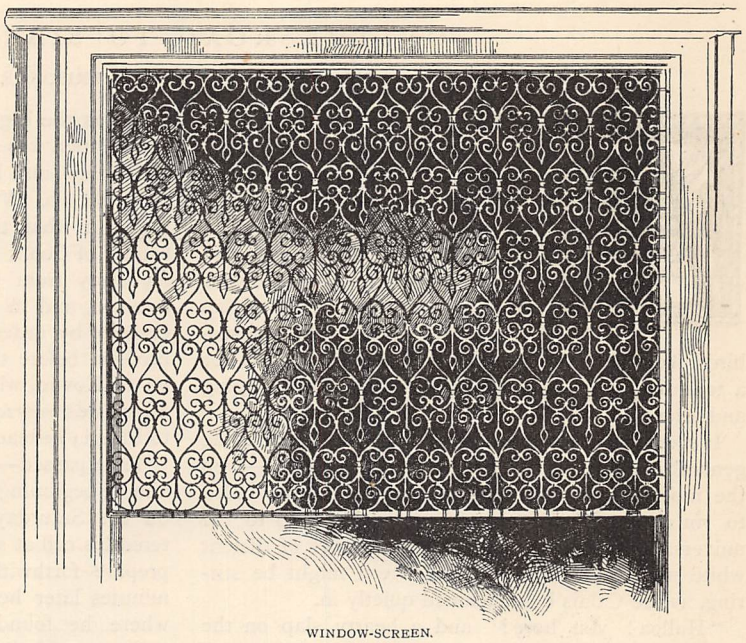
The splendid examples shown at the Italian Exhibition held at West Kensington last year must have been a revelation to some. That the sight of the Italian work has given an immense impetus to the trade there can be no doubt. The danger is that in the rapid manufacture, and in the regrettable necessity that exists of producing inexpensive articles to meet the modern cry for cheapness at any cost of



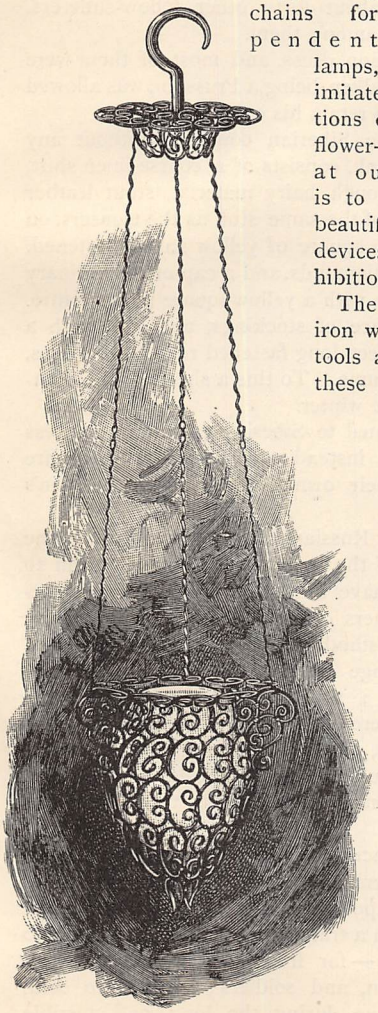
FLOWER-STAND.

excellence, iron work will sink to a lower place amongst the minor arts than it has hitherto held.

Wrought iron work is quite out of the question for the majority of amateurs, as forge, hammer, and anvil are indispensable for its execution. It affords us, however, the best models, and its study helps in no slight degree the bent iron worker. The form of an article we can reproduce, and the general effect of certain decorations will suggest to us felicitous ideas which we can carry out in bent iron work, but to copy the decoration entire is not possible. The representation of such flowers as can be produced by the hammer wielder are beyond the power of his humbler brother—the master only of the pliers. Balls and ornamental links that act as supporting chains for pendent lamps, &c., are easy to imitate; so, too, are portions of the lamps and flower-stands. To look at our illustrations, is to call to mind the beautiful links of various devices shown at the Exhibition.



WINDOW-SCREEN.



HANGING LAMP.

The execution of bent iron work needs but few tools and materials, and these simple and inexpensive. The worker starts with some hand-cut iron strips of three different widths, and a few strong hooks made of wrought iron. To fashion the iron strips into ornamental shapes, the tools required are a pair of square long nose pliers, a pair of flat nose pliers, and a pair of round nose pliers, a small pair of shears, which are known as snips, and a pair of pincers. A yard measure and a bottle of Berlin black end our list of requisites. It is advisable to procure wrought iron frames, as these are stronger than any which can be made with bent iron. Still many workers prefer to make these themselves. The cut iron, which is ⅜ths of an inch wide, is used for this purpose. Before commencing the frame it is necessary to buy the flower-glass, copper bowl, fairy lamp, or any other ornament which the iron stand is intended to hold, as it should be fitted in for the sake of appearance as well as for security.

It is a great help to get some good designs to work from. These are especially needful for those who are beginning to learn the art, as true measurements and the manipulation of perfect **C** and **S** curves are essential in producing articles of true value. Another excellent plan is to buy and copy one well-made article. This gives beginners a notion of the style of the work, which is rather difficult to understand at first from mere drawings.

The designs in the pendent lamp are intended to compose into various arrangements. Measure and cut off with the snips a requisite length of iron to form one of the curves. Take the square nose pliers in the left hand and hold the iron strip firmly with these, then with the round nose pliers, held in the right hand, bend the iron to shape. The medium width iron is employed for the ornamental portions. Continue thus until all the curves are formed. Now cut off short pieces of iron—say about half an inch or so—place the curves in position, and fasten them strongly together with the short pieces of iron which serve as clamps. These are folded round the curves and clamped tightly. Some clamps need to be longer than others, as a glance at the design will show. Lastly, give the work a coating of Berlin black.

E. CROSSLEY.

ON THE ROAD TO SIBERIA.

THE STORY OF A POLISH PRISONER.

A BRIGHT sunny day in June—the sky blue and intense, with the deep waters beneath it, and flecked here and there with light silvery clouds—hardly a breath to ripple the glassy surface of the soft ground-swell that comes rolling gently in, trying to lap the white cliffs of Dover; sea-birds flapping lazily along, scarce deigning to dip for a tempting morsel; everything inciting to lounging and idleness.

It seemed in vain to try and battle against the general drowsiness; energy itself had died out—even the most recent and most thrilling of stories failed to rouse me, and I was about to succumb to the universal somnolency, when a faint curl of distant white smoke told me something fresh might be stirring, as the Calais boat steamed quietly in.

"Halloa! you here?" and a hearty slap on the shoulder made me fairly start round, to find myself face to face with my wandering and erratic cousin, Charlie Norton.

"I think I may with greater justice return the compliment. Where do *you* come from? Have the mountains of the moon or the deserts of Australia been last honoured by your presence?"

"Not quite so far this time," was the laughing rejoinder. "I have only just come from Berlin, and am now waiting to meet a friend rescued from the clutches of that 'paternal government' you are so fond of. Poor Von Falken! He only narrowly escaped ending the rest of his days in Siberia!"

No further need now to rouse me; my interest was thoroughly excited.

"Do you mean that your friend actually managed to escape?" I asked.

"No—but thanks to that 'man of iron,' Bismarck, he was at last liberated. But there he is—come with me, and you shall hear the tale fresh from the fountain-head."

The steamer had by this time come in, and was slowly disgorging her freight of "kinds." Charlie, never gifted with too much patience, could hardly await the landing of the different passengers ere pouncing on his friend, and giving his servant directions about the luggage, he carried him off to the "Lord Warden," where he insisted on my accompanying them.

I found Herr von Falken a most charming and delightful companion, and gifted with great conversational powers. Had it not been for the settled look of intense suffering, which never left him, even when talking on ordinary topics, I could not have imagined him as having ever gone through all the terrible hardships of which he gave us the following graphic sketch while sipping our after-dinner Mocha, and soothed with the grateful fumes of pipe and cigar.

It was the beginning of the year 1862—the Polish insurrection was at its height—every day fresh arrests were made, and long trains of political prisoners sent off to Russia. Von Falken took no part in the rising (being at that time employed in looking after the estates of Count C. in Polish Lithuania), but although far away from the scene of action, he was falsely accused, and in spite of his protestations, taken into custody by order of the Governor of the Province, brought before the "Search Commission," and sent on to Kovno, where he was sentenced to death, but afterwards *reprieved*, and given life-long banishment to Siberia instead.

Time passed—still he remained in prison, and was almost beginning to think he had been forgotten, when on the Saturday before Easter, 1865, an officer entered his cell at seven in the morning, telling him to prepare forthwith for his dreary journey. A few minutes later he was taken to the prison courtyard, where he found about forty other fellow-sufferers, with several ladies among them.

All wore the prison dress, and most of them were chained, but Von Falken, being a Prussian, was allowed as a great favour to retain his own clothes.

The garb of the Siberian convicts, without any difference as to rank, consists of a coarse linen shirt, trousers of some rough hairy material, stout leather shoes, a long coat of the same stuff as the trousers, on the back of which a square of yellow stuff is fastened, like a huge ace of diamonds, and a cap of the ordinary military shape, also with a yellow square in the centre. Rags take the place of stockings, and this, with a chain about three feet long fastened round the ankles, completes the costume. To this a sheep's-skin great-coat is added in the winter.

Women condemned to Siberia wear the same dress as the men, only instead of the trousers they are allowed to use their own clothes under the men's convict dress.

The "fatherly" Russian Government permits the nearest relatives of the exiles to accompany them to Siberia, but they have to submit to the same treatment as the prisoners during all the long and weary journey. Notwithstanding this terrible ordeal, numbers take advantage of this permission, especially among the Poles; thus mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters were in close attendance on the long train of exiles, ready and willing to undergo any suffering and fatigue, if only they could help or comfort their loved ones. All honour to those noble souls!

And truly the sacrifice they brought was no small one! Most of them, women of high rank and birth, had left home and position, ease and comfort, to brave the horrors of such a transport! Packed closely into iron-barred trucks—far from clean—together with rough men, women, and soldiers; exposed to cold, hunger, and fatigue during the long and terrible

march on foot, lasting for more than a year, always under strict military surveillance: all this they willingly submitted to, and not a word of complaint or regret ever escaped those brave, unselfish lips! A four hours' journey of terrible discomfort brought the party to Wilna, where they were all placed indiscriminately in the common prison, and kept there during the Easter holidays. Several other transports of political prisoners having also arrived at the same time, the place was so crowded that Von Falken and Prince M. were thrust into a cell with some twenty-six ordinary criminals. Those days of their captivity were too horrible ever to be forgotten!

After five days (which seemed like so many months), their journey was continued to St. Petersburg. Men, women, and children, no matter what their rank or age, were kept close prisoners in the van, and for three days and nights no one was allowed egress under *any pretext whatever*, soldiers with loaded rifles keeping guard over this Elysium! Thanks to the ladies who had accompanied their friends, and who had provided themselves with money (which opens almost every door in Russia), many hardships were alleviated and comforts procured, and as the engineer kindly supplied boiling water from the engine, they were enabled at times to enjoy that never-failing Muscovite luxury, tea.

Arrived at St. Petersburg, a fine trait in the Russian character was conspicuous. Much as the Polish insurrection was disliked by all parties, yet these poor exiles, who were paraded through the principal thoroughfares of St. Petersburg, were only looked upon by the inhabitants as unfortunate victims, in need of their help and compassion; and as the long train passed through the streets, the people thronged round them, offering both money and food, the soldiers finding it utterly impossible to keep the crowd back. Some gave as much as fifteen and twenty roubles, and even more, the poorer classes eagerly coming forward with copper coins. One small child pressed her two kopecks on Von Falken, and would take no denial! He never parted with them, and showed us them as pendants to his watch-chain! While at St. Petersburg their treatment was much improved. They were placed in a large building, intended for an orphanage, together with a number of other political prisoners, all bound for Siberia, but they were allowed to mix freely, and were not cramped as to room.

While waiting here, Von Falken, through the kindness of the colonel in command of the convoy, got a letter sent to the Prussian Embassy, asking permission to see the ambassador and state his case. In reply, M. de Magnus came to see him, and advised him, as the ambassador was away, to write direct to the Emperor, and hand in his appeal to the Prussian Consul at Moscow, and he would write to him, and tell him to send it to the ambassador, who would himself hand it to the Emperor. He then bade farewell to Von Falken, leaving a considerable sum of money with him, together with a letter to the Prussian Consul at Moscow.

It was with a somewhat lighter heart that our friend prepared for his further route, and although the journey to Moscow was far worse than anything they had yet encountered, fresh hope and courage filled his breast as he looked forward to a speedy release.

When they reached the old Muscovite capital, the concourse of people was even greater than at St. Petersburg, all eager to show their sympathy towards the captives, who, after a short delay, were lodged in a splendid villa, standing in the midst of beautiful gardens and surrounded by a magnificent park. This lovely spot had been the home of a wealthy merchant, who having fallen under suspicion during the Crimean War, his property (which was very large) had been confiscated, and he himself ended his days in Siberia!

Von Falken's health, having been greatly undermined by the long confinement, now fairly broke down with the fatigues and hardships of the journey. By order of the doctor who looked after the Siberian prisoners in Moscow, a German, he was placed in a bright cheerful room by himself, and was pronounced utterly unfit to proceed on his journey.

Next day, feeling somewhat stronger, Von Falken began his epistle to the Emperor, telling him the whole circumstances of the case, and how, notwithstanding that the court-martial had declared him innocent, the governor, General Mouravieff, had had him arrested and condemned. He further asked the Emperor not for *mercy*, but for *justice*, and a revision of his case.

This petition he gave to the Prussian Consul, who came to visit him, and who promised to arrange that Von Falken should not be sent on till the Emperor's decision was made known, which promise was further strengthened by Prince Obolinski, the governor, who also came to see him. Thus poor Von Falken was indulging in the vain hope that perhaps at the eleventh hour he might yet escape his terrible doom.

The exiles are always granted an eight days' rest at Moscow, and during this period Von Falken was allowed free intercourse with his friend Prince M., who had already shared his cell during his three years' imprisonment. They had both been sentenced to life-long banishment to Irkutsk; thus a joint misfortune had cemented a true friendship, and now, forgetting his own misfortune, the prince was overjoyed at the prospect of his friend's release. But, alas! the day of parting arrived only too soon—they would probably never see each other again in this life—Von Falken was speechless with grief, but Prince M., giving his friend a tearful embrace, said, "Farewell! when you return to your own beautiful country, your beloved Germany, oh, do not forget your poor friend!" The convoy moved off, and Von Falken, still weak and faint from illness, was taken back to his room. He never saw his friend again!

During his stay at Moscow hundreds of exiles arrived every week. They were mostly Poles, doomed to forget their Fatherland in the mines of Siberia—men and women of all ranks and ages, and generally accompanied by some loving and devoted relative.

Truly, some men's losses are other men's gains, and the beautiful grounds of the unhappy merchant's

villa being easily guarded, unusual freedom was granted to the prisoners, who were permitted to roam about the gardens under surveillance.

Marvellous instances of devotion occurred, and traits of such sublime self-denial, that Von Falken felt that adversity truly often brings out what is noblest in the human character.

Among the various couples that wandered about the park, one especially attracted Von Falken's notice. It was a beautiful young countess and a nobleman, who had met in the prison at Kovno, and had fallen in love, become engaged, and got married by means of a most wonderful lover's alphabet. The prisoners in the two wings of the prison managed to communicate with each other by a system of telegraphy, so simple that even Siemens or Halske might have liked to patent it. The twenty-four squares formed by the iron window-bars represented the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, and the telegraphist, pointing from one square to another, would finish the word by a double stroke of the fingers. Thus words ran into sentences with wonderful rapidity, and anecdotes, messages, riddles were shot backwards and forwards to lighten the tedium of the captives.

The couple in question soon became quite expert in the use of these signals, and the lovely countess and the talented young nobleman fell in love and betrothed themselves in this original manner. After their engagement had been completed behind the barred window, the marriage was publicly celebrated in presence of all the prisoners, and what made it still more touching was the fact that the countess had already gained her freedom, and he—was condemned to hard labour for life! But she was true to her love, and determined to accompany the man to whom she had given her heart, though she knew it was into life-long exile.

Von Falken's hopes of a speedy deliverance were, however, doomed to disappointment. The Emperor had suddenly started off to the bedside of his son at Nice, and after waiting for nearly three months, the governor declared he could no longer undertake the responsibility of retaining him at Moscow. He was extremely sorry, he said, but the fresh orders he had received concerning the Polish prisoners were peremptory, and left him no alternative, so Von Falken must prepare to start with the next convoy. Both the doctor and the Prussian Consul interfered on his behalf, but with no success. On the 14th June, in company with 280 other unfortunates, the journey to Siberia was continued, and he became a "number," his individuality, nay, his very existence, wiped off the record of civilisation.

He paused. "I cannot tell you all my further sufferings. The time is hardly ripe for that. Some day, perhaps, if you care about it, I will tell you the rest of my tale. Suffice it for the present that, through friends and true friendship, I am once again free—a man—not merely a cypher! Oh, you English! Thank Heaven, on your bended knees, for the freedom that is yours by right." To which I added a silent, though heartfelt, Amen!

BIRDS OF THE MONTHS.

NOVEMBER—SEA-GULL.

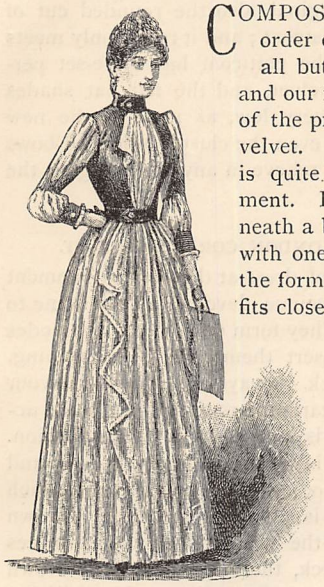
STORMS of autumn sweep the sea,
Inland, on the blast upwinging,
Come white-breasted Sea-gulls, bringing
Fresh breaths of the wild and free.

KATE T. SIZER.

WHAT TO WEAR IN NOVEMBER.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS: FROM OUR PARIS AND LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

I.—FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.



COMPOSITE dresses are the order of the day in Paris for all but plain woollen gowns, and our initial letter shows one of the prettiest styles of using velvet. The sleeveless bodice is quite new in its arrangement. It ends at the waist beneath a belt of velvet, fastened with one button, and matching the form of the collar-band. It fits closely, and has a full plastron with one corner draped as a handkerchief; this is made of the soft crêpe de Chine of which the skirt is composed, much lighter in tone than the velvet. The two materials are blended in the sleeve. There is a band-cuff with the same mitred point and button. The crêpe is gathered full, so that it stands up high in the armhole; and the velvet forms the back of the upper portion of the sleeve to the elbow, appearing in a diagonal band outside the arm, which unites in a point just above the elbow.

For a soft falling material, the skirt is well contrived; it is tacked down at the hem into kilt-pleats, which are gathered at the waist. Just in front there is an additional breadth laid on in folds, forming a sort of cascade which is exceedingly graceful at the side. On the opposite side the breadth is caught up carelessly just once, so that a few easy folds drape the left of the skirt. This style I can recommend for a home dinner-gown, and there are a number of useful inexpensive materials in which it might be made. The large-meshed "Egyptian net" (as it used to be called) is most fashionable in Paris just now, under the name of "Tosca," or "Russian net"; it is forty-eight inches wide, and costs only a few francs the metre here—that is, if made, as it often is now, of mohair; the better kinds are silk. It answers every purpose, however, at the lower rate; and light terra-cottas, pinks, greens, and the new petunias, with darker velvets, would be altogether charming in this style. Most of the new gauzes have special front breadths made on the principle of the pentes which were sold at such alarming sacrifices a few years ago when the fashion went out. Modes, however, never return quite the same, and these "volants Bayadères" have no fringe at the hem, and generally display graduated stripes in thicker material than the foundation. Still the variety is legion. Some show the Jacquard-woven designs of flowers forming a volant, the patterns like those on Madras muslin; others, as in crépon façonné, have a puckered stripe. Home dinner-gowns, as well as more dressy dinner-toilettes, are often made in gaze mignon, with Pompadour floral stripes between straight silk lines. To be quite *à la mode*, a check should appear somewhere, and very close, thick, decided silk checks are thrown on the light gauze foundations, and are used for the volants and for the entire dress. Striped and checked pongees and canvas have been brought out in endless variety; they last a fairly long time—quite as long as any fabric should, now that the modes change so quickly, and that good dressing is mostly ensured by "few garments and good:" a motto which should be borne in mind by those who study the question of tasteful dressing.

One great point in all these light and fashionable

AN UNEXPECTED PLEASURE.

fabrics is their freshness of aspect. They need to be very well made and carefully put on, and then they score a success. A new gauze, which is more costly, but at the same time more durable, has stripes in satin with ribbon edges; and others have interwoven lace-like edges.

There are two distinct styles of dressmaking which find favour in Paris—the one after the order of the Empire and Revolutionary periods, which are curiously jumbled together; the other savouring of the pretty picturesque modes of *le Trianon*, and the more sunny days of Marie Antoinette. For the latter class of dresses the printed crêpes de Chine and mousseline de laines serve best, with their little printed sprays of detached flowers that savour so much of summer-time and country gardens. There is great variety of choice in these fabrics. With them fichus of mousseline chiffon are worn as a matter of course, and no kind of muslin has been better suited to such fichus, with their frilling fully gathered and finely hemmed. This chiffon or rag-muslin is now brought out in all colours, and the lighter tints are particularly pretty.

Tailor-made garments find more and more favour with Parisians as the years go by, and one of the newest styles of long coats is illustrated in the accompanying pictures. It exactly meets the wants of country life and of a town walking-costume; no dress is visible beneath, and the skirts worn are now so scanty that no additional fulness in the coat is necessary, though it is gathered closely at the back. The sleeves are narrow, very high on the shoulders, and very plain; the front shows the novel part of the cut, a gathering of the stuff on the left side, meeting the diagonal opening, and kept in its place by two tabs which button the garment. This is becoming to the waist, and gives width to the bust; the collar is high, but is hidden by the long feather boa of curled ostrich—the most fashionable class of boa—in the ordinary shape. Many women so much prefer it that there is always a demand for boas of this description in fox, moufflon, sable, and squirrel; but the stole-shaped tippets falling to the hem of the dress are newer. The hat which accompanies this outdoor garment is made of velvet, with a round flat crown, and a brim which turns up at the back and in front. It is surrounded by ostrich-feathers, a tip curling over the brim in front where it widens, and standing up boldly at the back where it diminishes in size.

It will take some education to reconcile us to the make of the other coat, which is just sufficiently short to cut the figure. It is a veritable Louis XV. coat, with the long waistcoat of that period, and the flap pockets. The skirt is cut narrow to go with it, for the jacket has little fulness, having one large paste button on the centre seam, one at the bend of the waist, and one on either side some few inches below. Similar buttons appear on the corners and at the top of the flap pockets. They are much in request if really antiques; and silver buttons, buttons made of gems of any kind, repoussé metal buttons of centuries back, and the enamelled kinds, find a most satisfactory market. The newest modern kinds are of metal coloured to match the fabric. One of the great beauties in this particular dress is the exquisite embroidery in coloured silk which is carried round jacket and waistcoat, and appears on the pockets, collar, and oblong cuff of quite a new form. The plastron in front is original, also the rounded cut of the jacket over the waistcoat; and it really only meets for a few inches. The petticoat has close-set perpendicular bands of velvet, and the felt hat shades the face well. It is very low, as most of the new French hats are; and even the cluster of looped bows over the face does not relieve in any great degree the monotony of flatness.

II.—FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

The keen observer of dress at the present moment must, as a matter of course, devote no little time to the study of checks. They form one of the new modes of the season, and assert themselves in everything. The chessboard-check always returns to favour whenever any kind of tartan is revived; but in the accompanying picture it is used in quite a new fashion. The front of the skirt is entirely composed of it, and the best part of the bodice. The model from which our engraving is taken is a charming mixture of brown and white; and while the back and front side-pieces of the bodice are check, there are revers of brown velvet, a white plastron, cuffs, collar, and a full diagonal band of brown velvet just in front.

The check is made of the new checked velveteen, one of the most useful novelties of the year, and well suited to shallow purses.

The skirt, at the back of this same, is made of a soft woollen, with three horizontal bands of velvet. The sleeves are close-fitting, made of the same stuff as the skirt, with the check introduced as a full puff on the shoulder. The mixtures of fabrics in this way are extremely well suited for the renovation of dresses; and a little inexpensive investment in checked velveteen would make a last winter's gown of waning fashion quite *à la mode*.

More difficult to carry out, and no less stylish, is the new redingote worn by the other figure. The trimming consists of feathers of a natural tint which accords well with the new Da Vinci shade—a deep rich petunia. The back of this garment is perfectly plain. There is a seam down the centre of the back, and a side-piece beneath the arm. By this means a great deal of fulness is stowed away in the triple box-pleats at the back; and the band of feathers borders the redingote. But in front the band is carried up each side—not up the centre—so that it forms a point in the immediate centre of the bodice, just at the bust; and is not continued to the throat, which is encircled with feathers. On the left side there is an arrangement of gimp ornaments and cords, with a fall of aiguillettes just by the arm. This matches the beads and silk embroidery introduced on the mediæval sleeve, with its tight covering to the fore-arm, and the one full puff from the shoulder that meets it. It is of very little consequence what the dress is beneath, as it is completely hidden.

The bonnet is made of the same material as the dress, bordered with embroidery, a cluster of feathers in front. The strings are of velvet, and are fastened with a small heart's-ease ornament on one side. If bonnets are tied, they should show simply bows and no strings.

The hats most worn for the moment are of the tartan order; and red velvet, plum velvet, and black, with fur borderings, are as much in vogue as pieces of the stuff to match the dress. Tartan hats are made in velvet as well as straw, with the high crown and shallow brim, and just the band of ribbon round. Sometimes large looped bows are laid on the crown, but they are not so much worn in the country, though perhaps they are better suited to town thus trimmed, for in London and all large towns hats are more worn than bonnets in the morning, even by married women, and all day long by the unmarried. Still, it is not easy to distinguish between a hat and a bonnet as worn stringless by young girls. A few flower bonnets in velvet have been brought out, which are likely to be worn for dressy occasions. They are quite easy to make if you can obtain a suitable shape, the blooms requiring to be sewn on close together.

SISTERS.

Serge dresses of the ordinary navy blue tone are so universally useful that, let other stuffs come and go as they will, they are always in fashion. But no kind really wears better than ordinary navy serge, and any opportunity of getting it should not be neglected. A new way of trimming such dresses is with a pointed plastron back and front in white, with diagonal rows of blue braid half an inch wide upon it. A pointed piece is placed on the cuffs, on the tops of the sleeves, and round the collar. A band of similar trimming borders the full all-round skirt.

Shirts are, however, so much the fashion that loose jackets should always accompany serge gowns, for they can then be worn over a bodice or with a shirt; if the jacket be lined with red, additional smartness is the result. The choice in the make of bodices is varied. Many have the sailor back, and are cut straight at the waist in front, so that a full vest of contrasting material disappears in a broad sash which is only seen in front.

White felt hats with black velvet trimmings are being worn for the moment with black gowns, and with the white woollen dresses with black trimmings which many ladies have worn to the late autumn; but the bonnets of this mixture are far more pretty, especially if they have a knot of blush roses nestling in front.

If any of you are desirous of following the example of your French sisters across the Channel, and becoming "lady firemen," as they are pleased to call the lady members of the fire brigade, you may wear a very pretty dress. The uniform is—red silk cap; dark blue short skirt, meeting soft leather boots; neat bodice with brass buttons, having red collar and cuffs. If nothing else is the result of this new movement, it will enable women to devote their pluck to some practical purpose, and prevent a little of the unnecessary fear in which they are too apt to indulge.

With short plain skirts it is a good plan to line the upper portion with some rather stiff material, such as horsehair cloth. This is far better than a large pad, which is only too apt to look like a camel's hump. Steels are quite discarded near the waist; but, some twelve inches below, one is often deftly inserted. It is not easy to make a dress look wide enough, and not too clinging. *Le juste milieu* is always difficult to attain in most things.

WHAT *NOT* TO DO IN A SICK-ROOM.

BY A NURSE.

HE best-intentioned people, with the very kindest hearts, are often the sources of great annoyance, not to say suffering, to those whom they are nursing in illness, simply from want of thought and ignorance of how to act in a sick-room.

It is the general idea, of course, that a woman is a born nurse; but that is a popular fallacy, as far as the actual fact is concerned. Though she may have a great deal of natural talent for her work, that talent needs developing, and care and culture can do a great deal in making her a good nurse.

As this paper proposes to deal with the subject from a negative point of view, I will here give a few hints, the results of much experience, as to what *not* to do when nursing anyone. It must be borne in mind that this is by no means supposed to be exhaustive—rather it is giving an outline which each individual can elaborate for herself.

Do not, when you are nursing, wear an inconvenient dress—*i.e.*, one with either a long train or large dress-improver—but have something simple, that does not rustle, and, if possible, of washing material. In nursing an infectious case this latter is indispensable.

Do not imagine that to take proper care of your own health by taking sufficient rest and regular food is selfishness. If you do not keep in good health you run a great chance of catching whatever your patient is suffering from, or, if it is not contagious, of breaking down from exhaustion. For nursing is a great strain to mind and body, and the nurse should do all she can to prevent herself from becoming ill. Six hours' sleep, taken, if possible, out of the sick-room, is necessary; and it must be remembered that to lie down in the sick-room partially dressed is not half as resting.

Do not take your food in the sick-room, and never keep any food for yourself or the patient in it: all spoons, glasses, and anything, in short, that is used, being washed outside the room.

Do not be afraid of fresh air. Excepting where the doctor positively orders to the contrary, an inch or two of the window should be left open at the *top* night and day. Opening the window at the bottom is not as good; and remember that if you want pure air you must get it from outside, and not from a passage, unless there is in that passage an open window.

Do not whisper in a sick-room. Of all things calculated to annoy a sick person, whispering is about the greatest. Should you require to speak to someone, go out of the room, but do not forget to close the door after you, and not stand talking with the latter ajar.

Do not walk about in a stealthy way or on tip-toe, and always have soft-soled shoes on—nothing that creaks. High-heeled shoes make a disagreeable noise, even on a carpet, to the sensitive hearing of the invalid, and should be avoided.

Do not discuss the patient before his face; and if you are asked in his hearing how he is, try and return an answer as hopeful and cheerful as you can make it. It is never well to tell an invalid bad news, or to recount the tale of anything sad or melancholy. People are apt to dwell upon what they hear, as they have not much in illness to think of; and all that is bright and cheering should be told them. Avoid saying, "You do look dreadful to-day!" or else, "You are so pale; should you not like something to restore you?" Notice the paleness or any other change in the sick person—and a nurse cannot be too observant—but she should keep her thoughts to herself, and not speak them to the patient. Always have handy an inkstand with ink in it, and a pen that will write, as well as writing and blotting paper, upon which the doctor may write his prescription.

Do not give any medicine without first looking at the label, to make perfectly sure that it is all right. If the doctor has changed the prescription, put the medicine bottle previously in use quite away, for fear of mistakes.

Do not act upon your own judgment in defiance of the doctor's orders, unless in very exceptional and extraordinary cases. These rarely occur, and it is well to remember that a nurse, however naturally skilled and perfectly trained, is but a tool in the doctor's hands. She is to be able to carry out his orders, and in general cases to obey him implicitly.

Do not be alone, if you can help it, with a delirious patient, as it is most dangerous, people in that state often acting in the most unforeseen way. Let a delirious patient talk what nonsense he pleases; always agree with him, and never attempt to argue with him. If you can, try and appear interested in his talk: it often helps to quiet him. Arguing, if a patient is delirious *or not*, is always to be avoided; and you should never oblige a patient to decide things for himself. It is not wise to ask a patient if he will have such-and-such a thing; if it is something ordered, or his regular meal, or what you see he needs, bring it to him, and then see if he will take it. Food should always be made to look nice, and only a little brought at a time. Should the patient refuse it, do not leave it by his side on the chance of his changing his mind, but take it away out of the room, and bring him something fresh later.

Do not be fussy in your ways. Try and be calm, however trying the circumstances and painful the scenes you have to witness. Your manner will insensibly affect your patient, whether for good or bad, and quietness is a very great thing to be aimed at.

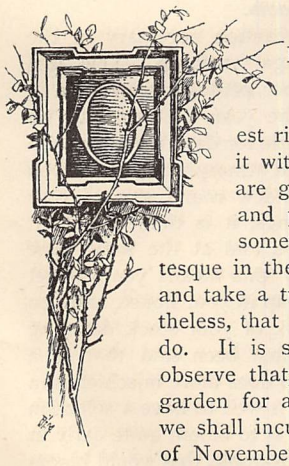
A kind yet firm manner is indispensable, as all roughness and sharpness is unpardonable in a nurse. Sick people are often irritating, and it needs much patience in nursing them; but patience should be considered a *sine quâ non*, for if people cannot help feeling tired they *can* help expressing their feelings.

Do not have any noisy occupations in the sick-room. If you have needlework, let it be noiseless, and avoid the clicking of knitting-needles—a sound small in itself, which, however, has the power of being very annoying to a sick person. In some cases of brain disease every noise is a cause of great pain, and care should be taken to avoid it. A fire is generally a noisy part of the arrangements of a sick-room. This is not by any means necessary, as it can easily be kept up or made very noiselessly. A pair of housemaid's gloves should be kept near the fire-place, and the coal put on with the fingers. It is always best to have the coals for the sick-room selected in knobs, and these can easily be placed on the fire, and, if the afore-named gloves are used, without soiling the fingers. Or else the coal can be placed on the fire by using those small tongs which cost so little, can easily be purchased at any ironmonger's, and which are most useful. For keeping up a fire in cases of severe illness, where it is advisable even to use greater caution to avoid noise, and also for replenishing it at night, it is a good plan to have a coal-scuttle made up the last thing at night, filled with little packets of coal made up in thin paper. These, even without gloves, can easily be laid on the fire, and as the paper burns at once, the coals go on without any noise.

Do not neglect the personal cleanliness of your patient. A warm bath should be given once a week, unless the doctor orders to the contrary; the feet should be washed twice a week or more, and the face and hands, back and shoulders, *every day*. Most scrupulous cleanliness is absolutely necessary for everyone who has the least desire to live in obedience to the laws of health, and to keep perfectly clean all parts of the body that press heavily on the bed is to avoid bed-sores.

Do not imagine that burning pastilles or scented paper dissipates an unpleasant odour or purifies the air. They merely cover the odour, and do not purify the air. Fire and fresh air do the latter; and besides these, in a sick-room, it is well to place open dishes containing Condy's fluid and water about the room, and all vessels in use should have a little kept in them. Condy's fluid is invaluable in illness; and my last advice to you is—do not be without it.

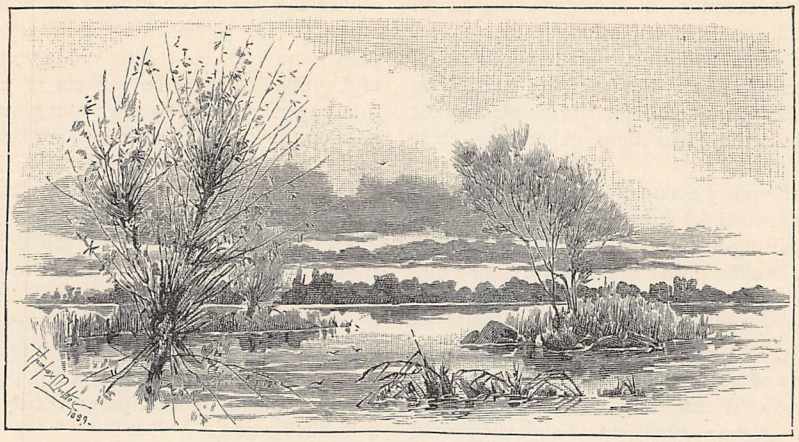
THE GARDEN IN NOVEMBER.



Of all the twelve months in the year, the month of November has the dreariest ring about it. We associate it with fogs and with days that are growing shorter and darker, and popularly speaking there is something just now almost grotesque in the invitation: "Let us come and take a turn in the garden." Nevertheless, that is just what we are going to do. It is sufficiently commonplace to observe that, if we utterly neglect the garden for any one month in the year, we shall incur the risk of having a sort of November garden all the year round. Well, and on the supposition that it is a cheerless morning, we will go at once into the greenhouse, where perhaps the little surroundings of an artificial summer may give a fillip to our spirits. From now until February is the great period of rest for our plants: they are, as it were, in bed and asleep. Now, if we were asked what is the primary object of having a greenhouse at all, we should unhesitatingly reply, it is merely a building to exclude the frost entirely, and one in which we preserve our plants during the cold season.

A very different thing this from a hotbed or a forcing-house. And yet in ordinary and domestic gardening the mistake is not infrequently made that a greenhouse is a building which must always be kept at an August temperature. So then let us say, at this time of the year, in the greenhouse much depends upon the weather, but as far as possible avoid giving artificial heat. Even during a period of intense frost we keep up our fire, but get almost concerned if we think that the thermometer inside is standing too high. A little over 40° by day, and if at night you find your thermometer has fallen as low as 34° you need not be alarmed—this would make a good average for the winter temperature of your greenhouse. Of course when a prolonged frost is about you must bank up your fire with ashes at night, and look into your greenhouse the first thing in the morning.

If by any mishap or carelessness you notice on entering, at seven a.m., that your thermometer is, say, at 30°, you will quickly see the results in the least hardy of your plants, which will look as if they had been blasted. Now, the hardier you succeed in rendering your plants, the better able will they be to resist the effects of some of those violent changes of temperature to which our English climate is subject. For this purpose, then, give air freely in mild weather. Of late years we have had one or two almost lovely Novembers, and to get well over this month is something to achieve. And even in ungenial weather some air must be admitted during the best of the day, say between one and two o'clock p.m



"THE MONTH WITH THE DREARIEST RING ABOUT IT."

Then, again, all through the winter water must be very sparingly administered. And among the most fastidious inhabitants of our greenhouse are our camellias, which, as they are now swelling their blooms, must not be allowed to get dry, otherwise their buds would drop; too much artificial heat would have the same effect upon them; while, lastly, you must certainly not let them be kept too wet. With all this they are fairly hardy, and the accidental admission of a degree of frost into your house would perhaps damage them less than many other of their neighbouring inmates. Still, they are like sturdy, spoilt children, and often give us a good deal of trouble. And next, get away all dead and decaying leaves from any of your plants which are in bloom.

THE CARE OF OUR CAMELLIAS.

Another winter precaution necessary in the greenhouse is that against damp. Now, this holds true in November perhaps more than in any other month of the year, for frequently we now have a rainy drizzle for days together, with a mild though saturated atmosphere; and if you see a little fur or mildew round any of your young stock of cuttings, it is time to act at once. Make up a fire, and at the same time open your lights. By this means you will get rid of much of the damp in your house, and you will incur far less risk of your stock damping off: indeed, it has often been said that in a climate like ours damp does more mischief than frost. Then, again, it is well to have a selection of plants whose habit is to bloom quite early in the year. Those, for example, that would bloom in the open in the early spring would bloom still earlier under your glass, where there is no frost at any time to check their proper development. Some hybrid rhododendrons, for example, are adapted for greenhouse culture, so that what with the early and the late blooming species, such as the salvia and the chrysanthemum, we ought never to be without *some* bloom in our house all the year round.

Enough then of our greenhouse: now let us go into the kitchen garden. Yonder is our sea-kale: cover it over with sea-kale pots, or with some large inverted flower-pots, and if sur-

rounded with hot stable-dung you will rapidly force on this popular vegetable; or, if every gardening appliance is not so ready to hand, you can utilise the dry leaves which just now are falling apace, and pile a large heap of them all round your sea-kale pots, though this, of course, is not so expeditious a method as the proper and more ordinary one of forcing. Next, if by any accident your crop of potatoes has not been all got up—for this is an October operation—delay not a day further in digging them. And then, by a little good management, salads—more particularly the smaller ones—can still be reared either under a hand-glass or in warm borders, where you can protect by litter: indeed, such as mustard and cress can easily be grown in the house—not the greenhouse, but the old home itself, where in a warm room the children would be interested and instructed by seeing how soon it grows.

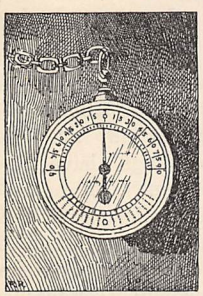
Onions, too, that were sown at the end of the summer can be drawn quite small for your salads; for why are we to content ourselves with having only a profusion of salads in July and August, and hardly any for the remainder of the year? Apropos of the onions, those that were some time ago gathered and stored ought to be gone over, and any that are rotten, soft, or damaged in any way carefully removed from the rest. And coming for a few minutes to the fruit garden: a visit to the shed or store-room where our apples and pears are stowed away ought to be made, and all the decayed and damaged fruit removed. As far as possible the apple-room ought to be in some extreme or out-of-the-way corner of the house, for their fragrance is so pungent and persistent as in some cases to amount to almost a nuisance. A rough and dry shed in the garden itself, with shelves along its top for fruit-storing, is a great convenience and an inexpensive luxury: it answers the purpose at intervals of a shoe and knife house, a lumber-room, tool-house, potting-shed, compost-room, and so on, while with open doors you can in April harden off under its protection many plants for after bedding-out. Indeed, it is almost a necessity in the garden, and on wet days many of your operations can be carried on with comfort under its shelter.

THE GATHERER:

AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION, DISCOVERY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article or work submitted.

A Watch Galvanometer.



The woodcut illustrates a pocket galvanometer for measuring electric currents of about an ampere or less. The construction of the apparatus does not essentially vary from that of the ordinary galvanometer of the laboratory or testing-room. The instrument is made so small that it easily goes into the pocket, and it is likely to be useful to electricians and amateurs, especially now that electric lighting promises to become more general.

Natural Spheres.

At a recent meeting of the Genevan Society of Physics and Natural History, M. Mallet exhibited balls about 4 inches in diameter, one black, of vegetable origin, the other white, of mineral origin, and both of almost perfect sphericity. The black ball had been formed in a very curious manner. It was found inside a piece of oak which had been used as a mill-wheel shaft. A cavity had formed in the wood through decay or some insect, and the dust of the wood cohering through moisture, as the shaft revolved, gradually grew during the lapse of years into a round kernel. The white ball was a calcareous pebble found with many others in a grotto, through which a torrent flowed into the Rhone.

Home Reading.

An effort is being made to establish a National Home Reading Circle, with the object of directing and aiding the private studies of the people, especially young persons, artisans, and general readers. Various courses of reading, approved by experts, will be recommended, and local centres organised, and encouraged to meet periodically for mutual improvement and recreation. Science, literature, and history will be the leading subjects.

Eucalyptus Honey.

This honey is the product of the small black bee of Australia, which frequents the Eucalyptus-trees with which the colony abounds. The honey is of a golden colour and almost candied in our climate; but when heated it becomes quite syrupy. Its odour and flavour clearly indicate its source (the Eucalyptus essences forming about one-third of its bulk) and classify it as a honey not like any other. This product is interesting to us from the fact of being yielded by those remarkable trees, the Eucalypts, the anti-malarial and purifying properties of which have caused them to be transplanted to other parts of the world with a view to rendering habitable unhealthy districts. The Eucalyptus owes most of its therapeutical properties to a

volatile oil contained in the leaves, which oil acts as a febrifuge in fevers, especially typhoidal and malarial, and as a stimulant and anti-spasmodic in asthma, bronchitis, and whooping-cough. Eucalyptus honey, thanks to the energy and industry of the bee, is a product that contains, according to an analysis published in a French medical journal, all the essences to be found in the Eucalyptus-leaf, in combination with about sixty per cent. of sugar in its purest form. It is used as a homely and simple remedy for coughs, bronchitis, asthma, and whooping-cough, while in feverish conditions it has, it is stated, given satisfaction. Being sweet and not unpleasant in flavour, it is very acceptable to children, to whom it is administered either in hot milk, hot tea, or hot water ; from one to four teaspoonfuls in either of the above-mentioned vehicles will cause in a short time a feeling of warmth to pervade the body.

An Employés' Time-Recorder.

This apparatus is intended to make a printed register of every servant's "number," the time of his coming and leaving for the day, the hours of his labour, and whether it is short time, full time, or overtime. As illustrated herewith, it consists of a lever clock showing two rows of figures, the upper indicating tens and hundreds, the lower units. The last are in duplicate, the left showing the time of arrival, the right that of leaving. Above the clock-case is a lever, which the servant touches in order to print the record, which is made on a travelling tape of paper with type and ink. The clock requires to be wound up weekly, and the ink roller to be moistened every month or so. As many as 42 records can be made on 12 inches of paper, and the machines are made to record different numbers of workmen.

AN EMPLOYÉS' TIME-RECORDER.

An Electrical Slide-Rule.

Dr. J. A. Fleming has brought out a slide-rule which is likely to be useful in computing the energy utilised in electric lamps and motors. It consists of a rule having four scales, marked amperes, volts, candle-power, and watts. The first and fourth scales are engraved on the rule, the second and third on the slider. There is also a brass slider having a reading point or index. If we know the current through a lamp, the volts at its terminals, and the candle-power, the rule gives us the watts per candle-power. If we know the watts per candle-power and the candle-power, we can also find the current corresponding to the volts at the terminals. If we know the volts and current, the rule will tell us the resistance of the lamp while hot, and also the candle-power approximately. Householders, as well as electricians, may profit by the rule.

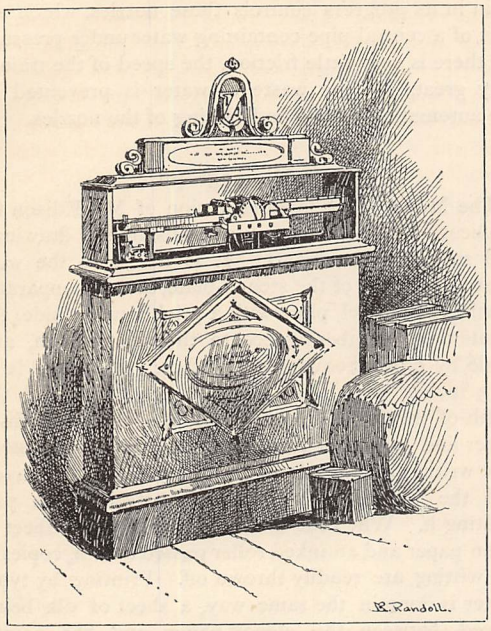
Terra-Cotta Lumber.

A new building material called "terra-cotta lumber" was recently described by Mr. E. B. Harper at a meeting of the Victorian Institute of Architects. It is a porous brick made by mixing clay with sawdust in a sufficient quantity to serve as fuel in burning the brick, and thus rendering the latter porous. The term "lumber" is evidently applied to the material because it can be cut and worked with tools like timber. The pores assist in holding mortar ; and when filled with pitch, make the "lumber" waterproof. The outsides of the material can also be glazed like other earthenware. Its weight is about half that of ordinary brick, and its resistance to a crushing stress about 840 lbs. to the square inch.

Full Fire-Pails.

Fire-pails, full of water, suspended at various accessible points in all large buildings, have now become a recognised institution, and they have often been of very great and immediate service in cases of fire. Unless they are carefully attended to, however, the water soon evaporates, and just when they are wanted the pails may be found empty. In order to prevent the possibility of this, it has recently been proposed, by an American inventor, to cover each pail with an air-tight sheet of tin foil, which, whilst preventing the contents from evaporating, can, when necessity arises, be readily removed. In very cold climates difficulties may arise from the freezing of the contents of the pails, and to guard against this, it is suggested that the pails be filled with brine or some such liquid in place of water.

An Electric Weighing Machine.



The weighing machine or steelyard which we illustrate is the invention of Mr. Snelgrove, and is extremely ingenious. The whole cycle of operations is performed automatically, it being only necessary to put the thing to be weighed on the platform. The current is switched on, and the load balanced; the mechanism is afterwards put to zero, and the current switched off when the weighing is done. The figure corresponding to the weight is properly indicated to the attendant. The machine can be made in different sizes, to weigh a pound or fifty tons, as required. One of these weighers excited considerable interest at the Birmingham Electrical and Industrial Exhibition.

The Potato as a Soap.

We may mention for what it turns out to be worth, a statement of *L'Industrie Parisienne* to the effect that boiled potatoes are used in a certain Parisian laundry in place of soap. Only water and the vegetable are employed in the washing; and the clothes, whether cotton or woollen, are said to be a credit to the establishment.

Buhach.

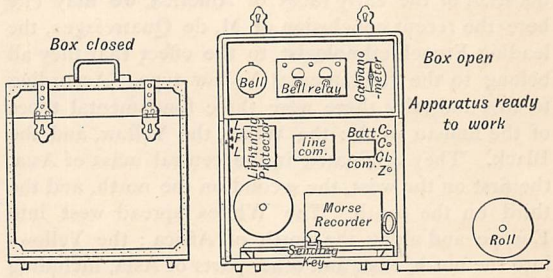
Buhach is a fine powder made from the flowers of the *Pyrethrum cinerariæfolium*, and much used in California for the destruction of insects. It was introduced into California by Mr. Mileo, a native of Dalmatia, and is now cultivated on a large scale by the Buhach Producing and Manufacturing Company, of Atwater, Merced County, California. The mills for grinding the flowers are situated at Stockton, near San Francisco. The pyrethrum grows to a height of 30 inches; the flowers are harvested in the end of May, dried in the sun, and ground to powder. They contain a volatile oil which makes the powder very destructive to insect life.

Apple-Grafts on Old Pear-Trees.

Mr. Gladstone, the ex-Premier, recently drew attention to a fact which deserves to be well known. It is that pear-trees, when they become old and past bearing, may be successfully grafted with scions of apple-trees, and thus made to yield apples. Recent experiments in this direction have been very encouraging.

A Portable Telegraph Office.

The Eastern Railway Company of France have introduced a portable telegraph office on their lines, to enable them to establish telegraphic communication at a point where there is no regular office. The example might be followed on some of our own railways, since it must prove useful in case of accidents or break-downs. The office is comprised in two boxes of moderate dimensions. The first, or office proper, is 1 foot 5 inches long by 1 foot $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad. It is arranged as shown in the figure and contains a Morse ink-writer, a sending key, a roll of paper, a vertical galvanometer, a bell relay, call-bell, two commutators, an ink-bottle, pencil, and a block of note-paper. There is also a battery of 24 Leclanché cells in ebonite cases, and a number of tools and spare materials, such as wire and writing implements. A scraper to clear the rails from rust is added in order that a good "earth" connection



may be obtained, when the apparatus is joined up between the telegraph wire and the ground, for signalling to the distant station.

Mexican Cave-Dwellers.

Lieutenant Schwatak reports the discovery of a curious tribe of cave-dwellers in the unexplored regions of Northern Mexico. Their caves are similar to the abandoned cliff-dwellings of Arizona and New Mexico. A notched pole placed against the face of the precipice enables them to climb to the entrance, but they are expert climbers independently of this. These people are tall and spare of figure, and of dark red complexion, resembling the negro. They are very wild and timid in their behaviour, and are believed to be sun-worshippers. While upon this subject, we may refer to the remarkable discovery of human footprints in a stratum of volcanic rocks at Lake Managua in Nicaragua by Dr. Flint. The prints, of which a specimen is shown in the figure, are $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad at the toes, and the foot which made them was probably about 8 inches

long. They occur beneath some twelve layers of tufa, sand, and pumice. Others were found by Dr. Flint on the southern slope of the Sierra de Managua. In one case they proved that the foot had been encased in a sandal or a moccasin. With regard to the question of age, Dr. Brinton, who has recently

investigated the subject, comes to the conclusion that, so far as is known at present, these footmarks cannot be removed further back in the scale of geological time than the present Post-Pliocene or Quaternary period. They present no evidence of belonging to an inferior type of man. With regard to the general question of the early races of America, we may cite here the recent conclusion of M. de Quatrefages, the leading French ethnologist, to the effect that they all belong to the fundamental Yellow type. According to this authority there were three fundamental types of the human stock : the White, the Yellow, and the Black. They originated in the central mass of Asia, the first on the west, the second on the north, and the third on the south. The Whites spread west into Europe and along the north of Africa ; the Yellows into the north, east, and other parts of Asia, including the Malay peninsula and islands ; the Blacks descended into Africa and Australia. The principal branches of the Whites are the Finns, the Aryans, and the Semites, but there are other "allophylian" Whites as yet unclassed, and these extended through North Africa even to the Canary Islands. Such are the latest results of ethnological research as communicated to the French Academy of Sciences.

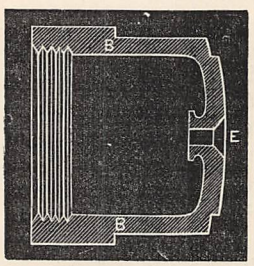
A Hydraulic Railway.

One of the amusements of Paris just now is the hydraulic railway, a rival to the switchback monstrosity. It is the invention of M. Girard, developed by M. Barré, and is laid down on the Esplanade des Invalides for a length of 200 yards. The train has no locomotive, and the carriages no wheels. It is supported on broad rails, rising above the ground by means of metal blocks. Before the train is started, water under pressure is forced through valves in these bearing-blocks, which are thereby lifted off the rails and rest on a film of water. The water-borne train is then propelled by the force of water-jets issuing from nozzles at intervals along the middle of the line, and striking on pallets under the carriages. The train in its progress controls these nozzles, which are part of a central pipe containing water under pressure. As there is very little friction, the speed of the train is very great, and the waste of water is prevented by the automatic opening and closing of the nozzles.

The Mimeograph.

The Mimeograph is an invention of Mr. Edison for duplicating type-writing, autographs, music, drawings, and such-like documents. It is based on the well-known principle of the stencil-plate, and the apparatus consists of a steel plate with a prickly under-side, the points on it numbering 200 to the square inch, and made by cross-grooving the surface. The plate is 1½ to 3 inches wide, and long enough to extend the width of the stencil-sheet, which is of thin paraffined paper and laid over the grated surface of the steel. The writing is then made with a stylus on this paper, and the stencil obtained by the steel points perforating it. When the latter is placed over a sheet of clean paper and an inked roller passed over it, copies of the writing are readily thrown off. Printing by type-writer is done in the same way, a sheet of silk being placed between the stencil-paper and the points. From 1,000 to 1,500 copies can, it is stated, be made from one stencil-plate, and the type is not injured. A sub-committee of the Franklin Institute have examined the apparatus and awarded the John Scott medal to its inventor. It is reported that Edison is engaged in constructing a "far-seeing" machine, but as yet not even the principle of the apparatus has been disclosed. Meanwhile a French inventor has deposited a sealed packet at the French Academy of Sciences, which purports to explain a device for attaining the same object.

A Lubricating Axle-Box.



An axle-box so formed as to contain a lubricator is shown in section in the accompanying figure. It is the invention of M. D. G. Labbé, of Paris, and resembles an ordinary axle-box, except that there is a hole, E, for introducing the lubricator, and a sufficient space, B B, to contain the latter, while the projecting rim or flange on the inside of the hole dips into the oil as the box revolves, and scatters it by centrifugal action on the end of the axle.

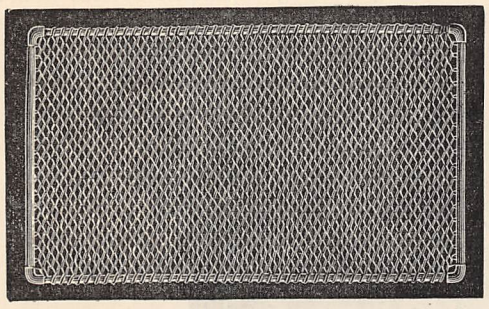
An Alternate Current-Motor.

Hitherto there has been, with one exception (the Tesla motor), no machine for turning alternating electric currents into mechanical power. The lack, however, is now supplied in a satisfactory manner by a motor introduced by Messrs. Ganz and Co., the well-known Hungarian electricians. The machine is, according to recent trials, capable of transforming

from 70 to 80 per cent. of the current into mechanical power. It will now be possible to employ alternating currents for motive purposes as well as the continuous currents which have been solely used heretofore.

A New Wire Mat.

A wire mat, constructed on a new plan, has recently been introduced, and is illustrated in the figure. Cross



and diagonal wires are avoided, the wires being intertwined and locked together as shown. The mat is thus very light, the frame being of steel tube, and it allows the dirt to fall through. It requires little or no cleaning, and is likely to be useful in public carriages as well as houses or halls.

Iron Cement.

The following cement is recommended for mending iron rails, grates of stoves, and so on, by an American mechanical journal :—Take equal parts of sulphur and white lead, and incorporate with $\frac{1}{8}$ part of borax into a homogeneous mass. To apply the composition, it is wetted with strong sulphuric acid, and a thin layer of it placed between the surfaces to be joined, they being at once pressed together. In five days the cement will be dry, and, it is said, the joint will be strong enough to resist the blows of a hammer.

An Automatic Lamp.

It is reported that the South Eastern Railway Company are about to introduce an automatic electric reading-lamp into their carriages. On putting a penny in the slot a five-candle power lamp will be available for the use of the passenger. It will burn for half an hour. Should the lamp be out of order the penny drops through the slot and is recovered by its owner. The whole of the lamps in a carriage are fed by one accumulator.

A New Method of Painting Porcelain.

The process of M. Bonnaud for designing on porcelain, china, or earthenware is intended to effect the results of hand-painting in a comparatively short time. It consists essentially in preparing the design in colours on a prepared glass, and transferring it to the porcelain surface. The glass is covered with a preparation containing bichromate of potash, and when dry is put in a printing-frame, and an unmounted photograph on paper of the picture to be copied is laid over it. Exposure to the light gives the glass the power of taking up more or less of the mineral pigments which are afterwards applied to it in a dry state by the brush. Various tints are added in this way, and the picture is fixed. The brighter colours and higher lights are then put in, until the picture on the glass is complete. It is transferred to the porcelain by a special process, in a chemical bath, by means of a collodion film. The porcelain is then fired and the design fixed in the material.

Giants of the Forest.

According to a recent report of the Conservator of Forests to the Victorian Minister of Lands (Australia), the tallest tree in the Dandenong Forest is 300 feet high ; that in the Black Spur Forest 302 feet high and 52 feet in circumference. At Mount Bawbaw there is a tree 470 feet in height, another in the Cape Otway range 415 feet, and one on Mount Conawarrabool 336 feet high, and no less than 69 feet in circumference.

A Public Safety Signal.

A system of signalling which connects the policemen of a town with headquarters has been tried for some time past at Islington, as previously mentioned in the GATHERER, and has given much satisfaction. We are now able to give a fuller description of the system, which comes from America. Signal-boxes, each having a "number," are placed at different points of a policeman's beat, and electrically joined up to the police station. From these a policeman can send intelligence to the office either by a telegraph, which records the message, or by a telephone. Aid can thus be obtained at a moment's notice. Householders can also, under certain conditions, have the use of the signal-box, keys being provided for this purpose. In connection with the system a "patrol wagon" is provided, having stretchers, splints, and surgical appliances to be used in cases of accident.

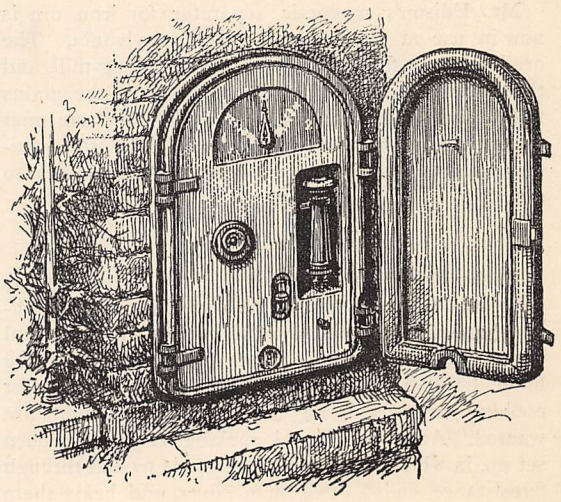
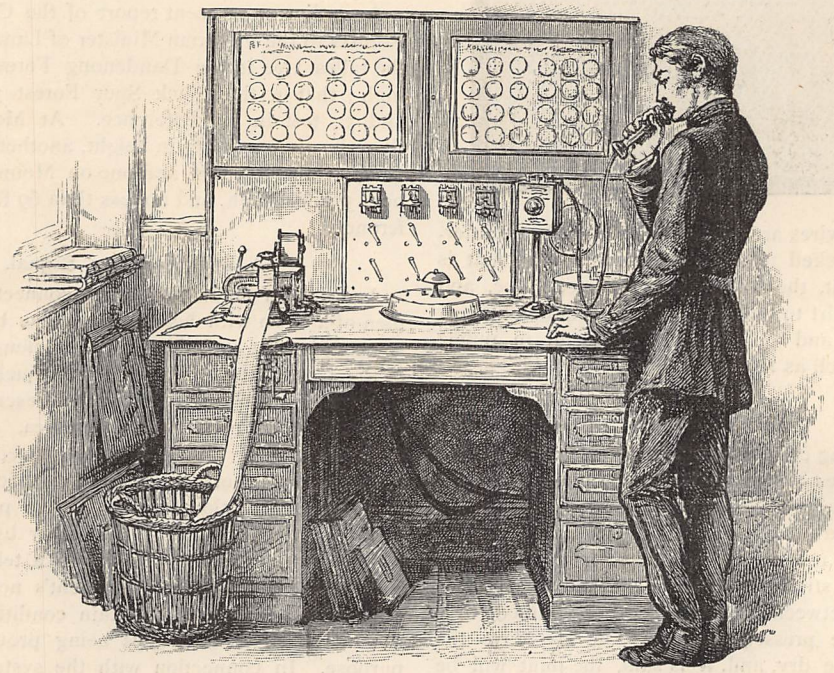


FIG. 1.

This wagon is always ready to start, and is manned by several of the police. Fig. 1 shows the signal-box open. It is merely an iron case holding the telegraph apparatus and the telephone, as well as the call-bell. The telegraph employed is a dial pattern, similar to the well-known domestic telephone of America. A dial or face, shown above, has several messages or requests printed on it, and all the operator has to do is to turn the hand or pointer of the dial to the "request" he wishes to make. Fig. 2 illustrates the corresponding apparatus at the police station.



A PUBLIC SAFETY SIGNAL.—FIG. 2.

The Magnetic Ore Sifter.

Mr. Edison's magnetic separator for iron ore is now in use at Blechtersville in Pennsylvania. The ore is brought from the mine to a crushing-mill, and there ground, then sifted. From the sieve the grains fall through a hopper, past a powerful electromagnet 6 feet long and 6 inches in diameter. The iron particles are drawn to the magnet, and the dross falls into a heap to be wheeled away.

An Electrical Range.

At the Hotel Bernina, Samaden, the electric light is generated from the power of a waterfall in the neighbourhood, and as this power is always available and costs practically nothing, the management of the hotel have been advised to utilise the current for cooking purposes during the day, when no lights are wanted. An experimental cooking range has been set up, in which the electric current is passed through "resistance coils" of German silver, and heats them red-hot. All the ordinary cooking operations of a range can be performed by means of this electric fire. Obviously the process is a very clean one, as the heat is pure and free from smoke and gases. From cooking to the table is an easy step, and we may mention here that a lady recently delighted her guests at a dinner party by marking their places with full-blown roses, on the petals of which they found their names delicately traced in a white line. This was effected by sending an electric current from the point of the stylus used in writing. It had changed the colour of the leaf.

Rolling Liquid Metal.

A rolling-mill for producing sheet metal from the molten metal, instead of from a billet or bar, has been at work for some time past in the can factory at Maywood, near Chicago. It consists of large rolls kept cool by circulating water, and these not only thin out, but cool the liquid metal into sheets.

A Store of Stories.

Mr. Marshall P. Wilder calls his volume of recollections, recently published by Messrs. Cassell and Co., "The People I've Smiled With." Doubtless the first effect of this publication will be to very largely increase the number of people who have smiled in company with the author, though he may never meet or see thousands of them. Throughout the volume Mr. Wilder has scattered a number of "bracers"—to use his own expression—such as he is wont to employ in his public efforts to make other people smile. To any one bound on a journey we recommend this easily read little work as a most admirable and suitable companion.

"WHAT HARVEST COMETH FROM THIS PROMISE RARE?"

"*BLOSSOMS*" (*p.* 59).

JULY, 1889.

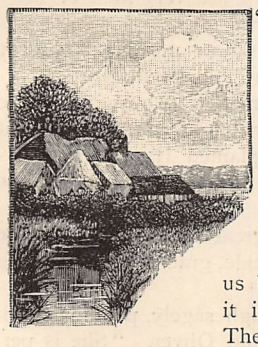
KING OR PROTECTOR?

By the Author of "A Man of the Name of John," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

ON THE HILLS.

"When I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
And told me I should love."



"WHAT on earth has become of Oliver?"

"The Lord Protector doesn't hurry himself, my dear child, it wouldn't be independent; I should have thought you would have known that by this time."

"He promised to be with us by five o'clock though, and it is past the half-hour now. The tea won't be fit to drink," said Clare Stuart, peering quite disconsolately into the depths of her teapot.

"It doesn't matter, Clare; I kept some tea back on purpose, and the fire is burning still. He shall have a fresh brew all to himself."

Phyllis's speech was greeted by a shout of laughter, in which she joined good-humouredly.

"Well, of all the pampered Protectors that ever were, commend me to Oliver!" laughed Charlie Stuart. "His Majesty doesn't get half such tender attentions, I remark!"

"I don't think you have much to complain of on that score," said a low voice near him, as Gertrude Fairfax glanced at the young man lying almost at her feet.

It was late afternoon on a glowing August day; the sky was cloudless, and the distant view obscured by faint heat-mists. But up here on the hills the breeze was fresh and cool, and murmured through the pine-trees with gentle unceasing sound. A little way off, on a bare patch in the short sun-dried turf, a kettle swung over a crackling gipsy fire; and just outside the trees, but in their deep shadow, the owners of the kettle were picturesquely encamped.

Clare Stuart was doing the honours—a pretty girl, who invested her seat of soft elastic heather with the dignity of a throne, and wielded her teapot like a sceptre, while in the intervals of her labours she fanned herself slowly with a huge frond of bracken.

At her right hand, on a luxurious couch of wraps spread over the heather, were seated Mr. and Mrs. Danesford:—he, a handsome man, with a thin worn look that told of ill-health, and she a woman in the prime of life, with a sweet calm face, who had eyes and ears for none but her husband.

A little further off Phyllis Danesford, their eldest daughter, had presided over the bread-and-butter, assisted by her cousin Hugh. Now that the appetites of the community were nearly satisfied, Hugh, a small wiry-looking young man, with very bright eyes and a thick brown moustache, had fallen back on the amusement of decking her hat with wild flowers. Opposite them, Maurice Stuart and Maud Danesford were wrangling over their tea, and sharing it with the dogs, in their usual heedless happy fashion, with all the light-heartedness of sixteen.

But the interest of the picture culminated in two figures at the edge of the group, Gertrude Fairfax and

her slave and admirer, Charlie Stuart, known since babyhood as King Charles.

She was a tall and strikingly handsome girl, but there was a cold hard look on her well-cut features, that invariably made people strive to disparage her good looks. "I know I am handsome, and I don't care the least for your opinion," was written on every line of her face. And yet no one could help admiring her, and even the girls who refused to own her supremacy in public, secretly acknowldged that they always felt small beside her.

She was dressed to-day as usual in exquisite taste, in a simple white gown of soft fine flannel, and a sailor hat with white ribbons. But only women could judge what that simplicity must have cost, and the magnificent rings on her long white fingers spoke of wealth to the most superficial observer.

The only child of rich parents, who simply idolised her, Gertrude had merely to express a wish to see it fulfilled. This year her fancy had been to take a country house for the summer among the Surrey hills. Whether the fact that she and Charlie had met frequently in town during the early part of the season had anything to do with it, she best knew. At all events, Charlie had taken his mother at the earliest opportunity to call on Mrs. Fairfax, and being made free of the intimate circle at Stoke Danesford, Gertrude had found her way into all the county gaieties.

Whether Charlie's attentions meant anything, was still an open question, but he certainly had paid the new-comer most marked attentions for the last few weeks. He had the reputation of being a tremendous flirt, but he always said plaintively that it really wasn't his fault. It was not his fault perhaps that he was possessed of most fascinating manners, in addition to a very handsome face, a singular grace of movement rare among men, and voice, eyes, and smile of peculiar charm. It was a little hard perhaps for a girl to realise that he would bestow the same bewitching speeches and smiles on a beggar as on his dearest friend, but it remained a fact. King Charles he would ever be, assuming his rights with royal grace, and bestowing his favours with princely condescension, accepting homage as his due, but as yet not at all disposed to abdicate his throne in favour of a queen.

Meanwhile he enjoyed life to the full, and especially such moments as the present, when the air was full of sound and perfume, and the beauty round him amply gratified his artistic perceptions.

"Here comes Oliver!" said Hugh, suddenly glancing up.

As he spoke a tall figure emerged from the trees at a little distance, and came towards them with a firm swinging stride.

"Now for that teapot, Phil!" said Charlie lazily.

"Maurice, get me some hot water, there's a dear boy!" begged Phyllis.

"Ask a Puritan—Hugh will go," returned Maurice, who was balancing a piece of cake on an eager terrier's nose.

Oliver raised his hat to Miss Fairfax as he came up with a pleasant smile. "How do you do?" he said, with his quiet hearty handshake. "You have got the best of it up here, good people. The heat in the lanes is tremendous," and casting hat and whip from him, he flung himself on the ground with a sigh of satisfaction.

Although not strictly speaking handsome, Oliver Danesford's face was a very pleasant one to look upon, and there was something very attractive in the glance of his kindly eyes. He was a big man, but though rather too broad-shouldered for his height, he never looked clumsy save when in company with Charlie.

"Any letters, Noll?" asked Phyllis.

"Yes, I got the second post. There is one for mother from our fair cousin at last."

He drew a packet from his inner coat-pocket, and selecting one directed in a very pretty hand, presented it to Hugh in exchange for a cup of tea.

"Give it to my mother, will you?" he said. "It won't bite, old man," he added, as Hugh turned the letter over doubtfully with a low whistle.

"Hm! not so sure," returned Hugh, carrying it to its owner.

"Is she coming, mother?" demanded Maud eagerly as Mrs. Danesford skimmed the lightly-covered sheet.

"Yes, she will be delighted to come, and hopes to arrive next week. She will let us know the date later on."

"This is a cousin of ours, a Miss Prescott," remarked Oliver in response to Gertrude's inquiring looks—"She is coming to stay with us for six months, while her father is gone to Australia for his health."

"Six months! I hope you are very fond of her," said Gertrude in surprise.

"On the contrary, they know nothing whatever about her. Aren't they rash?" laughed Charlie.

"Never mind! The specimen of a cousin they have got already is so satisfactory that of course they want another, Miss Fairfax," explained Hugh, whose orphaned childhood had known no other home but the Manor.

"I really think it is a great experiment; I hope it will succeed," said Gertrude, graciously addressing Oliver.

"I know it will," said Hugh sagely, perching himself on a heather-bush behind Oliver. "She is perfectly charming."

"Go on, old man, pile up the agony," said Charlie encouragingly.

"I can tell you anything about her that you like to know," returned Hugh boldly.

"Hugh! You have never seen her!" cried Maud.

"I never said I had. But I am intimately acquainted with her portrait, her writing, and her charms," and Hugh looked round with glee on the astonished company.

"Hugh, you don't play fair," said his uncle languidly. "Where have you met Miss Prescott?"

"I never met her," said Hugh. "But I know all about her, though I never till this moment connected Miss Prescott with a certain fair Nance I wot of."

"Hugh, you are a mean wretch," said Phyllis with warmth. "Tell us what she is like at once."

"I shall not describe her; you may each imagine your own type of beauty for yourselves," said Hugh calmly. "But she is clever, highly educated, certificates, all that kind of thing."

"How appalling!" said Charlie, who was nevertheless moved to sit up and attend to the conversation.

"I expect she is æsthetic and dowdy then," said Gertrude with contempt. "I hate clever women."

"THE INTEREST CULMINATED IN TWO FIGURES AT THE EDGE OF THE GROUP" (*p.* 3).

"Not a bit of it! She is one of those capable young persons who get a yard of print and two penn'orth of ribbons, and turn themselves out to rival Mme. Elise, said Hugh with twinkling eyes. He was well aware of Gertrude's dislike to home-made raiment.

"What a curious combination of gifts! It sounds interesting," said Charlie lazily. "Anything else?"

"I believe," said Hugh solemnly after a pause, "that she is a dreadful flirt."

"So I should think, as you have evidently tried her capabilities in that direction," laughed Charlie.

"Oh, I don't mind waiving my claim in your favour," returned Hugh politely.

Oliver rose, apparently to get himself some more tea, and addressed himself pointedly to Gertrude, who was plucking an unfortunate spray of heather to pieces. "Are you not going to see the church before we go, Miss Fairfax?" he asked.

"I thought the picnic was got up in order that I might see it," returned Gertrude coldly. Something had evidently offended her.

Charlie sprang up eagerly. "Well, let us go and see it now," he said. "The others can stop and pack up meanwhile; they have all seen it often."

"Yes, do, that will be a good plan," said Oliver, and added in a lower voice, "We ought not to stop very late; there will be a heavy dew to-night, and it will be dangerous for my father."

Gertrude hesitated. "I don't care much about churches," she said indifferently. "They are all alike. It is very pleasant here."

"But this church is not a bit like any other, and I do so want you to see it. Do come!" urged Charlie, holding out a hand to help her to rise.

Who could resist those pleading eyes and voice? Gertrude yielded, and strolled away slowly with her devoted escort, followed at a discreet distance by Maud and Maurice. Charlie led her down by a new way, through a long green glade between the stiff sentinel trees. The sun's level rays filtered through them, lighting their stems with a ruddy glow, and turning the under side of the dark branches to a vivid green. At their feet the bracken stood knee-deep in every

shade of green and gold, amidst the crimson flush of the heather. There was a soothing influence in the balmy evening air that calmed Gertrude's ruffled spirits in spite of herself.

"Do you think Mr. Danesford invented all that about Miss Prescott?" she asked, pausing to pull a spray of heather as she spoke.

Charlie laughed. "Most likely! You never can tell what Hugh is up to. What does it matter? I don't care what the Danesfords' cousin may be like!"

He offered her a frond of ivory-white brake to add to her bouquet; he looked down at her with his soft brown eyes and smiled. The glamour of the hour had enchanted both; two graceful figures in the magic pine-woods, what did they care for an unknown girl?

"Seriously, Hugh, do you know anything of Miss Prescott?" Mrs. Danesford was asking on the hill above.

"Seriously, yes, if Clare will promise not to betray us to King Charles," answered Hugh, actively collecting cups and saucers.

Clare nodded assent to his questioning glance, and he went on—"There is a very nice boy in our office, rather a chum of mine, who spent last Christmas in the same house with her, and is as desperately in love with her as a boy of eighteen generally is with a girl two or three years older than himself. They correspond, and she gave him her photograph. I've seen it. Oh! his raptures over it! Well, you know what Charlie used to be at his age."

"But you were inventing about her all the same," said Clare.

"No, I wasn't. I flatter myself that I have got the young lady's measure pretty accurately now."

"Still you needn't have made her out to be everything Gertrude is not, and then said that she was charming."

Hugh chuckled. "That was the fun of it. I like planting thorns in that young lady's pillow. She gives herself such howling airs, as if there wasn't another pretty girl in the world."

"You are a narrow-minded creature," said Clare crushingly.

"Very likely! All I hope is that Nance will cut her out when she comes. Charlie is much too good a fellow to be tied to an iceberg for life."

Hugh's tongue was always allowed great licence, but for once Clare looked displeased.

"Father, don't you think it is getting rather cold for you up here? Shall we stroll slowly down?" asked Oliver in the pause which followed. "I want to tell you what Carter said; we had a regular battle."

"I was afraid you would," said Mr. Danesford, availing himself of his son's arm to rise from his cushions with the slow movements of an habitual invalid.

Father and son moved slowly away across the turf, Mrs. Danesford watching them well content. Oliver was the only person she really trusted in charge of his father.

The others followed by degrees, Hugh lingering to extinguish the fire, and bringing up the rear encumbered with wraps and baskets, till he looked like some nondescript animal.

The direct path led straight down the hill through the trees, and past the churchyard to the little village in the valley below, where the road wound out of sight round the corner of the hill. A clearing had been made in the pine-woods for the church, with its slender spire, reared by a great architect in memory of a dearly-loved wife. So great was the slope that, above the plateau on which the church stood, the hill-side was on a level with the upper lights of the windows.

Oliver and Mr. Danesford stood leaning on the fence, listening to the music that rolled through the open casements to their very feet. Some one was practising for the Sunday service, and chant and hymn blended in harmony with the moan of the wind-swept boughs overhead. From where they stood they could see the glow of the painted panes across the church, lit by a shaft of light from the sinking sun.

Down below Charlie and Gertrude were wandering among the quiet graves, where the pine-stumps still stood here and there in mute protest against the hands that had felled them.

Oliver was musing on this unknown cousin who was so soon to form one of their family. Nance! he liked the name, it had a sweet old-fashioned sound. Moreover, a tender romance hung round her like a halo. He had heard his mother speak so often of her favourite cousin, who had married and died within a year of her wedding-day. So pretty, and so charming, the mother had been in her youth, and now the daughter was coming to renew the old friendship.

"Are you of Hugh's opinion, Noll?" His father quite startled him by asking the question.

"That Charlie is too good for Miss Fairfax? Yes. But Hugh need not trouble. Charlie will never marry her."

"You think he is not in earnest?"

"I am sure he isn't. Neither is she."

Mr. Danesford watched the handsome couple below in silence for a few moments; then he said, "I am not so sure. My belief is that she means to capture our King."

"Why do you think so, father?"

"For many reasons. One is that she is jealous of you now. She is of a frightfully jealous nature."

"Then I hope Charlie will never marry her," said Oliver, as they turned away. "Of all miseries commend me to a jealous wife."

"Commend me to your wife when I see her! She will be perfection!" laughed Mr. Danesford. "I should like to see you in love, Noll. At five-and-twenty it is time you were thinking of such things."

"Confess you never yet saw the wife you thought worthy of me," said Oliver, with a smile of amusement.

"No, I never did, lad, that's true enough," said Mr. Danesford affectionately.

"When I see my mother's double I'll marry her at once if she'll have me!" announced Oliver. "The truth is that you've spoilt us, father. Phil and I will never marry."

Mr. Danesford made no answer. He knew that his own life could not be a long one, and he would fain have seen Oliver with a wife before he died. And Oliver's thoughts went back to the unknown Nance.

By degrees the whole party assembled in the inn-yard at the foot of the hill. Gertrude's smart little pony-cart was waiting for her, and her friends waited to see her start before entering the break that was to convey themselves. She was more gracious than usual as she made her farewells, and tendered her thanks for a pleasant afternoon.

"Good-bye!" she said, finally, as Charlie laid the rug across her knees. "I think your plan for the 8th is quite charming."

And then she gathered the reins into her firm grasp, touched the pony with the whip, and dashed off.

"Oh, Charlie! Have you told her your plan?" cried indignant Maud. "And you haven't told one of your faithful Cavaliers!"

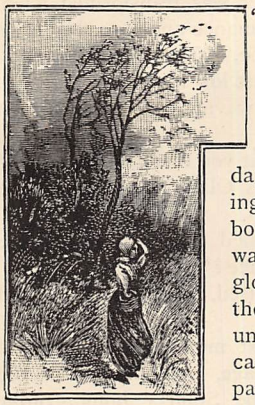
"Little girls shouldn't talk about things they don't understand," said Hugh reprovingly.

"Don't get agitated, Maud, he's only going to give you a penny Jubilee medal," was Maurice's consolation.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

SWEET NANCE.

"A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her—she."



"HEY for Cavaliers! Ho for Cavaliers!" rang out Maud's saucy voice—"Three cheers for King Charles!"

It had been a showery day, but the clouds were clearing towards sunset, and the old bowling-green at the Manor was suffused with a golden glow, as Nance Prescott turned the corner of the yew-hedge under Phyllis's guidance, and came in sight of the assembled party.

The Manor was a rambling red house dating from the days of good Queen Bess. A long, straight pleasure-ground lay behind it, with terraces and flower-beds and strangely-clipt yews, and on the lowest level of all a bowling-green, smooth and true as a billiard-table, where the favourite tennis-court was marked.

Oliver and Charlie had just finished an animated single, and Charlie struck an attitude of graceful victory in one court, while Oliver laughingly pelted him with balls from the other. Maud and Maurice, on the bank above, loudly applauded the victory of their side; but Clare nobly forbore, considering generously that one Puritan had returned to his daily journeys to town, and the other had gone to meet her cousin at the station.

"Oliver!" called Phyllis from the end of the green, "here is Nance."

There was only one word that could describe Nance Prescott, and that was—dainty. She was small and slender, and had a fragile look that appealed for protection, as did the dark grey eyes that glanced up from under her long lashes. She was always exquisitely fresh and trim, and having cast aside all trace of her long journey with her travelling-cloak, stood there clad in delicate grey, looking as if she had come straight from before her own looking-glass. The sunlight fell upon her golden hair as if it loved to linger there, and as she stood in the gap beside the hedge she seemed to gather all the life and brightness of the scene, and concentrate them on herself.

Maud flew at her in hearty welcome, and then hung back half abashed lest she should overwhelm anything so small and dainty. But Nance put out both hands and kissed her warmly.

"You are Maud, aren't you?" she said. "I am so glad to see you."

"And this is Oliver," said Phyllis, with her hand on her brother's arm.

Nance, on the bank, found her head almost on a level with that of her big cousin on the lawn below, and looked at him with a deprecating gaze as she held out her hand. "I am half afraid, but I am sure you won't hurt me," said the big grey eyes very plainly.

"How do you do, Miss Prescott?" said Oliver, with a reassuring smile.

"Oh, won't you call me Nance? Every one always does," she said plaintively.

Oliver was quite afraid he had hurt her feelings. He was always afraid of hurting people's feelings, and he amended his speech hastily.

"Nance, then," he said, "if you will let me call you so. Let me introduce Miss Stuart, Mr. Maurice Stuart, and His Majesty King Charles."

"The First—in our hearts!" added Maud.

Charlie came forward not a whit abashed by his introduction.

"I have no doubt Phyllis has revealed the state secrets to you already, Miss Prescott," he said, uncovering his curly head with courtly grace.

"Oh, yes; every one always does tell me all their secrets!" said Nance. "I hope you don't mind."

"We only came out for a moment," said Phyllis. "Papa wants you, Oliver, if you have finished your tennis."

"And we must be going," said Clare. "Will you get my racquet, Maurice?"

"Farewell, you beaten Puritan!" said saucy Maud, waving her hand, as her brother turned away.

The others followed him very leisurely, Nance and Charlie leading the way, her golden hair upturned to his, his eloquent face bent down to hers, as they mounted from terrace to terrace.

"What do you think of her?" asked Clare of her brother, after Phyllis and Nance had turned indoors.

"The idea of Hugh thinking he was going to appropriate her! He's a modest young man!" was His Majesty's indignant reply.

Nance was a young person of method and despatch. Her room was exquisitely neat, and looked as if she

had lived in it for weeks, by the time that she left it arrayed in her soft white dinner-gown, with Gloire de Dijon roses at her breast.

There was no one in the drawing-room, when she entered it, but Hugh, lounging near the open window, and watching the after-glow on the distant purple hills.

"Allow me to introduce myself," he said, springing up as the white gown rustled across the room. "I am Hugh. I need say no more!"

Nance dimpled and laughed. "How do you do, Mr. Danesford?" she said.

"Aren't you going to take me for a cousin? You had much better! Do!" said Hugh persuasively. "Things that are equal to the same thing, you know, &c. We are both cousins to Phyllis, therefore to each other. Q. E. D., Cousin Nance."

"Very well, Cousin Hugh," said Nance demurely, for she was only Mrs. Danesford's cousin. "After that able reasoning I can say no more."

"I think you know my friend, Ted Woodhouse?" said Hugh.

"Oh, yes!" said Nance, with animation. "Isn't he a nice boy? And you are the Mr. Danesford who was so kind to him, I suppose? I am glad we are cousins."

Nance had a pretty little way of paying compliments so simply that they were the more flattering.

Hugh bowed his acknowledgments. "You are very kind," he said. "Can I be of any use to you in a cousinly way in return?"

"Do explain to me," said Nance, with a puzzled air, knitting her brow, "what is all this about King and Protector, and taking sides? I can't understand it at all."

Hugh laughed. "It is only a survival of old days," he said. "We dubbed them King and Protector years ago, when the Stuarts first came here. You know, they live with their uncle, Mr. Helmsley? Puritans and Cavaliers made capital sides for all our games, and we keep up the old name for fun still. Maud and Clare are sworn Royalists, and think their King can do no wrong, and I tease them accordingly."

"Then you are a Puritan, I suppose?"

"Very much so. I am not carried away by outward advantages," said Hugh, with lofty disdain. "Those frivolous Cavaliers worship their King for his looks, it's my private belief."

"That is the speech of a narrow-minded person," said Nance promptly.

"I expect they will clamour for you to take one side or the other," went on Hugh. "If you will take my advice, you will——"

"Yes?" said Nance as he paused.

"Reserve your decision," said Hugh very coolly, as Oliver and Phyllis walked into the room.

"What do you think of her?" Phyllis had asked of her brother when they met on the stairs.

"I will tell you by-and-by," said Oliver cautiously.

Every one else was of one opinion before the evening was over—Nance was quite charming. Mr. Danesford was particularly fascinated by her; she devoted herself to him in such a pretty way, amusing without fatiguing him in a way few people had the knack of doing. And then she took all hearts by storm by her playing. No one knew Nance who had not heard her at her beloved piano, her whole soul merged in that of the composer whom she interpreted so well. She played some bright little pieces first, to feel her way, but when she found her audience appreciative she revelled in Chopin and Schumann to her heart's content.

"Thank you, my dear child. I don't know when I have had such a treat," said Mr. Danesford, when she rose.

"I will play to you every night, if you like it," said Nance, coming to sit near him, with a confiding smile.

"Now, Oliver, sing to us," commanded Hugh.

And Oliver sang—

"Thou art like unto a flower
So pure, so fair, so bright;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Steals o'er my heart's delight.
I feel as though I must lay, sweet,
My hands on thy head, with a prayer
That God may keep thee always, sweet,
So bright, and pure, and fair."

Nance looked up in surprise. Some strange freak of nature had gifted her big cousin with a pure sweet tenor of melting tone. Oliver was transformed when he sang, and the gates of romance and love flew open before the magic of his voice. Nance was lost in a world of dreams when the last low note died away.

"Go on!" she murmured, waving her hand. "Don't stop! Sing again, please."

"You haven't told me what you think of her now," Phyllis said reproachfully, as Oliver was lighting the bedroom candles.

"I thought I had," he replied coolly. "Isn't there a flower they call Sweet Nance?"

"Oh!" said Phyllis, surprised, and discreetly added no more.

Nance was conducted next morning on a tour of inspection through the village, beginning with the church and ending with the Stuarts' home, Stoke Court. It was a showery day again after a wet night, and the girls picked their way carefully along the muddy lanes, wrapped in their light cloaks. Suddenly they were overtaken by a pony-cart which came dashing round the corner behind them, causing them to scatter to the sides of the road.

Nance held her skirts away from the damp long grass beneath the hedge, and looked with interest at the dark, handsome girl, in faultlessly-cut covert-coat, who had drawn up at sight of Phyllis.

"I was just coming up to see you," said Gertrude Fairfax, taking in the new-comer at a glance. "Can you come over and play tennis with us this afternoon? My father has asked some friends down till Monday, and I think we could have a good game."

"Thanks very much, but the boys are all playing cricket to-day, and we are on our way to ask Clare to drive over with us and fetch them this afternoon,"

"THROUGH THE TREES, AND PAST THE CHURCHYARD TO THE LITTLE VILLAGE" (*p.* 6).

answered Phyllis. "I am afraid, too, that it will be too wet for tennis to-day."

Gertrude looked annoyed, and flicked the pony with her whip, till he danced into a puddle and splashed Phyllis woefully. "I beg your pardon," she said ungraciously. "Stand, Prince!" and then she looked across at Nance.

"My cousin, Miss Prescott—Miss Fairfax," said Phyllis.

Gertrude bowed like offended Royalty; Nance gave her a pretty little nod and smile in return. "What a dear pony! I must pat him!" she said, and she came fluttering round the pony's head with soft caressing touches.

The pony seemed to like it, as he thrust his velvet nose into her hand. Not so his mistress.

"It is no use my going on to the Court, then, I suppose?" she said. "Then I won't keep Prince standing, for he hates it. Disgusting weather, isn't it?"

"Oh, no! I am so glad to see the rain, when one thinks how terribly it is wanted after the long drought," said Phyllis.

Other people's wants did not much affect Miss Fairfax. She tightened her reins, and wheeled round with an abrupt farewell, scarcely giving Nance time to spring aside.

"'Temper, temper, take advice!'" sang Nance in mischievous glee, as the cart rattled away. "What is the matter?"

Phyllis could not help laughing at the comic elevation of her cousin's eyebrows. "It is only that she wanted Charlie for tennis, and can't get him," she said.

"Oh, is that all?" said Nance. "Dear me!"

The day continued damp and cold, without actual rain, but the girls agreed that driving dry foot was the pleasantest way of taking the air in such weather, so they started, after an early tea at the Manor, to fetch their brothers home. Nance was wrapped in a very becoming crimson fur-lined cloak, for the September air was raw and chill. Damp and dulness had, however, no effect on her spirits, and she kept the others well amused by her flow of nonsense, as she sat cosily ensconced in a corner of the big break. There was something so infectious in the ripple of her light-hearted laughter, that no one could help joining in it, and it was a very merry party that rolled along the miry lanes under a lowering sky.

The match was nearly over when they drew up at last by the pretty village green where the cricket-ground was carefully fenced off. Charlie was bowling at one end, and his graceful figure was displayed to its fullest advantage, as he sent ball after ball down the pitch at a terrific pace. Oliver was keeping wicket at a discreet distance behind the stumps, stopping and returning the balls with the regularity of clockwork.

"A maiden over! How dull!" said Phyllis. "I wonder what the state of the game is? Where's Maurice?"

Maurice, who was out in the deep field, ran up to them between the overs. "One wicket to fall, and six runs to make to win! It's awfully exciting!" he cried, and tore back again to his place.

"Oh, do look at Oliver! He looks like a big frog—how funny!" cried Nance, with a little ripple of laughter.

"He is only keeping wicket. Did you never see a match before?" said Phyllis.

"Not often. I don't know anything about cricket," said Nance. "But Oliver is too funny. Oh! they are making a run—how nice!" and she clapped her hands.

"Nance, you are applauding the wrong side!" cried horrified Maud.

"Oh! am I?" said Nance in dismay. "How silly!" and they all laughed in chorus.

The match was really exciting for the moment. Another single was made off Charlie's next over, and then in the following one, one of the batsmen made a drive that should have been good for four. But the ball travelled slowly over the long wet grass. Charlie was down on it like a flash of lightning, and throwing it in with deadly aim, took the off stump clean out of the ground when his opponent's bat was within a few inches of the crease.

"Fielded! Fielded!" shouted every one in chorus.

"Well done, King Charles!" shouted Maurice, flying his cap in the air.

"Who wouldn't be a hero?" laughed Phyllis, as Charlie became the centre of an animated group, who patted him on the back with truly trying zeal. "It really was a fine throw."

"Grand!" said Nance, clapping with the rest.

"Who says King Charles isn't a brilliant field?" demanded Maud in triumph.

"Brilliant, but unequal, my love," observed Phyllis politely.

Charlie soon disengaged himself from his admirers, and came up to the break at a run. "You just arrived in time," he said, climbing up the wheel. "It's been a dull match till now."

"How many did you make?" asked Maud.

"Twelve, first innings; seven, the second. No one made any runs to-day, and I ran Oliver out just as he got set. Clever, wasn't it?"

"Never mind, you won the match," said Nance consolingly.

Charlie took off his cap in acknowledgment, and then came clambering over the rail, and nestled down between his sisters. "It's awfully cold," he said. "Haven't you brought my great-coat, Clare? I wish I had a cloak like Miss Prescott's."

"I dare say you do!" said Nance contentedly, and looking rather like a warm little robin in its nest.

Charlie took kindly to a great deal of petting. He let his sisters fuss over putting him into a becoming caped great-coat, stole the end of Clare's boa to tie round his neck, and looked as absurd and handsome as he possibly could.

Oliver and Maurice came up presently with the cricket-bags, and they started off at an excellent pace, the horses not sorry to find themselves moving again with their faces turned towards home.

"Well, Charles, you distinguished yourself at the last match of the season," said Oliver, looking at his left hand.

"So did you. Do you know we hadn't a single bye in either innings?" said Charlie. "I say, old chap, are you damaged?"

"Split my fingers again, for a change; it's nothing. You haven't got anything to tie them up with, have you, Phil?"

"Oh, here!" said Nance eagerly, and she had whipped a little crimson handkerchief out of the front of her gown, and torn it into strips, before any one could stop her. "Let me tie up your hand for you, Oliver. I've been to ambulance lectures!"

It was just the sort of impulsive thing that Nance was always doing; foolish of her, perhaps, but very lovable. Oliver reached out his hand with a faint protest, and let her take her way. The crimson cambric was not the best bandage in the world, perhaps, but she used it deftly, and he seemed perfectly content with the result. But as she settled back in her corner again, Nance caught Charlie's dark eyes fixed on her, and blushed in answer.

"Gertrude came over to-day to ask us to tennis," said Phyllis, addressing Charlie.

"Oh, did she?" he said indifferently. "Why didn't you go?"

"My dear boy! Without any of you? Not exactly!" laughed Clare.

"Oh, didn't she want us?" asked Nance innocently. "I thought Phyllis didn't want to go."

There was a general shout of laughter. Even Oliver smiled behind his moustache.

"Phyllis is a person of discretion," he said.

"Well, I didn't want to, I'm sure," pouted Nance. "Miss Fairfax nearly ran over me, and I don't like people who lose their tempers; they frighten me."

"I don't believe you are so easily frightened," said Charlie.

"I hope you aren't going to lose your temper and try!" cried Nance, in pretended alarm.

"I haven't got one to lose," laughed Charlie. "We none of us have."

Nance glanced round the break, and nodded her head sagely.

"Some of you have," she remarked. "But I shan't say who."

"What do you know about it, Nance?" asked Phyllis, laughing.

"Nothing, of course!" said Nance, laughing back again. But for all that she was a young person of discernment.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE JUBILEE TOURNAMENT.

"'What is the game?' I asked. He answered, 'Love.'"

CHARLIE STUART was always as lucky with his weather as Royalty is proverbially supposed to be. The last tennis-party of the season, for which it was widely known that he had some new and fascinating idea in reserve, was fixed for the 8th of September, and on the 7th the clouds began to clear off, the sun shone out, and everything was fair. The gardens at the Court, indeed, only looked more green and fresh after the rain for which they had been pining through the long parching summer.

Stoke Court was a fine large house of white stone, built in the Tudor style, with thick mullioned windows, and a battlemented parapet to the roof. It had stood long enough to be half covered with quickly-growing creepers, and it had an air of prosperity among its well-kept lawns and trim shrubs. Mr. Helmsley's glasshouses were the finest in the neighbourhood, his gardener the best, and the newest and rarest flowers always bloomed in his parterre; but some unreasonable people objected to the air of affluence that pervaded the whole place.

"The Manor always reminds me of an old lady of the *ancien régime*," said Nance, after her first visit to the Stuarts. "The Court is like a young lady attired in a fancy dress of the Watteau style."

Still Stoke Court was a very pleasant residence, and its owner was sufficiently independent of any income arising from land to be proud of the broad acres surrounding it. Mr. Helmsley had made his fortune on the Stock Exchange, and retired with it while still a comparatively young man. His ambition in life was to found a family, but he wished to do so in the person of one of his nephews, whose birth was, on one side at least, superior to his own. It would have been no satisfaction to him to perpetuate the race of Helmsleys; he wished to bestow his wealth on a Stuart who should have a right to hold up his head with the best in the county. Reflected glory was enough for him.

He had adopted the whole family, when his sister was left a widow with a military pension, and he had never repented the deed. He was fond of them all, but Charlie was the light of his eyes. The best of everything was to be Charlie's, and Charlie's taste and desires were the standard for the whole household. Mrs. Stuart was well pleased that it should be so. She had idolised her husband, she now idolised her son, and she was wont to say that he had never crossed her wishes since the day of his birth, which was hardly strange, since her wishes were mere reflections of his own.

Nothing pleased Mr. Helmsley better than to be asked to spend money for any entertainment of Charlie's devising, and this Jubilee Tournament of his gave as much enjoyment to the uncle as to the nephew. It was wrapped in great mystery, even the faithful Cavaliers were not allowed to know His Majesty's latest whim beforehand. But on the morning of the eventful day the party from the Manor were bidden to the Court, that the secret might be revealed to them.

"Though I don't believe there is anything to reveal!" grumbled Nance, as Charlie came down the drive to meet them in the fresh September air. She looked bright as the day itself, and her mocking laugh took all the edge off her words.

"All hail, Macbeth!" cried Charlie, as he drew near. "Now, my friends, come up and see the Jubilee Mystery."

His words were addressed to all, but it was with Nance that he led the way, and it was Nance who first entered his studio, sacred ground, whither no one ventured uninvited.

It was a charming room, but no one had eyes to spare for its art or luxuries to-day. All glances were directed towards an unfamiliar table in the middle of the floor, bearing a quaint variety of objects.

In the centre a gay mass of Jubilee medals on ribbons of all colours were carelessly heaped together, and on one side was a heterogeneous collection of penny toys and other trifles. On the other were arranged in regular order a selection of fans, bangles, and other gewgaws dear to the feminine heart, culminating in a little gold brooch, with 1887 on it in diamonds.

"May I have my choice? Bags I the brooch, as Maurice says!" cried Nance, in an ecstasy of delight.

"Charles! why all these riches? Explain!" commanded Oliver, amid the babel of wondering admiration that arose.

Charlie now posed himself behind the table with a gratified air, and began in showman-like style to expound.

"Every player attending my Jubilee Tournament, ladies and gentlemen, receives a Jubilee medal, on the following conditions:—Each gentleman on arriving is presented with a medal, and allowed to draw from a classic jar a paper containing the name of a lady. To her he will present a medal on a ribbon corresponding with his own, and for her he will embark on a desperate single combat. Whether he wins or loses she will have a prize of more or less value, and also the

privilege of presenting him with one of these objects of rare and intrinsic worth, which you will observe on my left. The winner of the final will present the Queen of the Tournament with this chaste and elegant brooch. Say, is my plan approved?"

"Three cheers for His Majesty!" shouted Maurice, as Charlie louted low, and the applause was terrific.

Nance spoke so innocently that none could help laughing.

"Charlie will win it if he plays up," said Maurice promptly.

"I don't know about that. It is a handicap, and I want Oliver to look at the odds," said Charlie, drawing a paper from his pocket. "I mean to owe fifteen."

"'DO YOU THINK MR. DANESFORD INVENTED ALL THAT ABOUT MISS PRESCOTT?'" (*p.* 6).

"But, my good man, we shall be all day playing," objected Oliver.

"No; I think not. I have allowed for sixteen men, a pair for each court to begin with; after that there will be plenty of vacant courts for outsiders. The first two rounds will be one sett each, the final, and semi-final, best of three."

"I have no doubt your calculations are exact," murmured Nance softly, her dark grey eyes glancing up at his. "But will you tell me one thing?"

"Anything," he hastened to assure her.

"Then who will win the brooch? Because I will at once take measures to insure his drawing my name."

"The conceit of some people!" murmured Oliver gently.

"Harry Wilde will beat you if you do, Charlie!" cried Clare.

"All the better. I don't want to win," said Charlie.

"Of course not. Yes, I think that's fair enough; I don't think you will beat Wilde with those odds," said Oliver, studying the paper.

"I wonder," said Maud, who was gifted with exceeding frankness of disposition, "I wonder who will draw Gertrude? Because she will be frantic if she doesn't win."

Nance nodded. "Yes, she will. She likes to win everything," she said.

Phyllis looked a little surprised, for Nance had only met Gertrude once again at tea at a neighbouring house, when rain had put tennis out of the question. "How do you know?" she said.

"By her hands," said Nance complacently.

Oliver looked up surprised. "Can you tell anything from people's hands?" he said.

"Oh! I think they tell you so much! Now, Miss Fairfax's are so white, and long, and firm, they look as if she grasped everything, and let nothing go," said Nance. "I shouldn't like to be in her power; I call them cruel hands."

"What a strange idea!" said Clare.

Oliver was looking at Nance with interest.

"I hope you don't study all our hands like that," said Charlie with a deprecating glance and smile.

"Yes, I do, I can't help it," said Nance demurely. "Now, I should have known from yours in a moment that you were artistic, they are so expressive. Don't you know how he always uses them when he talks?" she added, appealing to Clare.

"For the future," said Charlie, laughing in pretended embarrassment, "I shall always keep my hands in my pockets."

"It is too late," said Nance. "Look how different ours are! Phyllis's are capable; Clare's were made for needlework; from mine, you can see I play a great deal. Look how my hand has broadened out of all proportion. That is why I never can get gloves to fit me," she finished pathetically.

"You can't tell much from mine, anyhow, Nance," said Oliver. "For you did not know enough about cricket when you came, to know that these swelled joints and crooked fingers were due to wicket-keeping."

Nance nodded her wise head all the same. "Your hands tell a great deal," she said. "They are strong, and they are gentle, and they are nice and brown and manly. I like your hands."

Oliver fairly blushed under his tan at such cousinly openness. "Let us go out and look at the courts," he suggested. "I'll be bound the gardeners will mark them out all wrong."

Nance lingered amid the general move, and turned to Charlie. "*Will* you do me a favour?" she begged earnestly.

"Of course I will!" he answered gallantly.

"Then please see that I get a medal with a red and white ribbon, because it matches my dress!" said Nance, with a great show of confidence.

The guests all arrived punctually that afternoon, prompted by a desire to know what the words "Jubilee Tournament," inscribed on their invitation cards, might mean. On the broad gravelled terrace stood Charlie, presiding over the table of prizes, and bearing with careless ease a handsome brass jar, which he presented in turn to every man selected to play, requesting him to draw a paper and choose a medal.

Around him thronged a gay and animated crowd, amused at the idea, and interested to see how the lots would fall. The girls had grouped themselves in a little knot, fluttered by excitement, which increased as every now and then some young fellow came up, medal in hand, made his bow, and presented it to the lady he had drawn.

Oliver drew his lot early in the day, and the tennis championess of the neighbourhood fell to his share, an honour which he declared quite unnerved him. The pairs for the first round had been drawn, and the list made out, beforehand, and as the pairs were made up by degrees they sauntered off to begin play. Some of the girls followed to see their champions acquit themselves, but the greater proportion still remained watching till the drawing was over.

Name after name emerged from the jar of fate, and yet Nance stood undecorated, and her coveted ribbon lay on the table. She had come prepared to play herself, and looked very business-like in her navy-blue skirt, loose bodice of narrow red and white stripes, and sailor hat with its plain white ribbon. She was waxing impatient as court after court filled up, and she was left unrepresented. She hummed a tune to herself, and made an imaginary guitar of her racquet, while she leant against the pedestal of a huge vase of red geraniums and tapped her foot impatiently upon the ground.

"Who is there left, Stuart?" asked one of two young fellows still standing about in their flannels.

"I am going to beat you in one minute," answered Charlie patronisingly. "We are only waiting for Wilde, and also for Miss Fairfax, who, by the way, haven't been drawn yet."

"No more have I!" sighed Nance. "Do draw, and end my suspense!"

"I must take the last left," answered Charlie, but their eyes met with a comforting glance of mutual understanding.

"Here comes Miss Fairfax!" said a bystander suddenly; and Gertrude stepped out upon the terrace in company with the missing Mr. Wilde.

Gertrude, aware of the plan beforehand, had come prepared only to look on. She was attired in an exquisite pale grey gown, in which gleams of white and silver shone here and there. A soft grey hat rested on her dark hair, and showed off the clear pallor of her complexion, while a cluster of stephanotis and maiden-hair completed her costume.

"Come on, Wilde! How late you are! You are the last man to draw," called out one of his friends.

Mr. Wilde, grasping the situation, hurried forward with an apology, and thrusting his hand into the jar, brought out two papers at once.

"Here, stop!" cried Charlie. "One of those is mine."

"I thought you said I was the last to draw," explained the young man.

"So you are, but I want your leavings. Miss Prescott has not been drawn yet," answered Charlie.

"Oh! I beg your pardon. Choose!" said Wilde, holding out the folded papers.

Every one was watching the rival champions with interest, except Nance, who played with her racquet and seemed to take no notice. Gertrude looked on with a proud smile. She was certain fortune would favour her.

"Which shall I take?" asked Charlie, turning to Nance.

She looked up innocently. "Oh, I don't know! The one with the crinkled corner," she said.

Charlie drew, and opened the fatal paper amid breathless silence. There was an angry look in Gertrude's eyes as she watched him.

"Take the white ribbon, please, Wilde," said Charlie with a smile of triumph. "Miss Prescott would like the other;" and with his most courtly bow he handed the medal to Nance.

"The white will match your gown, Miss Fairfax," said young Wilde as he presented it.

It might have done, but it did not match her lowering brows. Gertrude looked black as thunder.

The afternoon wore on, and the tournament proved a great success. The lady winners gave themselves great airs, and the losers of the first ties found consolation in promising their partners the most ridiculous things on the table. After the first round there were always vacant courts for any one who chose to play, and Nance played hard and well the whole afternoon.

Now and then her champion came up to inform her that he had won another game, but otherwise she took little apparent interest in his proceedings, being much more concerned about her own setts. Gertrude watched the games far more eagerly. Her champion was Charlie's equal, a more certain player, if not so brilliant at times, and she had set her heart on his winning the tournament, and beating the King on his own ground.

By-and-by, Oliver came up to Nance as she served a conquering ball. "Won your sett?" he asked, as she waved her racquet with joy. "I have just lost mine. I came to tell you that Wilde and Charlie are in for the final. I think you ought to come and see it."

Nance fluttered away with her big cousin, telling him with animation about her games, while her late partner walked on her other side. So escorted, she met Charlie coming to seek her.

"Are you coming to see the final?" he asked eagerly. "That's right."

Somehow Oliver and the other man fell behind, and Charlie walked off with Nance.

"I hope you won't mind very much if I don't win this," he began. "Of course I shall play up, but I should have to do better than my level best to beat Wilde with such odds; and I would rather he won."

"And how about me?" pouted Nance. "I want that brooch."

"I will get you one just like it for a consolation prize," suggested Charlie.

"That wouldn't be at all the same! I want you to win it," said naughty Nance. "Away from Gertrude," she mentally added.

She came gaily up to the bench where Gertrude was waiting to see the match, and held out her hand.

"As our champions are going to fight it out, I think we ought to sit side by side, and shake hands first, to show there's no ill-will, don't you, Miss Fairfax?" she cried.

It was impossible to refuse; but any one except Nance would have been crushed by Gertrude's stony dignity. Every one else laughed and encouraged her, however, and Nance took her seat, feeling that public opinion was with her.

Charlie came up and laid his coat at her feet.

"So you really want me to win?" he asked, with his dark eyes fixed on hers.

"I will never forgive you if you don't!" answered Nance, with energy.

And with that the game began. It certainly seemed as if Charlie was overmatched, for he lost the first sett, and Nance frowned on him. In the second he played in his favourite court, and won amidst great applause. In the third, the interest was at its height, and the thick line of spectators applauded every point with energy.

"Good fight this. I hope Charlie will lose," said a voice behind her, and Nance looked round to see Hugh just arrived.

"You are a horrid thing!" she said indignantly.

"Can't help it. It's bad form to win your own tournament."

"I don't care! It is five all, deuce, and he *shall* win! That's his vantage," and she clapped her hands. "And his sett! Hurrah!" she added the next moment, as a masterly service shot across the ground unreturned.

"Madam, the brooch is yours!" said Charlie, as he came panting up to Nance, amidst rounds of applause.

"Hurrah!" clapped Nance again, and turned to accost Gertrude. But Miss Fairfax had withdrawn, as if the touch of Nance's skirt were contamination.

Nance's ostensible reward to her champion was a china mug—"For a Good Boy"—but the real one was yet to come.

"After this," said she, gazing on her brooch with affection after the guests were gone, and the home-party stood alone on the dewy lawn—"After this, I think I really must profess myself a faithful Cavalier henceforth."

"Three cheers!" cried the irrepressible Maud.

But the King thanked her with a royal glance.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

A TIRESOME PURITAN.

"All worldly joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

NANCE PRESCOTT was by nature a sunny little soul, who had fluttered through life gaily for twenty years, enjoying its sweets like a very charming butterfly. She was wont to say that she never was afraid of any one, and that she liked everybody, and everybody in consequence liked her. She could no more help making herself pleasant to every one she met than she could have made herself ugly or ill-favoured; and she

took all the love and admiration which she met with in a curiously simple way, thinking the world a very pleasant place, and all the people in it very kind.

Nothing had ever yet stirred the depths of her nature, and some people averred that there were no depths to stir. Others, who knew her equally well, maintained that to make as many friends as she did, and lose none, was in itself a refutation of the charge of shallowness, and added that there was a great deal more in Nance Prescott than she got credit for.

For the first time in her life Nance discovered that she had made an enemy, and the fact rather amused her. She did not actually dislike Gertrude, but she despised her for showing her hand so openly at the Jubilee Tournament, and she determined to plague the proud beauty for fun. Both girls were equally accustomed to the lion's share of attention wherever they went, but Gertrude demanded it as her due, whereas it always seemed to fall unsought at Nance's feet.

Nance had the advantage, for men love to show their strength by yielding to the weakest creature they can find, and her shy appealing glances were far more powerful than any weapons with which offended dignity could furnish Gertrude. Moreover, Nance could keep cool, and lay her plans for attracting Charlie's attention, with no end in view but that of teasing Miss Fairfax; whereas Gertrude's feelings were deeply involved, and when the heart gets the better of the head on one side, the game lies in the hands of the other.

It was easy for Nance to keep Charlie amused at Stoke Danesford, where he was in and out of the Manor all day long. It was far less easy for Gertrude to decoy him three miles away, if His Majesty did not choose to go.

And King Charles was very happy where he was. He admired Nance extremely, and her pretty little ways were far more fascinating than Gertrude's demands upon his homage. It was the last week of Maurice's holidays, an excellent excuse for making it a pleasant one, and the whole party enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content from morning to night, without troubling themselves about any outsiders.

Oliver did not join their games and expeditions. He was very busy just now, and if he had a few hours to spare, they were given up to shooting. Charlie did not care in the least for that form of sport—because his lady friends were not yet sufficiently advanced to carry guns, Clare always told him—so that even when Maurice deserted to Oliver, he was always at the girls' beck and call.

The young people from the Manor and the Court formed one large family, and were left almost entirely to their own devices. Mr. Helmsley's desire in life was to be a complete country squire, and he was busy all day on his property, or on the Bench, without giving a thought to his nephews and niece, as long as they were intimate with one of the oldest families in the county. Mrs. Stuart had never gone into society since her husband's death, and her rule was a very simple one: Clare might do whatever Phyllis did.

Phyllis's rule was equally clear: she might do anything that Oliver did not object to.

Oliver's position was a peculiar one for a young man. At five-and-twenty he was virtually master in his father's house, and supreme manager of the property, the household, and the family. Mr. Danesford had become by degrees a complete invalid, and left everything to his son, though he still took interest in that son's doings. A severe attack of rheumatic fever some years before had left behind it an affection of the heart, which developed into actual disease. He was a great sufferer at times, and subject to attacks, any one of which might prove fatal. Mrs. Danesford, who was one of those women who are more wife than mother, had completely merged her identity in that of her husband. She never left him, she had no interests but his, and she deputed the charge of her daughters and her social duties generally to Oliver.

Phyllis was a girl of great judgment and common sense, but she was only twenty, and girls of twenty are not infallible. If it had not been for Oliver, she would have landed herself in scrapes more than once; and in spite of her declarations of independence, she was easily talked over by Charlie at any time.

All his cares and responsibilities had made Oliver old for his age, and begun already to trace lines upon his brow. Nance took him for five-and-thirty when she first saw him, and in her heart of hearts was just a wee bit afraid of him. The constant pressure of the thought that at any moment he might be left the real head of the family—a fact which no one but himself and his mother seemed to realise—helped to give the young man a serious, almost a stern look when his features were in repose. It was only in Charlie's company, as a rule, that he unbent to laugh and joke; but King and Protector had been close friends from boyhood, and Charlie's lively tongue could always raise a smile on Oliver's grave countenance.

If he did not share in the festivities of this last week, he was not unobservant of what went on, and he electrified his family by asking, as they gathered round the tea-table on Wednesday, after a long ride over the hills—

"When did you see Miss Fairfax last, Phyllis?"

"At the Jubilee Tournament," answered Phyllis casually.

"I thought so," said Oliver. "Doesn't it occur to you that you ought to ask her over here?"

"We can't ask her to-morrow, for it is Maurice's last day, and we are going on a blackberrying expedition," said Maud promptly.

"Then I think you ought to ask her to join you. You promised to take her blackberrying with you," said Oliver conclusively.

"My dear boy, she will be so unfeignedly in the way!" said Phyllis.

"Why more than at any other time? You have seen her three or four times a week at least ever since they came here, and now you have let a whole week go by without taking any notice of her. I call it very rude. You had better write and ask her to join you, Phil, and send the note over to-night."

"Noll, you're a nuisance! We don't want her!" said Maud.

"Why not? You can't be such friends with a girl one minute, and want to drop her the next," said Oliver.

"No, you can't," said Nance gravely, as if stating a fact.

Oliver had been arguing with a tiresome tenant about repairs the whole afternoon, and his temper was wearing thin. He got up and left the room.

"Remove that bauble!" cried Charlie, in a voice of command, striking an appropriate attitude as the door closed.

"The Lord Protector rebuking the Commons!" added Clare.

"Well, I do think it is too bad!" said Phyllis, flicking her habit with her whip. "I shall have to ask that girl now, and she will spoil all the fun. We none of us want her."

"I want her," said Nance demurely. "I think it will be great fun. I should like to see Miss Fairfax scrambling about in the hedges. Is Oliver coming too, do you think? Fairfax is an Independent name, isn't it?"

"What next?" cried Charlie, intensely amused at the idea.

"Be comforted," murmured Nance confidentially, as she helped herself to cake. "If she has an ounce of pride, she won't come."

"Why haven't you asked Miss Fairfax here all this week?" Oliver asked of Phyllis, finding her alone in the drawing-room before dinner.

"I don't know. No one suggested it."

"It seems a little odd when you were so intimate before."

"I never did care for her much, really," said Phyllis honestly, though her conscience pricked her. "It was Charlie who always wanted her asked over."

Oliver looked at her with his eyebrows slightly raised. "My dear Phil, I'll give you a piece of advice," he said. "I should recommend you not to mix yourself up in Charlie's flirtations."

Unfortunately, Nance was just opening the door, and caught that last remark. She was annoyed with Oliver, and determined to make him feel it. When he asked her after dinner, as usual, to play to them, Nance declined.

"I have orders from Phyllis to finish these stockings for Kilburn this week; I am too busy," she said, holding up a mass of scarlet knitting.

Oliver said no more, but when he himself was singing instead, presently Hugh came over, and took a seat on the sofa by Nance.

"Why is there thunder in the air?" he asked.

"Because that tiresome Oliver will make us ask Miss Fairfax to go out with us to-morrow, and we don't want her," pouted Nance.

"He is quite right. It is very hard on that girl. She has been in and out here all the summer, and now you all refused to go there on Monday, and haven't seen her since," said Hugh. "I'm not very partial to her myself, but I think it's a shame."

"Oh, you're a Puritan!" said saucy Nance. "Who cares for your opinion?"

Had Gertrude Fairfax no pride? Most people thought she had. Nevertheless, she came to the blackberrying party. For one reason, she determined to ignore the fact that she had been neglected; and secondly, she wished to show Nance how easily she could beat her out of the field.

Only, unfortunately, that was just what she did not succeed in doing. She tried to be politely distant to Nance, but Nance would not be kept at a distance. She treated Gertrude with overpowering friendliness, and Charlie danced attendance on them both. Nance appeared as much to advantage scrambling about among the hedges as Gertrude did the reverse, and she had a particularly aggravating way of calling Charlie to Miss Fairfax's assistance, that was gall and wormwood to Gertrude, who resented being made out so helpless and out of her element. It was all done so simply and openly, that the onlookers did not suspect Nance of malice prepense. But Gertrude was not deceived for a moment, and before they parted, her dislike to Nance was changed to positive hatred.

There were many remarks made about Gertrude's unfitness for country life, as the party turned homeward, after she had driven off. "I told you she would prove the fun of the occasion," was Nance's comment to Charlie.

"Well, we needn't ask her again in a hurry," was Maud's conclusion, destined to be rudely disturbed.

"What are all these?" she cried, catching sight of a pile of envelopes on the hall-table, as they entered the house.

"Invitations to a dinner-party," answered Oliver, who had just laid them there. "As my father is so well just now, I persuaded mother that we ought to give one next week, and invite the Fairfaxes."

"Good gracious! That's the climax!" cried Maud, flying upstairs in a rage.

"Never mind, Maud! You won't have to dine!" called Nance consolingly.

Nance was fully convinced after this that Oliver was a very disagreeable, hard man, who had no consideration for other people's feelings. They had been so happy before, and now he had spoilt everything. As a matter of fact, when Maurice was gone back to school, and Maud had returned to the daily lessons she shared with a friend of her own age who lived near by, Phyllis and Clare only settled down, as they always did, to more regular ways. But Nance, feeling vaguely that the gay holiday-time was over, chose to set it all down to Oliver's interference.

He escorted Phyllis over to tea with Gertrude during the following week, but when Charlie and Clare happened oddly enough to call at the same time, His Majesty's first inquiry was "Where's Miss Prescott?"

"She promised to walk over and fetch Maud this afternoon," answered Phyllis. And the tidings so displeased her hearer, that he was not his genial self all the afternoon.

He reproached Nance for her absence afterwards, whereupon she looked at him demurely, and said—

"I thought it might add to the general peace if I stayed away. Miss Fairfax doesn't like me much, I'm afraid."

"Miss Fairfax is an idiot," said Charlie inconsequently. "One comfort is that they are going in October."

"I thought you were going to Rome then," said Nance.

"Perhaps I shan't go after all," said Charlie.

On the afternoon of the dinner-party, Nance elected to go for a walk alone, and was caught by a shower

It was a cold day, and Nance in her crimson dress and fur boa was a cheerful sight. She made herself at home directly, drew a chair to the fire, which she stirred to a cheerful blaze, and sat there cosily, chatting away in her usual pleasant style.

"You are the young lady who is staying at the Manor, aren't you?" asked the young man after a while. "I thought you were. Mr. Oliver promised to bring you to see me some day."

"Mr. Oliver?" repeated Nance, surprised.

"Yes, miss," and the thin face lighted up. "Mr.

"'I WAS JUST COMING UP TO SEE YOU'" (*p.* 8).

on her way home through the scattered village. Her first impulse was to seek shelter at the nearest cottage, which was unfamiliar to her.

"Please come in," said a voice, in reply to her knock; "I can't open the door."

A little surprised and interested, Nance walked in, and rounding the corner of a screen placed to cut off the draught from the door, found the sole occupant of the little room to be a young man lying on a couch near the window, whose white, thin face bespoke a constant invalid. Her sharp eyes noted in a moment the luxurious couch, out of keeping with the rest of the room, the shelf full of books above him, and the book-rest at his side, even while she came forward with an apology for intrusion, and request for shelter.

"You're kindly welcome, miss; please dry yourself at the fire, and take a chair. You see I can't move," said the young man, looking at her with an invalid's interest in a fresh and pretty face.

Oliver is a great friend of mine. He gave me my couch, and all my books, and he comes to see me two or three times a week when he can."

"Really?" said Nance, much interested in this new view of Noll's character. "And what sort of books does he give you?"

"All kinds, miss. But I like this sort best," and he held up a well-worn copy of "Westward Ho!" "This is my favourite. I feel as if I had seen the places almost, I have read about them so often."

"I wonder you can bear to read about them!" said Nance impulsively.

"Time was I couldn't, miss, after I first had my accident. Did you ever read 'Frank Fairlegh'? That was the first book Mr. Oliver lent me. He said he thought I should like it, because it was written by a gentleman who was a cripple all his life, like me; and so I did—it seemed to make a kind of feeling between us."

"I wonder at his thinking of that," said Nance, meditating aloud.

"There's a deal in feeling the same things, miss. Now, Mr. Oliver and I, we meant to have gone all over the world together, and we neither of us could; so now we like to read about all the foreign countries and adventures instead."

"When did Mr. Oliver mean to go all over the world?" demanded Nance.

"When he went for a soldier, miss. I was just waiting to enlist in his regiment, and then Mr. Danesford fell ill, and I got laid up, so neither of us ever went, you see. There he is!" and the young man's face broke into a smile of anticipation, as footsteps came down the road.

Nance wondered how he knew. Sure enough, the firm step turned up the flagged pathway, a hand was laid on the latch, and Oliver walked into the room. He started with surprise as he caught sight of Nance sitting at her ease, with the firelight playing on her gown, and bringing out the golden gleam of her hair.

"I am seeking refuge from the rain, and find that I have been trespassing on your preserves!" cried Nance gaily.

"All the better for Bill! The shower will be over directly," said Oliver. "Well, old fellow, how are you to-day?"

He hung up his wet overcoat, and went and sat down by the couch; Bill held out his thin hand with delight—this was evidently the great treat of his dreary life. Nance, from her cosy corner, watched the two young men, such contrasts in outward appearance, who nevertheless seemed to have so much in common, while they carried on an animated conversation. She was almost sorry when Oliver rose at last, saying that the rain was over and they ought to be starting homewards.

"I will come and see you again if I may," said Nance, holding out her hand in farewell to the invalid.

"Thank you, miss; I shall look for you," he answered simply, but so gratefully that Nance was touched.

She loosened a bunch of autumn violets from her dress, and laid them beside him on the pillows. "I dare say you like flowers," she said, as she turned away with her pretty smile.

"It will be very good of you if you will go and see Bill Sims sometimes," said Oliver, as they splashed homewards through the mud. "He has very few visitors, poor fellow, and his mother is out a good deal."

"What is the matter with him?" asked Nance.

"He fell off the shaft of a cart, and the wheel went over him and injured his spine. Till then he was the most active fellow in the village."

Nance was silent for a few moments. Then she asked, "Oliver, is it true what he told me—that you meant to be a soldier once?"

"Oh, yes! quite true," said Oliver carelessly. "I had just got my commission when my father fell ill, and then, of course, I had to give it up."

"How very good of you!" said Nance earnestly.

"Why? They couldn't have done without me at home. My dear Nance, pray don't imagine that I am the morbid victim of self-sacrifice!" and Oliver fairly laughed. "I was not cut out for such a romantic part."

"But weren't you very sorry to give up the army?"

"Yes; of course, I won't deny that it was a disappointment, but it was nothing compared to that poor chap there. His father was one of our keepers, you know, and we had been chums all our lives, and planned being in the same regiment. I don't know what he would have done if I had gone off and left him. Besides, they wanted me at home," said Oliver, recurring to his first argument.

"I should think they did. You must be very glad now that you gave it up," said Nance, musing.

"Yes, I am," said Oliver quietly.

It was not his way to express his feelings, but his affection for his father amounted almost to a passion, and nothing he felt would have compensated him for having spent any of these last few years away from home.

Nance had her own ideas of self-sacrifice. Her views of Oliver had changed considerably during the last half-hour. She was revolving many things in her busy brain as she walked along.

"Oliver," she began presently, "I am afraid you must think me very horrid and selfish not to care more about my father being ill and away."

"Of course not! It is quite different for you," said Oliver quickly.

"You know I never saw him in my life till last year," went on Nance. "He was a dear, good old father, always sending me presents from India, and writing me nice letters, but that is not like knowing anybody. He would not let me go out to him when I was grown up, because he was at such an unhealthy station; and since he came home he has been too ill to go about with me. Then he was ordered to go to Australia, and I do so hate the sea, and he did not even ask me to go with him. But I feel as if I had been a very bad daughter to him all the same."

"I don't see that you had the chance of being any kind of a daughter to him so far," said Oliver kindly. "But when he comes back, well and strong, you can have a little house together and be jolly, and you can fuss over him as much as you like."

"Do you think he will like me if I do?" asked Nance eagerly.

"Yes," said Oliver slowly. "Yes; I am quite sure he will."

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

HUGH TURNS PROPHET.

"'Tis sometimes sweet to have our quarrels
Particularly with a tiresome friend."

NANCE came down to dinner that night looking like a little rosebud in her pale pink gown. She was well pleased with herself, and with the prospect of the evening. She had decorated the dinner-table with her own hands in the newest

style, with sprays of bright autumn leaves, and had escorted Mr. Danesford to see and admire beforehand, and she felt she had contributed most materially to the success of the evening.

She had also coaxed Mrs. Danesford into letting her rearrange the drawing-room a little for the occasion, and she had contrived a very artistic corner with a tall palm from the greenhouse and a screen, draped skilfully with some of her own rich Eastern embroideries. In this corner she had placed a low, luxurious easy chair, and a small red milking-stool; after which she declared the arrangement perfect, and defied any one to touch it.

"What is all that elegance for?" demanded Charlie, when he arrived in good time, bearing with him a spray of hothouse flowers which he presented to Nance.

"For me? Oh, how lovely!" she said. "Well, do you like my cosy corner?"

"It's quite utter!" said Charlie, looking round—"You have transformed the room!"

Nance had certainly contrived to give it quite another air. Mrs. Danesford never troubled herself about such things, and it was not much in Phyllis's line, but it grieved Nance not to see the lovely old furniture made the best of, and she had worked her will to-night with surprising effect.

"Phyllis, do look what lovely flowers Mr. Stuart has brought me! Have you got a pin?" said Nance, preening herself before a glass, and trying their effect in half a dozen ways. It pleased her to be considered extremely vain, but her vanity was so open and innocent that it took in nobody.

"What a pretty child she is!" said Mr. Danesford to Oliver, watching Nance, the centre of a laughing group of advisers. The tall glass reflected her bright fair face and golden hair, with Charlie's graceful head over her shoulder in the background. "I begin to think King Charles may yet have a wife worthy of him—eh, Oliver?"

"I hope he will," said Oliver, turning down a lamp that had apparently flamed too high.

The Fairfaxes were almost the last people to arrive. Gertrude liked coming late into a well-filled room. She was beautifully dressed to-night in a gown of deep yellow, trimmed cunningly with rare delicate lace, and with a long train sweeping behind her. There were diamond stars sparkling in her dark hair, and she looked regal as she trailed her rustling robes over the floor with stately tread. There was no one in the room to compare with her, and she knew it; but she knew also that Nance made an excellent foil to her, and that their two styles were so utterly different as not to suggest comparison.

She fell to Oliver's share to take in to dinner, but Charlie sat on her other side. It was the custom at the Manor for the host and hostess to sit at the middle of the table, opposite to each other, and it so happened that Oliver and Gertrude were at its head. She looked quite magnificent at the end of the long vista of lights and flowers, and many admiring eyes were turned upon her. Even Charlie fell under her spell again, his artistic nature stirred to intense admiration for the time, and his fascinations were rewarded by the rare smile that warmed her still features into perfect beauty.

Nance and Hugh, far down at the other end, laughed and chatted without ceasing. There was plenty of merriment where they were, and Nance was too much taken up with her neighbours to have a glance to spare for Gertrude.

"What a silly child she is!" thought Gertrude scornfully, as she heard the silvery ringing laugh in the pauses of conversation.

After the ladies had returned to the drawing-room, however, Nance attacked Miss Fairfax in her usual fearless fashion, talking away fluently as if they were the best of friends. Gradually and skilfully she drew her away from the general group, and decoyed her into the chair in her special corner. Gertrude was nothing loth, for she perceived in a moment what a setting it would be for her own statuesque beauty, and she had no objection to see Nance on the milking-stool beside her, looking childish and undignified.

But Nance's quick ear caught the sound of the dining-room door, and so she fluttered off to Mrs. Danesford.

"Would you like me to play to you?" she asked softly.

"Oh, please, Nance! it will bring the gentlemen in," said her unsuspecting cousin.

And when the gentlemen came in the little figure was seated at the grand piano, playing a fiery polonaise in brilliant style. Charlie came up, and stood leaning against the wall behind her till she had finished.

"Go away, you make me nervous," said Nance, over her shoulder.

"What did you say?" asked Charlie, stooping forward.

"Go away and talk to Deborah."

"What do you mean?"

"Deborah under her palm-tree—I can't talk and play," said Nance, dashing into a complicated passage of octaves.

But Charlie did not go till the polonaise was ended, and then he strolled off leisurely, playing with one of Nance's Indian bangles which he had picked up off the piano.

Gertrude could play and sing after the fashion of all well-educated young ladies, but she knew better than to display her talents to-night. Oliver sang, and Charlie, and one of the guests—a very good musician—had brought his violin. Nance was in constant requisition at the piano to play or to accompany, and fluttered hither and thither smiling, and at her ease all the evening.

"What a charming girl!" said every one.

Gertrude meanwhile remained in her becoming corner. She found it a trifle dull, for the men fought shy of it. No one but Charlie could look graceful on a milking-stool in evening dress, and men do, of all things, abhor standing to talk to a lady seated well below them. Nevertheless, she could not make

up her mind to relinquish her position. Her imagination painted Nance in possession of it, and she could not give her such an advantage. Besides, it was well placed for seeing and hearing; so Gertrude sat on and fanned herself slowly, looking like a queen. Nance had estimated her character exactly when she decked that throne for her rival.

"How beautiful Deborah looks to-night! Don't you want to paint her?" she asked of Charlie, as he finished a song.

"Not particularly, although she would be a fine model—she is so still."

"I'm not! I never can get photographed respectably, because I never can sit still for a moment," lamented Nance.

"I should like to paint your portrait," murmured Charlie, removing his music.

"Wouldn't you like to fly over the moon?" laughed Nance, as she rose from the piano.

Mr. Helmsley had just approached Gertrude, and was talking affably to her. He admired her intensely, and thought her just the wife for Charlie. As for Nance, he never troubled his head about a child like that.

"Charlie," he said, looking up, and as his nephew drew near, he went on, "Miss Fairfax says she has never seen your studio. Couldn't we arrange a day for her to come over and see your pictures?"

"I am afraid there is nothing to see," said Charlie carelessly. "All my celebrated works are in town; there are only a few sketches down here now."

"Well, you might show the sketches," said his uncle.

"Oh, they are not worth seeing, are they?" said Charlie, turning to Nance.

"Candidly, I don't think they are," said Nance, shaking her head. "Phyllis and I routed them all through the other day, and there was nothing there."

Gertrude looked daggers. She did not want to go by invitation to see pictures that Nance could turn over at leisure. "When you have anything to show us in town, perhaps you will let us know?" she said coldly.

"Oh! certainly," said Charlie politely. "Meanwhile," he added, turning to Nance, "do go and play us that Rubinstein barcarolle."

"Which? No. 3?"

"My favourite — 'Moonlight on the Waters' — Please do."

Nance went off, forbidding him by a look to follow her; and Charlie subsided on to the milking-stool, where his uncle left him, well pleased.

Gertrude tried to talk, but the buzz of conversation died at the sound of Nance's music, and she was forced to desist. Charlie clasped his hands lightly round one knee, and sat in a dream with his eyes fixed on the golden head at the piano, while the music rippled through the room. What was the cold beauty beside him to the fairy who could evoke such strains at her own sweet will? He came to himself with a sigh as she ended, and Gertrude had to repeat a remark twice before she could attract his attention.

"My father wants us to sing that trio from the 'May Queen,'" said Oliver, coming up to Phyllis quite late in the evening.

"My dear boy, I can't. I haven't practised it for weeks. Nance must sing; I'll play."

Nance had a pretty, light voice, very useful in part-

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music, as she was too good a musician not to sing true under all circumstances. She was willing to sing now, if Phyllis really preferred to accompany them, and so it was arranged.

The piano was in a corner, so that the singers had to stand out into the room—broad-shouldered Oliver at one end, tall graceful Charlie at the other, and little Nance almost lost between them. They had only one copy of music for all three, and the soloist took possession of it, while the others waited defenceless.

"Shall a clown that beauty wear?"

began Charlie in his soft, rich baritone, indicating Oliver and Nance with a dramatic gesture that sent a titter through the room. Encouraged by appreciation he threw himself into his part, and sang with ardour and appropriate action.

Laughing Nance joined in with good-will:

"Can a simple maiden hear
Such a tongue, and feel no harm?"

she asked, appealing to the room with protesting glances.

Oliver only did not seem to see the joke, and sang steadily through his part, unmindful of the dark, deceitful smile that Charlie endeavoured to assume, and regardless that Nance was creating much mirth by her endeavours to see the music which the two young men held between them almost above her head.

"The carriage is here, Gertrude; we had better be going," said her father, approaching her amid the general break-up that followed the trio.

"Yes," said Gertrude icily; "it is quite time."

She held her head proudly as she moved to go. Nance had triumphed to-night, but she would have her revenge yet.

"Stop and smoke?" inquired Oliver of Charlie, as Clare went down to the carriage on Hugh's arm.

"Yes, all right," said Charlie, and stopped accordingly.

Hugh went off early, grumbling, and envying the happy beings who had not to be up for an early train next day. The other two left behind discussed cricket with as much animation as if their whole welfare had depended on the heavy scores made during the past season. Just as Oliver was seeing Charlie off, however, he remarked—

"I say, old fellow, you made Nance extremely conspicuous to-night."

"I know I did," said Charlie lightly.

"Oh, if you know it, it's all right," said Oliver. "Good night."

Other people knew it besides Oliver. Charlie's conduct afforded food for reflection in several minds after that evening, and most people drew the same conclusion. Nance herself discussed the dinner-party with interest, was pleased to be complimented on her decorations, and remarked how very handsome Gertrude had looked.

Charlie was full of his new idea of getting Nance to sit to him; he declared that he had worn out his family's patience, and was pining for a new model. Nance would not consent. She said the other girls had confided to her that sitting for one's portrait was an awful bore; besides, she was sure he would make her hideous; and the more he implored the less she would give in.

On the Tuesday after the dinner it so happened that instead of coming straight home, Hugh went up to the Court first, with some books he had brought down for Clare, and found her alone in the library, just returned from a drive.

"Where's the world?" asked Hugh, as he came up to the fire. "How cold it has been! The thermometers——" he began to quote.

"Yes, it is very cold," said Clare, remorselessly interrupting him. "Charlie is at the Manor, of course. Mother has been driving with me, and is gone to take her things off. We went over to see the Fairfaxes."

"Ah!" said Hugh; "and how is the fair Gertrude?"

"They're gone," said Clare coolly.

"Gone?" echoed Hugh, surprised.

"Gertrude went to Scotland yesterday to stay with some friends," said Clare; "and Mr. and Mrs. Fairfax went to Bournemouth this morning for a few days. But the butler said he did not think they would come back here again, as they are giving up the house at the end of the month."

Hugh got up with a low whistle, and stood leaning against the mantelpiece, looking down at Clare. She was a very pretty girl, and as she sat there in her tight hat and well-fitting jacket, her face lit up with suppressed amusement, she was very like her brother.

"Well?" she said, with a twinkle in her eyes.

"'Well,' you call it?" said Hugh gravely. "I call it ill."

"Why, might I ask?"

"Because, my good Clare, we are none of us blind, and you can't pretend to deny that Nance Prescott is at the bottom of this."

"And I don't want to," said Clare triumphantly.

"Well, if you ask my candid opinion," said Hugh, cheerfully, "I don't mind telling you that I think King Charles is behaving very badly."

"Why?" said Clare, waxing indignant.

"Because he has run after that girl persistently for a whole summer, and now has just thrown her over for a new fancy in a most unfair way."

"Really, Hugh, I think you are very rude!" said Clare, holding her head very high. "If he did run after Gertrude, what of that? He has done such things before, and you never made unkind remarks about him."

"Very likely; he is a notorious flirt."

"And you said yourself that you hoped Nance would cut her out."

"I know I did. I thought then that it was nothing but a flirtation. You mark my words, it was more than that, on one side at least."

"I am sorry if it was, for I am sure he did not care for her. Nor more did I, really," said Clare; "only we were obliged to have her so much if Charlie wished it. But I am sure he only admired her beauty; he did not really think much about her.

But with Nance it is quite different, she is such a dear little thing; and I am sure Charlie is really and truly in love with her."

"And I am sure," remarked Hugh, "that he is just as much in love with one as he is with the other."

"Hugh, you are perfectly hateful!"

"There is only one person with whom Charlie is really and truly in love, and that is his Royal Self," continued Hugh calmly.

"Hugh! I won't have such things said of my brother!"

"It is quite true, all the same," nodded Hugh. "It doesn't make him any less pleasant somehow; he is a good old chap, one can't help liking him, even if one sees his little errors."

"I should think not!" said angry Clare. "You are a thorough Puritan!"

"I should never be surprised," said Hugh, regardless of interruption, "considering how badly he has behaved to one girl, if he were to behave badly to the other."

"Hugh! you seem to think I have no feelings, the way in which you stand there and abuse my brother," cried Clare. "I won't listen to any more of it. I tell you, I know Charlie is really in love with Nance, and I am very glad of it."

"I doubt it," said Hugh reflectively. "He is very much gone on her for the moment. If nothing comes in the way, they may arrive at an engagement, but we shall see. You haven't heard the last of Gertrude yet; and if I had been Nance I wouldn't have gone out of my way to offend that young lady."

"I wonder you don't accuse Nance of flirting, too," said Clare viciously.

"I wish she were!" said Hugh. "Then, if anything went wrong, she wouldn't care so much."

Clare was too angry to answer. She was really a little afraid that Charlie had behaved badly to Gertrude, and she was the more anxious to persuade herself that he was really in love now.

"Shake hands?" suggested Hugh, holding his out. "I must be off again."

"No, I shan't!" said Clare, clasping hers tightly, and looking very pretty. "You are a horrid, rude, old Independent, and you can go and talk treason to Oliver."

"No," said Hugh, with a curious glance; "I don't much think I shall somehow. Good-bye; don't bear malice!"

"Yes, I shall!" Clare called after him as he closed the door.

In the hall he met Charlie just returned, radiant with delight at having made Nance promise at last to sit for her portrait. It was difficult to think hard thoughts of the handsome young man who put an arm through his, and pressed him to stop for a pipe, and saw him out with cheery farewells on his refusal. Yet, after the hall door was closed, Hugh relieved his feelings by turning back and exclaiming in dramatic tones—

"'Oh, purblind race of miserable men!'—particularly women!" after which he seemed to feel better.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

"CHARLIE IS MY DARLING!"

"Learn to win a lady's faith
Nobly, as the thing is high."

"NANCE, when is Charlie going to Rome, do you know?"

Oliver and Nance were riding side by side along the crest of the hills. They were great friends now. Nance looked on him in quite a different light since the day that she had met him in Bill Sims's cottage, and her only fear was that he must think her very foolish and frivolous at times. If he did, he was very clever at concealing his feelings, for he always tried to fulfil her wishes, and listened to her in her most nonsensical moods as if they amused him.

Nance had become quite a daughter of the house. She had the greatest respect and admiration for Phyllis, and was anxious to imitate her in all her pursuits. She visited among the cottages assiduously, and demanded a Sunday class, and felt herself quite a model. Moreover, she worked harder than any one at preparing gifts for the parish Christmas-tree—a task which always made autumn a burden to Phyllis and Clare—and her ready fingers, and skill in contriving, were simply invaluable.

Nance had been well crammed at school, but the conversation at the Manor revealed to her the fact that her knowledge of English literature was sketchy in the extreme.

"You ought to lend me books; my mind wants cultivating quite as much as Bill Sims's," she said to Oliver, with an aggrieved air; and he found himself elected to direct her studies and discuss the books afterwards.

She soon found ways and means of making herself useful to Oliver in return. Phyllis was too independent and too much like her brother to think of offering help unasked; but Nance coaxed her way into his den, and discovered exactly when her assistance in copying papers, or disentangling accounts, was of real use to him.

She knew, too, that there was nothing Oliver liked so much as to see her go to the piano spontaneously, and play by heart, rambling from one thing to another as her fancy led, in the dusky hour before dinner. He never asked her to do it, and he never said more than "Thank you," when she had done. But he always looked into the library after his day's work, when Hugh came home, and if there was no music forthcoming he quietly took himself off again.

Charlie was very busy over Nance's portrait—when he was not escorting her out, or trying over new songs with her. She went for an hour or two nearly every morning, and sat to him patiently—at least, he said she did. Nance herself declared that she never was

still for a moment the whole time, and was always striking new attitudes for his benefit. She was a great favourite up at the Court, where she fluttered round Mrs. Stuart with pretty little attentions, and made her laugh more in a single morning than she had hitherto done in a month. Mr. Helmsley liked her too; he thought her a very intelligent young person, as Nance heard to her delight.

"My manner with the aged was always considered particularly happy," she declared with glee, when Charlie informed her of his uncle's remark.

Her manner with every one was always happy; she seemed always happy herself. Life was very bright to little Nance as golden October drew on, and she certainly was a great element in the brightness of the lives around her. Clare was very fond of her, and made a great fuss over her. Hugh was not yet forgiven for his remarks about Charlie, and the fact that Nance was a faithful Cavalier was flaunted frequently in the face of the stiffnecked Puritan, who regarded the information not at all. Still every one else was privately of Clare's opinion as to Charlie's feelings, and gradually Nance was looked upon as the person most in his confidence, and most likely to influence him. Therefore it was that Oliver said to her—

"Nance, when is Charlie going to Rome?"

"I don't know!" said Nance, laughing. "I don't believe that he means to go at all!"

Charlie had announced for weeks past that he should spend the next winter at Rome, studying hard; but of late less had been heard about the project, and as day after day slipped by, there seemed no prospect of his starting.

"I am afraid, too, that he won't go," said Oliver gravely. "I am very sorry."

"Why should he go?" asked Nance, bending forward to pat her horse's neck. "He paints beautifully now, and there isn't the slightest occasion for him to work hard. He hasn't got to earn his own living."

Oliver was silent for a moment, then he said—

"His old master, in whose studio he used to work, told me once that if Charlie had only been a poor man he would have been a great artist."

"What difference would that have made?" asked Nance quickly.

"He needs a spur to make him work. In his case it can be only one of two things. I hoped that if he went to Rome, it might rouse his ambition."

"I suppose he will always paint as much as he likes, and I think it is a great deal better he shouldn't work hard and sell his pictures. It would be a shame if rich men like him were to take money away from men who were obliged to earn their own living," argued Nance.

"Charlie isn't a rich man," said Oliver quietly.

"Not a rich man?" echoed Nance, in surprise.

"No; he hasn't a farthing in the world but what his uncle gives him."

"Oh, well! that's just the same thing," said Nance.

"Pardon me; I think not. Suppose that he offended his uncle in any way, and Mr. Helmsley stopped the supplies? Charlie might have been independent by now had he chosen; as a matter of fact he is not."

"He's never likely to quarrel with his uncle!—I'm sure Mr. Helmsley dotes on him," said Nance casually. "I don't see that he need ever trouble to work for his living."

"The question is," said Oliver gravely, "whether he is justified in wrapping his talent in a napkin?"

Nance looked up in surprise. The question had never presented itself to her in that light before.

They rode on without another word for some moments, the creaking of the saddles and the soft footfall of the horses on the turf alone breaking the silence. Nance looked down upon the brown heather and golden bracken as they passed, and pondered the new idea. Oliver gazed from the lissom figure beside him, swaying with every movement of her horse, to the far blue distance, with a stern look on his face.

"Charlie is the oldest and closest friend I have in the world," he said, at last. "I don't grudge him anything. But I should like to see him do himself justice, and prove himself worthy—of whatever good luck may come in his way."

Nance was still considering. "I shall try and persuade him to go to Rome," she said at last. She guessed what other spur might drive Charlie to distinguish himself yet.

"Do," said Oliver briefly.

"And, meanwhile," said Nance, straightening herself in the saddle, and drawing up her reins, "let us have a canter over the turf!"

She was a little surprised when she entered the studio next morning to find her portrait deposed from its place of honour, and a fresh canvas standing on the easel.

"What is this for?" she demanded.

"I have altered my mind," answered Charlie, laughing. "I am going to make a full-length of you and put you in a picture."

"But suppose I won't be put in a picture?" said Nance, protesting.

"Ah, but you will, when you know what it is going to be," said Charlie reassuringly.

"I think it is a great pity," said Clare, studying the half-finished picture where Nance's very self smiled out from a rough background. "It is just like Charlie; he is always beginning things and never finishing them."

It was true enough; the number of half-finished canvases that stood about or leant against the walls was a mute reproach to the hand that might do so much and did so little.

"That's not the speech of a faithful Cavalier," said imperturbable Charlie.

"It's not in the letter of the bond that we mayn't reprove our King in private!" returned Clare lightly.

"It is an excellent rough study. I can work from it when you are tired of sitting," said Charlie, turning to Nance.

Nance was a little vexed; she had been pondering Oliver's words, and she was sorry Charlie should have

changed his mind so lightly. It augured ill for the success of the portrait, she thought. She turned away and looked out of the window at the distant hills without replying.

"I don't think that the back of your head will be a very interesting study," murmured Charlie, in her ear.

"I am going to write some notes for mother. I shall expect to see you well started when I come back," announced Clare, and she discreetly withdrew, wishing that old Puritan, Hugh, could have seen Charlie at that moment.

Nance sat still upon the window-seat, and tapped her little foot upon the floor.

"I'm cross!" she said; "I'm going to lecture you."

"Go on!" said Charlie, with resignation. He seated himself astride a chair, and, folding his arms on the back, looked at her with a confident smile.

"You are very lazy and changeable!" began Nance severely. "Look round the studio, and tell me if you are not ashamed of yourself! You will never do any good unless you stick to your work. When are you going to Rome?"

"You've been talking to Oliver," remarked Charlie calmly.

"When are you going to Rome?" repeated Nance.

"I don't think I shall go at all."

"Not go?"

"No!" and the dark eyes looked into hers unabashed.

"Then you are very lazy, and wasting your time."

"Excuse me; I should waste it if I went. I shouldn't paint a bit. I should lark about and amuse myself all day long; I know I should," as Nance shook her head. "I was only going for the fun of the thing."

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" said Nance.

"If I really wanted to work hard, I should make peace with old Pipes—my old master, you know; I always called him Pipes, he smoked so incessantly—and go back and work in his studio for awhile," remarked Charlie parenthetically.

"Why don't you, then?" said Nance. "You ought to work hard. You ought not to waste your talents any longer."

"You see, we had a row," said Charlie, balancing his chair on two legs.

"What about?"

"He got frantic with me because he said that I shirked my work, and produced effects by all kinds of lazy tricks; it's quite true, I do," owned Charlie, with perfect frankness. "I can't help it. I hate drudgery. If I can do a thing in two days that another man can do in ten, why shouldn't I?"

"I like thoroughness," remarked Nance.

"So did he. However, I knew he thought a lot of me, or he wouldn't have taken the trouble to blow me up, so I gave myself airs accordingly. He told me with scorn to go home and paint a picture, and put it in the Academy. I took him at his word, and did."

Nance looked puzzled; she couldn't see the point.

"He loathes the Academy, you know; he thinks it is the poorest thing going. I sent a portrait of Clare idealised, and called it 'Resignation.' I sketched it when a new gown of hers didn't come home in time for a party. No matter," said Charlie, explaining, "it sold, and I got orders for portraits. I called on old Pipes politely for congratulations, and he raved, and said those fools the British public had spoilt an artist. So I thanked him, and withdrew. I haven't seen him since."

"Then you could make money by painting, if you chose?"

"You mercenary being, I could!"

"Why don't you?"

"I am ashamed to take money for such shocking work, and too lazy to do better. Besides, I only like painting when I am in the mood for it."

Charlie's extreme candour in confessing his faults had a very softening effect upon Nance. She gazed with less stoniness upon the handsome but hardly penitent young man, and said—

"If you went back to your master, what would you do?"

"Make my peace, submit to tears over the returning prodigal, and set to work. My anatomy is distinctly faulty, you know," said Charlie; "but," he added, with pride, "I always make him green with envy over my colour."

"I wish," said Nance, "that you would go back and work hard. I wish you would distinguish yourself. Why don't you get a picture into the Academy that every one would crowd to see?"

"The hair of the venerable Pipes would stand on end if I did," remarked Charlie.

"Never mind! If you painted it properly it wouldn't matter to him where it was hung," argued Nance.

"And what is the picture to be?" he asked.

"Anything you like."

"Did you ever read 'The Gardener's Daughter'?" asked Charlie.

"Yes, of course," said Nance.

"I dare say you have forgotten it; I will read it to you," said Charlie persuasively, and he picked up a Tennyson that was lying suggestively near.

Nance listened while the melodious voice, deepened by feeling, read in measured cadence the sweet, impassioned poem. She felt his eyes were on her while he read, and she gazed out over the far blue hills, and thought of Oliver's "He needs a spur."

"'Tis not your work, but Love's'"—

there was a meaning in the words as they fell upon her ear. Her colour came and went, and her sweet eyes drooped, as the expressive voice gave the last lines with tender emphasis and passion.

There was dead silence when he had concluded. Charlie turned back the leaf, and read again—

"'Half light, half shade,
She stood, a sight to make an old man young.'

"Shall I paint that picture, and use my rough

sketch for Rose, the Gardener's Daughter?" he asked softly.

The tender flattery of eyes and voice bore down all Nance's prudence. "As you like," she answered low.

"Then I will!" said Charlie, with a ring of triumph in his tone; "and it shall hang in next year's Academy, and all the world shall crowd to see it. And then," he added low, "I shall expect to be paid."

Nance answered only by a look, but it seemed enough for him.

She held her head proudly, and looked at him with her true grey eyes, half fearless and half shy.

Just at that moment Mr. Helmsley, of all people, took it into his head to walk in.

"Well, Charlie, my boy; I've come to see how you are getting on," he said cheerfully. "Why, how's this? Nothing done?"

"I am going to begin a new picture," said Charlie lightly. "The first was a mere study, just to get my hand in."

"Oh!" said Mr. Helmsley drily; "indeed?"

"'WON YOUR SETT?' HE ASKED" (*p.* 14).

"And I must go back to work, and make peace with my tyrant, and slave all through the winter?" he asked, with tender reproach.

"Yes, you must," said Nance. "You must waste no more time, but do yourself justice, and make us all proud of you.'

"Don't you think you are rather hard?" he pleaded. "I thought the time had gone by when ladies set their knights hard tasks by way of proving them!"

"But not for knights to set themselves hard tasks to show their ladies what they can do," said Nance. "We like our knights to be worthy of their spurs still —and how much more a King!"

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

MR. HELMSLEY HAS HIS SAY.

"The young heart, hot and restless,
The old subdued and slow."

"LOOK here, Charlie," said Mr. Helmsley, "I want to have a little conversation with you."

"By all means, Uncle Robert," assented Charlie politely.

They were sitting over dessert still, after the ladies had left the dining-room. Charlie was idly cracking filberts, and setting the shells to float in his finger-glass.

"I want to know what you are after, that's all," said Mr. Helmsley good-temperedly. "I can't make

you out, Charlie ; you've got so many strings to your bow. First it was Miss Fairfax, and now it seems to be Miss Prescott. It seems to me that it is almost time that we had a little explanation."

"Yes," said Charlie carelessly.

"Girls won't stand more than a certain amount of fooling round," went on Mr. Helmsley. "I think it is about time that you went and made it up with Miss Fairfax again."

"I don't understand you, Uncle Robert," said Charlie, looking up. "What should I go after Miss Fairfax for ?"

"Because you've had a lovers' quarrel of some sort —I don't want to know any particulars—and it is quite time that it came to an end. You'll lose that girl if you don't take care, Charlie ; she's not one of the sort that will put up with your playing fast-and-loose for long."

Charlie waited tranquilly for his uncle to explain himself yet further. Mr. Helmsley evidently had his own ideas of the position of affairs ; it had not occurred to his nephew before that they might be so wide of the mark.

Mr. Helmsley prided himself on understanding exactly what was going on. "Charlie and Gertrude had had a tiff about something," he said to himself : "let them alone, and a little enforced absence would soon put it all straight." As to the cause of their quarrel he was content to be ignorant ; it had never occurred to him till that morning that it could have anything to do with little Nance.

"Besides, you're not playing fair with that little Nance Prescott," he continued. "You'll make her fond of you before you've done, and then it will be a cruel thing to go and leave her. You've been hanging about her quite long enough ; it's time you were off."

"Really," said Charlie, quite absorbed by his mimic fleet, "you surprise me very much. I had no idea that you took so much interest in my affairs, Uncle Robert."

"Who should, if I didn't?" returned his uncle. "Look here, my boy, young heads are very foolish, you know. It's about time I showed you where you are drifting to. Suppose you got entangled with Miss Prescott for want of a word of advice ?"

"Well, suppose I did ?" said Charlie indifferently.

"Then you wouldn't get my consent to marrying a penniless girl."

"How do you know she's penniless ?" asked Charlie.

"I found out, of course. Young folks don't think of such things, naturally. Her father has his pension, and when he's gone she'll have hers, but that she will lose if she marries."

Charlie threw himself back in his chair, and put his hands in his pockets. "I don't see what difference that makes to me," he remarked.

"Really ? And how are you going to support your wife ?"

Charlie looked up, and his dark eyes met his uncle's shrewd gaze. It came upon him suddenly that an idler like himself was hardly able to cope with a man who had made his fortune by his own energy and determination. Still, he put a good face on the matter.

"By painting, of course," he said casually.

"I suppose so. And how long would it take you to make a home for her if I cut off your allowance ?"

It sounded harsh, but Mr. Helmsley's face was perfectly good-tempered in expression, and he put the question apparently merely for information.

Charlie thought it best to make light of it.

"I can't imagine anything so unlikely !" he said, with his genial laugh. "Fancy your playing the cruel uncle !"

"Look here, my lad ; you're making a mistake. You think you're a rich man," said his uncle, surveying him steadily. "Well, you may be some day, or you may not—that depends upon whether you and I fall out or no. But, meanwhile, you needn't suppose that I am going to keep your wife for you, for I shall do nothing of the sort."

"Really, Uncle Robert—" began Charlie, rather hurt.

"All right, my boy, don't get offended ; I'm only making things clear to you."

Charlie thought he was making them very clear.

"You don't consider what it costs me to keep up this place ; and there will be Clare wanting a marriage portion some day, and Maurice starting in the army and wanting an allowance directly. I certainly can't afford to keep you and your wife as I should like to see you, and what's more, I don't mean to try."

Charlie judiciously remained silent. This novel revelation of his uncle's ideas took him aback considerably. The King was not accustomed to have his wishes crossed, and to be spoken to in this style.

"I am a youngish man yet," went on Mr. Helmsley, "and I hope to live a good many years longer. I don't want to see you during those years working hard for your daily bread in a small house, with a tribe of squalling children round you."

His idea was that Art was an excellent amusement and a very poor profession. Perhaps it was Charlie's also, for his lip curled instinctively—the picture did not sound inviting.

"I know you pretty well, Charlie," went on his uncle proudly. "You never were meant for a poor man, or for a hard-working one either. There's no need why you should be the one or the other. You marry a rich wife, as you were meant to do by nature, and I'll do my share ; you shan't be dependent on her. But don't let's have any fool's schemes of marrying a poor girl, and keeping her by your brush. Remember, I know what poverty is, you don't. With your tastes and disposition you'd be in the Bankruptcy Court in three years."

"That's a pleasant prospect," murmured Charlie.

He got up and went round to the hearth-rug, kicked the fire with his foot, and stood leaning against the mantelpiece.

"But suppose I don't care about a rich wife, and there is a poor girl I do care for ?" he asked.

His uncle turned in his chair and faced him. A

sudden suspicion seized him that his warnings had come too late.

"Are you engaged to Miss Prescott?" he asked gravely, as he thought of the attitude of the young couple that morning.

Charlie was anxious of all things not to commit himself. Time was everything; he must have time to reflect.

"No, we are not engaged," he answered; which was literally true.

"That's all right then," said his uncle, with an expression of relief. "Of course, if you had said anything to her, that would have altered matters. I wouldn't have you do anything dishonourable; but if you are only fooling round with her, it is time you stopped, before the child thinks you mean anything by it. You go and make it up with Miss Fairfax, and let's have no more nonsense. It is time you were settled in life, my boy."

"I can't imagine why you are so set on my marrying Miss Fairfax," said Charlie impatiently.

"Because you gave us all to understand that you meant to do it. Why, they all expect it! Mr. Fairfax as good as told me himself that he'd be proud to have you as a son-in-law — and so he well might be!" said Mr. Helmsley, affectionately glancing at the young man. "And she is the sort of girl I should like to think would be mistress here some day."

"Good gracious!" muttered Charlie, who felt as if a net was closing round him. "Really, sir, it's all very well, but I can't marry to order."

"Nobody wants you to, you silly fellow!" laughed his uncle. "It's to your own order, I should say, after the way you have been dancing after Miss Fairfax all the summer. Of course, we all know young people have their tempers, and you've had a quarrel. Never mind! You go and make it up again, and I'll warrant you'll find her ready to forgive you," and with that Mr. Helmsley rose as if the last word had been said.

"Then I am to understand, sir, that you wouldn't give your consent to my engagement with Miss Prescott?" asked Charlie, looking very proud and stately.

"You are to understand, young man, that if you were to ask for it after this I would cut you out of my will," was the unexpected reply. "I don't wish to hear anything more about that girl. She's a mere child, not fit for you. If you want to repay me for all I've done for you, let me hear that you are engaged to Miss Fairfax."

"Miss Prescott, indeed!" muttered the uncle to himself as he crossed the hall. "I was within an ace of being too late. How could I be so blind? But whoever would have thought of King Charles being attracted by that little thing with her baby face?"

King Charles, left behind in possession of the dining-room, was fuming with rage. His uncle's extremely plain speaking had annoyed him beyond all words, and that last hint of repayment made him determined to prove his independence. He would accept no more favours at his uncle's hands to be taunted with them afterwards. If he had only had the remotest idea that an engagement beforehand would have made any difference, he would have declared himself engaged already, and gone to Nance to gain her consent afterwards. As it was, he was caught in a trap, and he could not yet see his way out.

But Nance and poverty did not sound well connected. What did his uncle know about it? Was she really poor? He did not believe it. She was always so well dressed and bright, always seemed to have spare money at command; there was nothing about her to suggest, for a moment, that she was not as well off as her present surroundings would imply.

Impatient and annoyed, Charlie determined to go over to the Manor at once. A glance at Nance's pretty face would dispel all these unpleasant thoughts and ideas. And being a young man of impulse, he donned his coat, and set off through the keen frosty night without more ado.

"Now he's in a rage," thought his shrewd uncle, as he heard the front door close. "Never mind! He will go and talk it over with Oliver, and is sure to get good advice. Give him plenty of rein, and he'll come round all right."

The library at the Manor looked very warm and cosy when Charlie entered it after his walk through the cold night air. Mrs. Danesford, seated near the fire, was watching Oliver and his father over their chess; Hugh and Phyllis were wrangling gently over a scrap-book the latter was making for her burdensome Christmas-tree. Nance and Maud sat together on a huge sofa, busy with pencil and paper, with a very dull-looking book lying open between them.

Charlie's entrance did not disturb the family party at all.

"It is such a lovely night that I thought I would walk over and call," he remarked, and he strolled over to the sofa and sat down by Maud. "What's all this?" he asked, gently pulling her long hair aside.

"It's only Nance has been helping me with these disgusting sums," answered Maud, tossing back her mane. "Thanks, so much, Nance. I never could understand fractions before, but you explain everything so beautifully."

"Then you'll give me a testimonial when I want one?" said Nance, laughing. "I always thought I should make a good governess."

"Splendid! I wish you were mine," said Maud.

"But you are never going to take to teaching?" put in Charlie. He did not quite know why he said it, only Nance's laughing speech seemed to confirm his uncle's words.

"I don't know about that. I am fully prepared to earn my own living," said Nance, nodding her wise head. "I shouldn't have gone in for all those Cambridge examinations for nothing. I have got all my certificates upstairs now ready for action."

"But, Nance, why should you ever want to earn your own living?" said Maud.

"If I were left alone in the world, I should have to," replied Nance. "Yes, I should really, Maud; you needn't look so surprised."

"Unless some one else did it for you," murmured Charlie, looking at her across Maud.

"I'm not particular about being a governess; I think I should prefer to give music lessons," said Nance lightly, and then she got up and went to the piano.

Charlie followed to open it for her, and sat on a chair just behind her while she played. His thoughts were very busy while he watched the lissom fingers moving over the keys. He scarcely knew what she played, or how, and yet he had a vague consciousness of recognising all his favourite airs.

his uncle's wishes? If only Nance had not been poor! It was an idea that had never entered his brain. Of course, as an only child, he supposed she would inherit her father's money; it had never struck him that there would be none to inherit. What could he do? And how could he win Nance without offending his uncle? For that was the impossible task that he had set himself.

"You didn't mean what you said to Maud about teaching?" he asked her at last, as she played a graceful little Norwegian air.

"'SHAKE HANDS?' SUGGESTED HUGH" (*p.* 22).

What should he do? he was asking himself. Should he quarrel with his uncle? Never! that would be the height of folly. Should he give in then, and seek out Gertrude again? No! ten thousand times no! cried his heart, while Nance sat so close beside him that he could touch the folds of her gown.

What could he do then? for he was not independent. He might have been by now, had he chosen, but he had idled his time away, and now he was no nearer earning his own living than he had been when he left Cambridge three years ago. Still it was a mere question of time and work on his part; only, would it be fair to take his uncle's money, and use it to support himself while he worked to obtain means for thwarting

"Yes, I did. I have known for a long time that it might come to that; my father lost all his savings in an Indian bank failure," she answered lightly. "I don't mind. I like being independent."

So did Charlie; but at that moment he felt hopelessly the reverse. It was the first check His Majesty had ever met with in his career, and it irritated him accordingly.

"Noll," he said, as they strolled up to the Court together later in the evening, "I am thinking of going to town and setting to work again."

"Quite time you did, old fellow," returned Oliver.

"I am going to eat humble pie, and see if old Pipes will take me back again."

"I am very glad to hear it," returned Oliver. "Why don't you paint something really good and set the world talking? You could if you liked, I know."

"I knew Nance had been talking to you!" said Charlie, laughing. "She gave me a lecture this morning. Hang it all! I wish I had taken your advice before, old fellow. I would give all the world to be independent now!" and he sighed, a rare thing for the light-hearted King.

"Well, you soon can be if you choose," said Oliver.

"I hate waiting," returned Charlie.

"I wouldn't mind waiting" — "if I had anything to wait for," Oliver nearly said, but he altered it to— "for some things." He spoke in jerks between the puffs of his pipe, so Charlie did not notice the hesitation.

"Oh, you are so different from me!" said Charlie. "I always did like a bird in the hand best."

"When are you going?" asked Oliver.

"Oh! I shall go at once. What's the use of putting it off?" said Charlie. "This week, I shouldn't wonder. I shall wire to-morrow to have my rooms got ready."

Oliver walked slowly home under the starlight. He could see it all plainly. Charlie would really paint now that he had some one to inspire him, he would succeed, he would earn fame and fortune, and lay them both at Nance's feet. And he had done it all deliberately: he had set Nance to start Charlie on his career. "Well, if it makes her happy, I am glad I did," said Oliver to himself, as he strode over the firm, hard roads.

Mr. Helmsley took Charlie's sudden decision to go to town and get to work very calmly. He even smiled to himself. "It's the best thing he can do," he thought. "He will soon forget his fancy when he is away from her, and the Fairfaxes will be in town again before long. We shall see what we shall see. I knew His Majesty wouldn't relish the notion of poverty at all."

Nance was very proud of having incited Charlie to such immediate action. When he came to say good-bye before he started, she received him with smiles of approbation.

"You might look a little more sorry at my going," said Charlie reproachfully, as they wandered round the garden in the October sunlight.

"But I'm not! I'm very glad," she said. "And when the picture is in the Academy, you will be glad too."

"Ah, yes! I shall be glad then!" he said, with emphasis.

Nance blushed: she had not meant that.

"You are going to write to me sometimes, when I am away?" he pleaded.

"I don't know," said Nance.

"Oh, yes, you are! They all do—Maud, and Phyllis and all!"

"I am not Maud or Phyllis," said Nance.

"No; so I shall want your letters all the more!"

Nance made no answer, but pulled twigs from the yew-hedge as they drew near the bowling-green.

"It was here that I first saw you, do you remember?" said Charlie tenderly.

"Oh! I remember," said Nance softly in reply.

"Give me a bit of that yew to keep!" begged Charlie.

"No, no! it is horrible stuff—suggestive of churchyards and melancholy," objected Nance, with a shudder.

"It will remind me always of this dear old hedge and garden, and the place where first we met!—Please!" and Charlie drew the spray from her half-resisting fingers.

"Charlie! will you come up and say good-bye to my father?"

"Coming!" shouted Charlie, in reply to the distant voice, and was off.

Nance came up the terraces after him slowly, a soft light in her eyes, and a rose that he had given her in her hand.

"The summer days are over! Good-bye, sweet rose, good-bye!" she sang as she went.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

WORK *v.* PLAY.

"And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain."

SO Charlie went up to town and set to work, and very amusing he found it to begin with. First he had to make his peace with his old master, a task which he thoroughly enjoyed. The reproaches levelled at his head pleased him as tributes to his genius, and the flat refusal to admit him to the studio again on any terms only made him the more determined to come. He ended by gaining his point, after he had artfully coaxed the elder man to come and smoke a pipe of peace with him.

"You needn't cut me if you won't teach me," said Charlie reproachfully; and his master yielded, as every one always did to the persuasive tongue.

Nance's portrait stood upon the easel in Charlie's studio, in the best possible light, and though the artist assiduously endeavoured to keep his eyes averted from it, the attraction was too great.

"Who's that?" he asked at last, indicating it by a wave of his pipe.

"It's a rough sketch for a picture I am going to paint," answered Charlie casually.

The other man rose and walked over to it; he moved this way and that, studying it intently for some minutes. Then he came back to his seat.

"It's the best thing you ever did!" he said. "Hang the boy! I believe I shall have to let him come back after all. There's no denying that he's got genius!—But don't you touch that!" he added, turning fiercely upon Charlie.

"It isn't meant to be touched; it's only a sketch," said Charlie meekly.

But he executed a wild dance of joy when the artist was gone.

"Bless you, my little Nance! You'll make my fortune yet!" he said, and carefully veiled the picture lest dust should injure it.

After that it was placed in a corner, cunningly draped with soft silks, and fragrant flowers offered the incense of their scent before it day by day.

Just for a change, Charlie found hard work rather pleasant and exciting. He was the idol of the studio, and its envy, and he enjoyed the feel of the brushes and the smell of the paint again, while he fell to talking once more with keen interest the jargon of art that he had almost forgotten. He had no time to be dull while the light lasted, and, in the evenings, he and his fellow-students made merry together as of old.

The stir and life of London was congenial to him after the comparative stagnation of the country for so long. It pleased him to look up old haunts and old friends, and to hear the tales of every one's summer wanderings.

And then he had a proud consciousness of a purpose in his life to support him. Nance wrote to him sometimes, not often enough for him to expect her letters as matters of course, but still she wrote. Simple letters they were, which all the world might have read, full of the village news, and Maud's latest escapade, and raptures over the loveliness of the lanes and hills in their autumn dress. But there was always at the end a demure little inquiry after the picture, that was worth all the rest, and made Charlie's ardour rise high again.

Still, after a while he got tired of this life. Charlie was one of those men who cannot live without ladies' society, and he grew weary of the company of his young artist friends, who painted by his side all day, and talked art to him all the evening. He had kept aloof from society, because he was afraid of being decoyed away from his work; but his resolution began to give way, and he thought there would be no harm in going about just a little.

And while he was hesitating on the point, he took it into his head one day, when he couldn't please himself, and his brush would do anything but what he required of it, to go into the National Gallery and make himself feel small by contemplating the old masters. So thither he went, and stood opposite one of Raphael's Madonnas, and looked as handsome and listless as a man could well look, and began to think he was a fool for supposing that he could ever paint.

"How do you do, Mr. Stuart?" said a pleased voice behind him, and turning, he found himself face to face with Mrs. Fairfax. "I didn't know you were in town," she went on.

"Oh, yes! I am up here painting hard," said Charlie. "But I thought you were all in Scotland now."

"So we were, but we came south when the weather broke up, and we are in town for a week or two before going down to Brighton for the winter," explained Mrs. Fairfax. "Gertrude is here; have you seen her? It seems an odd place to meet in, but my daughter has an old schoolfellow with her who wanted to see the Turners."

Charlie felt quite pleased to have met a friend. He and Mrs. Fairfax always got on very well together, she being particularly susceptible to his little attentions.

They strolled on together, and presently came upon Gertrude. She looked handsomer than ever in her costly furs, and her companion, a plain girl plainly dressed, formed an excellent foil to her.

"I have met Mr. Stuart, my dear," said her mother approaching. "Isn't it fortunate? I had no idea that he was in town."

Gertrude bent her swan-like neck, and held out her hand. Her manner was polite, but distant, as might be expected.

"How do you do?" she said. "May I introduce you to Miss Evans—Mr. Stuart. Mary," and she turned to her companion, "Mr. Stuart is an artist, and will be able to tell you all you want to know about the pictures."

"Not all, I am afraid," said Charlie, with his genial smile.

"Then will you show Miss Evans as much as you can in an hour?" said Gertrude gravely. "She is not likely to be here again soon, and does not want to waste her time."

Charlie could only bow and acquiesce, but he resented being turned off to a stranger like this, and while he pointed out the beauties of Turner (whom at that moment he positively loathed) to Gertrude's friend, he was listening all the while to the sweep of Gertrude's dress upon the floor, and the sound of her clear, calm voice. Had she been gracious to him, the thought of his uncle would have made him rebel, but it displeased his spoilt Majesty to see her turn him the cold shoulder, well as he deserved it.

"Can we drive you home, Mr. Stuart?" was Mrs. Fairfax's next offer. "We have a spare seat in the carriage."

So Charlie accepted it. He meant to make Gertrude smile on him ere they parted. But his intentions were thrown away, for she continued severe and cold, and when they reached her friend's house, announced that she should remain to tea there, requesting that the carriage might be sent for her later.

"You will see me home, won't you?" said Mrs. Fairfax, turning to Charlie as he stood irresolute on the pavement; and he did not refuse.

"Pray come in and have some tea," she said, when they reached Lancaster Gate; and Charlie went in, resolved to wait till Gertrude came home.

A pile of notes and cards awaited Mrs. Fairfax, and she picked up an envelope, with an annoyed expression.

"Please excuse me," she said, skimming through a note. "I thought so! Really, young men are too bad! Mr. Stuart, will you do me a favour?"

"Certainly, with pleasure," said Charlie politely.

"We are expecting a few friends to dinner to-night, and one of my gentlemen has just failed me. Will you come at such a short notice and fill his place?"

"I shall be delighted," said Charlie truly, feeling as if fortune had favoured him.

Soon after, he took his leave, and went away smiling

to himself. It amused him to think how mistaken his uncle was, and how far Gertrude was from wishing to make up their supposed quarrel.

"Mr. Stuart is coming to dine here to-night, my dear," said Mrs. Fairfax, when her daughter returned.

"Mr. Stuart, mamma!"

"Yes, Mr. Wilson has failed us at the last moment, so I asked Mr. Stuart to take his place."

"Really, mamma, I think you might have consulted me first!" said Gertrude proudly.

"My dear child, I thought you would like it!" cried poor Mrs. Fairfax, alarmed at having displeased her daughter.

But Gertrude swept away, offended dignity in her looks, secret triumph in her heart. So he was coming after all! And there would be no Nance in the way to-night!

She was moving among her guests with smiles and gracious greetings when Charlie arrived. She wore a gown of deep maroon velvet, whose heavy folds became her well, and whose rich colour set off the whiteness of her throat and arms. It was a small informal party, and she had not troubled to add ornaments or flowers, but her regal beauty shone the more from its plain setting.

Charlie sat opposite to her at dinner, and he could not but admire the superb pose of her head, and the slow grace of her movements. Gertrude was at her best in society, and in her own house. Consideration for her guests lent a certain softness to her manner, and she was far more fitted to move slowly about drawing-rooms than to rove happily about the country like Nance.

Charlie could not get speech of her all the evening. She asked him to sing, and introduced him to a lady who really accompanied him well, but whenever he tried to approach her she was always entertaining some one else. The other guests were ready to respond to such a fascinating young man, and praised his beautiful voice and singing; but Gertrude scarcely seemed to notice his presence, and she was still talking to some old friend of her father's, when he was obliged to go at last, after trying to outstay every one else.

King Charles went home a little annoyed. He did not want to make himself agreeable to Gertrude, but he wanted her to be agreeable to him. He was not accustomed to being treated like this, and it did not please him. It was all very well to laugh at Gertrude's airs with Nance, but Nance was not with him now, and it was poor fun laughing alone. Besides, those airs really became her; and Charlie, meditating over a lonely cigar, found himself making a lifelike sketch of Gertrude on an odd scrap of paper before he went to bed. "She is handsome!" he said to himself—"Couldn't I make a picture of her!"

Two days after he went to call as in duty bound. Mrs. Fairfax was at home, received him graciously, and asked if he would go to a concert with them next afternoon. It was a private affair for the benefit of some *protégé* of a friend of hers, and Mr. Fairfax could not go. It would be a real kindness if Charlie would escort them.

It was impossible to paint after half-past three now, said Charlie to himself; so he promised to join them at half-past two.

Gertrude made no objection to his presence; in fact, she ignored it as far as possible. When they arrived at their destination, she found some friends of her own, and left Charlie to look after her mother, without a glance in his direction.

Charlie was intensely disgusted. Gertrude was, without doubt, the handsomest girl in the room; heads were turned to look at her, whispers of admiration went round.

"That is the handsome Miss Fairfax, the heiress. They say she will have fifty thousand pounds on her wedding-day," said some one near him.

"I wonder how many offers she has had," said a second speaker.

"Dozens, I believe. Sir Herbert seems hard hit, doesn't he?"

"I don't suppose she would let herself go under a coronet," laughed the other. "She looks as proud as an empress."

"He as good as told me he would be proud to have you as a son-in-law." The words rang in Charlie's ears, as he watched a small, fair young man making himself agreeable to Gertrude. He did not particularly want to be Mr. Fairfax's son-in-law, but he wanted to show the room that he could cut out any number of young men with handles to their names.

Between the parts he made straight for Gertrude.

"May I take you to have an ice?" he asked.

"Thank you; I think Sir Herbert is going to get me one," answered Gertrude, smiling, and moved away on the arm of the little man, whose head she could see over easily.

Charlie was not to be so lightly defeated. While Sir Herbert struggled in the crowd, he secured an ice and a cup of tea, and came up to Gertrude.

"You had better take one of these while you are waiting," he said. "Your escort will never be seen again, I fear."

His careless good-nature was irresistible; perhaps, too, Gertrude was not insensible to the pleasure of being waited on by the most distinguished-looking young man in the room. She took the tea, and Charlie secured her cream and a choice of cakes as if by magic.

"You really manage to cope with the waiters most successfully," she said, regarding, with a disdainful glance, the hungry and thirsty souls around her.

Charlie leant one arm against the wall in such a way as to shield her from general observation.

"I wish I were as successful in coping with other things," he said, as he bent slightly towards her.

"Isn't your painting successful?" asked Gertrude, wilfully misunderstanding him.

"Oh, my painting does well enough! When are you coming to see my studio?"

"The last time I inquired after your pictures, you told me that you had none," said Gertrude coldly.

"I told you that they were all in town. I wish you would come and see them. Do come one afternoon early, before the light goes!" implored Charlie.

"I am afraid we can hardly manage it. We are leaving town shortly."

It was no use beating about the bush. Charlie plunged into his subject boldly.

"I can't think why you are so offended with me, Miss Fairfax," he said reproachfully.

"I am not offended."

"I think you are. You won't speak to me, nor look at me if you can help it. What have I done?"

If ever a man put his head wilfully and recklessly into the lion's mouth, it was Charlie Stuart at that moment.

"Nothing," said Gertrude icily. "By the way, Mr. Stuart, allow me to congratulate you," and she looked at him proudly, without the quiver of an eyelid.

"Thanks, very much. What on?"

"On your engagement to Miss Prescott," replied Gertrude unflinchingly.

Charlie reddened, in spite of himself. "You are very kind, but we are not engaged."

"Indeed! I beg your pardon. I was led to understand that you were."

Charlie could no more help flirting than he could help breathing. His artist nature was strangely susceptible to beauty, and she looked so beautiful with the fur round her delicate throat, and her clear-cut profile slightly turned away now.

"You know you never thought so," he said softly.

Gertrude was in love, and this tender voice and glance unsteadied her.

"What else was I to think?" she murmured.

"You might have known it was not likely." He did not want her to suspect the true state of the case, he argued with himself. "Have you forgotten our picnic on the hills?"

Had she not kept the heather he gave her? Did she not remember every word he spoke that day? Of course, it was she who had been foolish and unreasonable. That little witch had decoyed him away for a moment, and instead of making his path easy to retrace, she had frowned on him and been cold to him! The proud Gertrude was in love, indeed, when she could argue thus.

"No, I have not forgotten," she said, in a low voice.

"Here is some tea, Miss Fairfax; I have had so much trouble to get it," cried little Sir Herbert, coming up to them.

"Thank you; Mr. Stuart got me some long ago. We are just going up, the music is beginning again," said Gertrude. And she swept past the astonished little baronet on Charlie's arm, proudly conscious that people were nudging each other to look at the handsome couple.

Nance's eyes smiled reproachfully upon Charlie when he next entered his studio.

"It is all very well, my dear child," he said aloud —"but it is no use quarrelling with Gertrude. We aren't engaged yet, though we mean to be, and I may as well enjoy myself first. Suppose I didn't get my picture into the Academy, and sell it, what should we do?"

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

GERTRUDE'S REVENGE.

"Sweet is revenge—especially to women!"

"SO that is Miss Prescott's portrait?"

It was Gertrude who spoke, as she surveyed Charlie's studio with a sweeping glance.

The journey to Brighton had been delayed, and Gertrude and her parents had found time to visit him after all.

"Yes; do you think it is a good one?" asked Charlie carelessly.

He did not choose to conceal it—perhaps he wanted the smiling face to support him—but he had moved drapery and flowers for the occasion, and placed it among the other canvases.

"Excellent. Will you put it on the easel that we may see it better?"

Charlie complied; yet he felt unwilling to expose his little Nance to Gertrude's criticism.

"I should think she was a bad sitter," said Mr. Fairfax. "A pretty little girl, but as far as I remember her, never still for a moment."

"It was difficult to catch the likeness," Charlie owned.

"But it is remarkably good," said Mr. Fairfax—"remarkably." And he returned to it several times while the rest of the party were inspecting various other pictures.

Charlie had asked two or three friends to meet the Fairfaxes, and by degrees they all dispersed about the room, examining the curiosities and nicknacks that abounded in addition to the works of art. Mr. Fairfax drew Charlie aside into a corner, and affected to be gazing at a landscape.

"Do you paint portraits on commission, Mr. Stuart?" he asked.

"Certainly, when any one will order them," laughed Charlie.

"I wish," said his guest, playing with his eyeglasses—"I wish that I could persuade you to paint my daughter. I have long wished to have her portrait, but I have never yet found the right person to do it. I have no fancy for paying a thousand guineas to some swell who may, perhaps, take no interest in his work."

"No artist could possibly help being interested in Miss Fairfax's portrait," said Charlie.

"Then, again, several men have asked her to sit to them, but I do not care to have her portrait another man's property to be exhibited where he chooses. Now, if you would undertake it, I should be perfectly satisfied with the result."

Charlie hesitated. As an artist he yearned to perpetuate that stately beauty on canvas; as Nance's lover he felt it might be a dangerous task.

"You see at present I am hard at work under a master——" he began.

"Oh, there is no hurry at all. After Christmas, perhaps, when we have returned to town," said Mr. Fairfax.

"Then I shall be busy over a picture that I hope to get into the Academy," explained Charlie, feeling very ungracious.

"But after your picture is sent in, and when the days are longer?" suggested Mr. Fairfax. Charlie wavered. After all he would be handsomely paid, and the money would be a step on the path to freedom.

"'UNLESS SOME ONE ELSE DID IT FOR YOU,' MURMURED CHARLIE" (*p.* 28).

"If it would be agreeable to Miss Fairfax——" he began.

"Oh! you must settle that. I don't think she will dislike sitting, she is so still by nature," said her father, laughing. "And all questions of costume, and so forth, I expect you will find she wants to have a voice in. Now, how should you propose to paint her?"

Charlie replied vaguely that he must think it over.

"Should you mind, Nance, I wonder?" he said to the portrait after his visitors were gone. "It is only a matter of business, you know, dear."

He had a letter from home the next day, asking if he were not coming down for a Sunday, soon. He had promised to lunch in Lancaster Gate, and go with Gertrude and a friend to the Abbey afterwards next Sunday, but he did not say so. He wrote that he was very busy, and couldn't well spare time, as it would lead to his sacrificing Monday also, unless he were good like Hugh, and came up by the early train, which he said made him tremble to think of, at this time of year.

"There!" said Clare triumphantly, as she imparted his reply to Hugh. "I told you so. He has found an object in life at last, and he is working hard for Nance! Dear old boy!"

"Hum!" said Hugh.

"What now, you crabbed, cross-grained Puritan?"

"I saw him driving with Miss Fairfax yesterday, and another man told me that it wasn't the first time he had seen him in their carriage," remarked Hugh.

"I don't believe it!" cried Clare indignantly—"Besides," she added, with feminine logic, "I don't see any harm in it if he did!"

"It is always rash for weak young men to run into temptation," opined Hugh; and then promptly took himself out of the way of Clare's wrath.

Nance believed firmly that Charlie was working hard, though he told her he should not begin his picture till January. She was very happy as the year drew to a close, minding neither rain nor mud, never finding the country dull, and keeping every one's spirits up gaily. She was a great friend of Bill Sims now, and they had a great secret together. She was teaching him to knit a pair of socks for Oliver, and they afforded endless amusement to the invalid, who could only do a little at a time, and frequently

had to have that little undone at Nance's next visit.

Charlie's master would hardly have given such a favourable report of his work. The King was wearying of his industrious fit already. He took to arguing, painting in what the other man called a slovenly style, and then suddenly turning out a bit of exquisitely finished painting just to show what he could do if he chose. Then he would absent himself for whole days, declaring the light was bad, or that he was not in the mood for painting. "You're more plague than profit!" stormed the old artist angrily, as Charlie strolled in late after a couple of days' holiday, to announce that his work was hard and dry, and would never come to anything, and he should begin a fresh study.

It was much pleasanter escorting Gertrude about to picture galleries and concerts, or lingering in drawing-rooms with her. She had an intimate friend who played and sang well, and was fond of music, and she was always asking Charlie to meet her. They spent whole mornings and evenings together at the piano, Gertrude listening and criticising, while she sat by the hour on a low chair by the fire, with nothing to occupy her hands. She never wanted anything to occupy her; she could sit still for hours in graceful attitudes with her hands before her.

Suddenly this pleasant life came to an abrupt conclusion. Mr. Fairfax found a house he liked at Brighton, took it, and transported his family there.

London was really too dull when they were gone. Charlie had had no idea how much time he had spent at their house, till he found how it hung heavy on his hands. He began to sketch out his picture by way of putting fresh interest into his life, but it wouldn't come. Rose, the gardener's daughter, would have Gertrude's eyes, and aristocratic hands that had never nailed up a creeper in their lives.

He nearly went home for a while, but he could not make up his mind to it. If Nance questioned him, and it came out that he had been idling his time away with Gertrude, what would she say? Well, it was probably the weather that made him feel so stupid; who could paint this time of year? After Christmas he would begin his picture in earnest; and, meanwhile, he ran down to spend a Sunday at Brighton.

It was a fine, clear day, and the sun shone as it shines nowhere else. Charlie went with Gertrude to hear the finest choir that Brighton could produce, and then did Peacock Parade with her, and met a quantity of friends strolling up and down on the broad sea-wall, and he thought it all a great improvement on London in winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Fairfax seemed delighted to see him. They wanted him to change his hotel for their house, but Charlie had just enough prudence left to refuse. Still they made a great fuss over him, and welcomed him in every possible way.

"You must come down to us for Christmas," said Mr. Fairfax in farewell.

"Oh, no, thanks! I shall have to go home then," said Charlie quickly, shocked to find that he had nearly accepted the invitation.

"No, no, they won't want you there. You must think it over, and write," said his host, shaking his hand warmly.

Charlie went back to town, and considered the question through a sleepless night. If he went, he knew what it must mean. There was no mistaking the parents' manner, they looked on him as their daughter's favoured suitor. And yet the idea did not seem repulsive to him.

What was the use of his slaving away to win Nance? Perhaps his picture might not be accepted after all. If it was not, she would be vexed, and perhaps have nothing more to say to him. If it were, he would be bound to own to his uncle that he cared for her, and then he would find himself cut off with a shilling. And what good would that do to Nance?

He was rather a fool, he said to himself. He had got into a cleft stick. If he had only waited, not made his intentions quite so clear to Nance, it would have been so much better. It seemed rather a shame to think of making money for her by painting Gertrude, rather a mean sort of thing to do. And what good could painting one portrait do him? particularly if he quarrelled with his uncle first.

He was conscious that he ought to decide once for all what he meant to do: either work hard, and get orders, and set about earning his living; or else let it go, and only paint to amuse himself as he had done hitherto. No one could suppose that Mr. Helmsley's adopted son was in need of money. If he meant to earn it he must make the fact known; and then if his uncle cut off his allowance meanwhile, how was he to live?

He was no nearer deciding than he had been when he began, and he dropped off to sleep with the mental argument still unfinished.

Two days after came a more pressing invitation by letter from Mrs. Fairfax. He let it lie on the table, and considered it, much perplexed. What should he do? If he accepted it he felt his fate would be fixed, and yet how could he refuse now?

No man ever thinks seriously that he has behaved badly in his love affairs. It was always circumstances that were too strong for him, or the girl should not have put him in such a position. Charlie felt that all this was Nance's fault. Why had she set an impossible task before him, as a condition of his winning her? If they had only been engaged in the first place he could have owned as much to his uncle, and this complicated state of affairs need never have arisen. He contrived to feel quite injured as he looked back upon the past.

Finally he did, as usual, what came easiest, and decided to go down to Brighton. He need not absolutely compromise himself by so doing; and if he were to go home now what an awkward position he and Nance would be in, he argued. So he accepted the invitation with an ill-used feeling as if fate was hard upon him, and then he sat down and wrote to Nance.

"My people will be surprised to hear that I am not coming home for Christmas," he wrote. "I hope you

will not be annoyed too. It seems to me that under all the circumstances it would be better that we should keep apart for the present. When my picture is hung in the Academy I will come down and tell you so in person," and so on, and so on, not committing himself to anything definite, but filling little Nance's heart with pride, as she thought how hard he was working, and how good it was of him to exercise so much self-control. It might have been awkward for them to meet, and yet she yearned for a sight of that fair head and those soft dark eyes again.

Every one else was loud in complaint. There would be no fun in Christmas at all without their King, and Mrs. Stuart was deeply disappointed. Why should her boy go and stay with strangers at Brighton? she lamented openly. He ought to come and spend Christmas as usual with his mother.

Mr. Helmsley and Hugh alone said nothing. Mr. Helmsley had been corresponding with Mr. Fairfax on a matter of business lately; and Hugh picked up a good deal of information as to Charlie's movements in town.

There was no use in doing things by halves, so Charlie packed up and went off several days before Christmas. He found a warm welcome when he arrived. The house was full of young people, and very gay, and Charlie was a ringleader in all the frolics. They paraded the cliff, and rode over the downs, and went in and out among the shops full of bustle and customers, and enjoyed the festive season to the full.

His place at table was by Gertrude's side; it was he who assisted her to mount and rode at her bridle-rein. Whatever was going on, Charlie and Gertrude headed the entertainment. From the host downwards every one seemed to unite in assigning him the position of son of the house. If he had one lingering thought of Nance, Charlie felt he ought to go; but he did not go, he stayed on to be openly chaffed in the smoking-room at night on his good luck.

Gertrude had never seemed so fascinating. She laughed more often, she became more animated, she was always appealing to him to further some plan for the amusement of her guests. How could he ever have thought her proud and cold? he wondered, as he watched her, beautiful alike in costly furs, or trailing evening draperies, or in her dark simple riding-habit, and ever with a smile on her curved lips, or in her deep eyes, for him.

The atmosphere of wealth and luxury round him suited Charlie exactly. He felt that his uncle was right, he was not born to be poor and hard-working; why had not Nance been rich?

Christmas Day came and went. Charlie offered one of his sketches to Gertrude, and it was accepted. They went together to the holly-decked church, and sang from the same hymn-book.

"I wish Christmas Day were always on a Sunday; it prevents all absurd attempts to make it merry," said one of the girls. "It was more bearable than usual this year."

"It is the happiest Christmas I ever spent," murmured Gertrude, as if to herself; but Charlie heard her.

Boxing Day arrived, and brought the usual discussion: what could be done on Bank Holiday in a town? Some new and brilliant idea was wanted, and Charlie supplied it.

"Let us go out by rail to the Dyke, and take our lunch with us," he suggested.

A December picnic was a really novel sensation, and grasped at accordingly. Sandwiches were hastily prepared, thick boots donned, and the party set off, laughing at the wildness of their expedition.

It was a glorious day; the sky a cloudless blue above, and the light coating of snow sparkling on the ground below under the brilliant sunshine. There were few travellers by the midday train, and the party had little difficulty in shaking themselves free of those few, when they emerged from the little station under the hill.

The downs were covered far and wide with the crisp shining snow, a faint frosty haze obscured the distant view. The air was sharp and invigorating, and seemed to inspire the young people with exuberant spirits. They ran, they shouted, they laughed and joked, the young men took to snowballing one another with deadly aim. Even Gertrude was infected by the general mirth, and laughed and raced with the rest.

Down in the valley there would be shelter from the keen hill breeze, so down the steep side of the Dyke they all scrambled, brushing the snow after them, and leaving their track behind them as they went. The young men stormed the little shops in the village below, and bought biscuits and gingerbread nuts to add to their store, while the girls stamped, laughing, up and down the road outside, trying to warm their frozen feet.

They encamped in a farmyard to eat their lunch, sitting on a convenient harrow which served as table and chair. It was quite warm and pleasant there in the brilliant sunshine, and winter picnics were voted a huge success, while they drank Charlie's health in home-made ginger-beer.

"There's a path up through the fields there," said some one at last. "If we get up to the road there is a pretty view; you can see the Surrey hills better than from the Dyke itself."

"Shall we go up there?" Charlie asked; and he and Gertrude led the way.

There were no passengers along the snow-covered road that ran at the foot of the sweeping line of white hills. The party broke up into twos and threes, and went tramping along with songs and shouts in the country stillness.

"This must be the best place for a view; the bank rises above the road further on," said Charlie, and stopped, leaning over a gate.

Some of the others cast a glance, remarked that it was too hazy for a good view, and passed on; most strolled by without taking any notice.

"I can just see a faint blue line in the horizon—it may be only a cloud," said Charlie. "Do you see it?"

"IT WAS MUCH PLEASANTER ESCORTING GERTRUDE ABOUT TO PICTURE GALLERIES" (*p.* 34).

"Are those the hills where we had our picnic last August?" asked Gertrude.

"I suppose so. I can hardly distinguish them, but I think that is the range," said Charlie.

Both were silent, their memories flying back to that sunny golden time.

"It was on that day," said Gertrude at last, "that I first heard of Nance Prescott."

"I believe you were jealous of her then," said Charlie, with a soft, reproachful look.

"Had I not reason to be?"

Charlie could not deny it. "I wonder you could be jealous of a child like that," he said in self-defence—"you were so hasty. You condemned without proof."

"I thought I had sufficient at that tournament."

"If one afternoon's amusement is to make you so angry, how could I ever please you?" said Charlie, feeling the spell of her magic beauty, and no longer struggling against it.

"Then you were only amusing yourself with her?"

The keen eyes looked straight into his with an eager glance, as if she hung upon his next words. It came upon Charlie with a feeling of sudden triumph that this beautiful woman really loved him, that he had not to sue for what was his already. How could he refuse such a gift?

"That was all!" he said, and hated himself for saying it. "What is Nance beside you, Queen of my Heart?"

And as Gertrude yielded with a shy, sweet smile that made her yet more precious in her lover's eyes, she felt that the hour of her revenge had come.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

DISILLUSION.

"To my true King I offered, free from stain,
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain."

CHRISTMAS at Stoke Danesford was not so merry as usual. They missed Charlie at every turn, and his faithful Cavaliers often speculated as to what had become of him.

"Whom is he staying with at Brighton? He might have told us all about it," they grumbled, as they dis-

consolately sang or whistled their war-song, "Charlie is my Darling."

Only Hugh went through all the festivities with a feeling that the match was laid to the train, and the explosion might follow at any moment. He watched Nance as she fluttered about, gayest of the gay, with pity in his heart. What blow was about to fall on her pretty head?

Nance had no fears. She had firm faith in Charlie, and she was enjoying herself immensely. All these country doings were delightful novelties to her, and from the moment that she began to put up the first holly-spray in the church she was full of busy life and happiness. It was such an ideal Christmas, too, bright and keen, with just snow enough to look picturesque, but not to spoil the skating. There was plenty of skating on the fish-ponds at the Manor, and the days were all too short for the fun that was crammed into them.

Hugh had got a week's holiday, and stayed into the New Year. He did his best to supply Charlie's place, and with excellent success. Inward uneasiness only sharpened his wits and tongue, and he was the life and soul of the party.

Charlie did not write home from Brighton. "Too busy enjoying himself," said Maurice, with a sly glance at Nance. He was openly and desperately in love with Nance himself, and danced attendance on her assiduously.

The truth was that Charlie could not make up his mind to write. He did not want his uncle to triumph over him, and he felt that no one ought to break the news to Nance but himself. So he suggested to Gertrude that they should keep their engagement quiet till the party broke up; and she was nothing loth, for she shrank from the open congratulations and teasing that would follow its announcement.

So Charlie planned every day to write to Nance before night, and once sat down to begin—but what could he say? That he had loved Gertrude all along? That would be insulting and untrue. That he had ceased to care for her in her absence? Or that his uncle's arguments had been too much for him? That made him out to be too despicable.

So he tore up the unfinished sheet, and finally concluded not to write at all. He would write to his uncle instead, and let him enjoy his small triumph. He did not regret what he had done. How could he when he looked upon his beautiful love and knew that her whole heart and soul were his, and that the girl so proud to others was his veriest slave? He was proud of her beauty, and of his own good fortune in winning her; and the easiest and pleasantest thing to do was to put Nance out of his mind altogether—which he accordingly did.

On the first day of Hugh's return to work, he came down again from town unusually early. The station-master was surprised to see him, and remarked that the dog-cart was not here yet.

"No, they did not expect me so soon," answered Hugh. "Good day, Saunders!" and he walked away up the road, whistling as he went.

His three-mile tramp was drawing to a close when he came in sight of Clare Stuart, walking along the winding lanes that led through the village at a furious rate. Hugh had fairly to run to overtake her, which he succeeded in doing, calling after her, "Clare! Clare! Whither away so fast?"

She heard him at last, and turned. Her face was white, and her eyes were blazing with wrath. Something, it was easy to see, had disturbed her beyond her wont.

"What in the world is the matter?" demanded Hugh, as he came up.

"That you should ask me, of all people!" she returned with a laugh that had no mirth in it. "Have you heard the news?"

"What? Who's dead?"

"I could wish he were! Death before dishonour! Charlie is engaged to Gertrude Fairfax!" said Clare.

Hugh put his hands into his coat-pockets and nodded his head.

"Well?" said Clare. "Why don't you say 'I told you so'?"

"The satisfaction would be so cheap as to be hardly worth attaining," remarked Hugh. "Since when is this?"

"They have been engaged a week to-day."

"And he has just written?"

"Yes; this morning. He is at Brighton still. And Uncle Robert is so delighted; mother began by being disappointed, but he was so pleased that she immediately came round."

"Shall we walk on?" suggested Hugh. "It's chilly."

"I wonder you condescend to walk with me," said Clare.

"Why?" asked Hugh.

"Because I am so ashamed of him, so dreadfully ashamed!" cried Clare. "Oh, it makes me so wild that I don't know what to do. Poor little Nance! Poor little Nance!"

Hugh made no remark, but there was an ugly look in his eyes. It was just as well for Charlie that he was miles away.

"I know why he has done it," went on Clare. "It all comes of his being dependent on Uncle Robert. We all of us are; we daren't do anything he doesn't like. If Charlie had been free, if he had been earning his own living like a man, he would have married Nance. I know, I know, in his heart of hearts, he loves her best."

"Jolly look-out for Gertrude," remarked Hugh.

"I don't care a farthing for Gertrude?" cried Clare. "He never made love to her as he did to Nance! She is a cold, heartless, designing girl! I heard lots of people say in the summer that she meant to have Charlie, and she has caught him. I hope she's proud of herself! I hope——Oh! if she wanted to make some man behave dishonourably for her sake, she needn't have chosen my brother!" and Clare's sentence ended with something suspiciously like a sob.

The winter sun was setting in a belt of soft pink light. There was a subdued glow over the leafless

hedges and the white world. To Clare all the world was desolate and bare as the wintry landscape. She had lost faith in her King, and all her life was shattered to its foundations.

"I have been obliged to keep quiet all day," she went on at last, "because Uncle Robert is so pleased, and I daren't tell him what I think. But I don't mean to stand it any longer. I won't! I feel as if his food choked me, and the air of his house was suffocating. I will be independent. I will go away and be a governess. No one shall ever have the right to interfere with me. Oh, my poor Charlie! Your expectations have been your ruin!"

"Of all the curses that I know," remarked Hugh, "the greatest curse a man can be afflicted with, in my humble opinion, is great expectations."

"If he had only had to earn his own living from the first!" said Clare. "But no! He was brought up as a rich man, and as Uncle Robert's heir, and now he will do anything rather than forfeit his inheritance. Poor mother said so innocently, 'I thought he was going to marry Nance;' and Uncle Robert said, 'I promised to cut him out of my will if he did.'"

"Phew!" whistled Hugh. "That was the way the cat jumped, was it?"

"He may cut me out of his will as much as he chooses!" declared Clare indignantly. "I am going to be independent henceforth. I shall look out for a situation at once."

"Is it absolutely necessary to teach in order to be independent of your uncle?" inquired Hugh meekly.

"Why? What else can I do?"

"You might have asked why I am down so early to-day," remarked Hugh, in an injured tone.

"I didn't notice it," said Clare apologetically. "Why is it? Is anything wrong?"

"Wrong with some folks is right with me," replied Hugh enigmatically. "You know our firm has got a branch in Canada?"

"Yes. Are you going there by chance?" asked Clare, at random.

"Well, the man at the head of it out there has been making a fool of himself and letting the whole thing go to pieces. The head sent for me to-day and asked if I would like to go out and put things straight a bit, and dwell there as head boss, so to speak," said Hugh modestly.

"My dear Hugh! How splendid! Of course you'll go? What promotion!" cried Clare, keenly envious of the contrast between her own brother and Hugh, who was already so valued and trusted.

"Well, it rather depends," said Hugh reflectively. "Of course, it is a good post, about £1,000 a year, and the country and people are all very well; but there's the climate to be considered, and I think it would be rather lonely. I wish you'd come too, Clare. Only perhaps that wouldn't suit your views of independence?"

Clare positively did not know if he were in jest or earnest.

"I came down this afternoon on purpose to ask if you would go with me," he went on calmly. "I got a holiday to think things over in on purpose. I told them that they should have an answer to-morrow. What do you say, Clare? Will you come?"

Clare looked up, still perplexed, and met his eyes. She stopped, bewildered. Hugh took his hands out of his pockets and held them out.

"I can't say any more," he said, in his most wheedling voice. "You know I've never cared for any one but you, and that's why we have quarrelled so. Won't you come, Clare? I won't cut you out of my will, whatever you do; I promise."

And Clare, half laughing, half sobbing, said she would come.

"But I never knew you really cared for me, Hugh!" she declared, as they walked on presently with his hand in her muff.

"Clare, you will have a spot on your tongue to-night."

"Hugh, were you ever serious?"

"When I am, you can wire for the doctor."

"But when are you going, Hugh? Not soon?"—with some little anxiety.

"I told them I wanted to get married first," said Hugh calmly, "so they said they would give me a month before I went."

"Hugh, you wretch! You didn't!"

"All right! I never contradict a lady. Now, you are coming when I go, aren't you? You'd never let me go alone to those distant wilds? We shan't ever know each other any better than we do now. You can't buy Canadian raiment in England; and there's just time to have the banns put up and have a week's honeymoon."

"Hugh, you are the most impatient person that I ever met."

"Haven't I waited for you fifteen blessed years? Besides," went on Hugh, as serious as he ever was, "I thought you might be glad to get away just now. You can't see much of Gertrude before you go, and it will be a little awkward for you down here under present circumstances, won't it?"

"Yes," owned Clare, sighing. "But, Hugh, are you going for long?"

"For some years, I suppose; but we can easily run backwards and forwards; it isn't like going to India."

"No," assented Clare, and then she burst into tears. "But, oh, Charlie, Charlie! my King that I was so proud of! What will become of little Nance? Oh, Hugh! I can never be a Cavalier again!"

"Try being a Puritan for a change; you might do much worse," said Hugh, comforting and caressing her tenderly.

There was no one at home but Phyllis when Hugh walked into the library late in the afternoon. She sat over the fire with a book in her lap, but the absence of all light showed that the reading was a mere pretence.

"Oh, Hugh! I thought you were never coming to-night!" began Phyllis, starting up.

"Did you want me?"

"Yes, indeed! What shall we do?"

"Oh! you've heard about the young man, Charles Stuart, too?"

"Don't joke, please, Hugh!" and Phyllis fairly stamped. "Who is going to tell Nance?"

"Doesn't she know?"

"No! Mr. Helmsley came over this morning delighted to tell us the news; he asked for papa, and I was with him. Mercifully, Oliver was out."

"What did the pater say?"

"He said as little as he could, but I think he's very angry. Mother took it very quietly. She never takes much interest in anything that doesn't affect papa, you know."

"Have you told Oliver?"

"Yes, I told him. He looked like—well, I can't tell you what he looked like," said Phyllis honestly. "But he said, 'I beg you will never mention Charlie's name to me again,' and then he stalked off, and never came in to lunch. I was fairly frightened," owned Phyllis. "He's furious."

"Can I not find thee a warrant for changing?" hummed Hugh. "Well, who is going to tell Nance?"

"I don't know; I shan't," said Phyllis, who felt she had done her share. "It is too disgraceful. I will never forgive Charlie as long as I live."

"My dear child, you must be discreet. You can't quarrel with Clare."

"I feel as if I could," said Phyllis vindictively.

"You can't. I don't permit it."

"You!"

"Yes, I! *Moi qui vous parle!* I am going to take Clare to Canada with me, and I shall not allow my family to quarrel with my wife," said Hugh, with dignity.

The door opened, and Nance came in singing gaily.

"What's all this?" she asked, for Phyllis was pouring out questions and exclamations in a breath.

"Nothing, nothing! I'm not shy! I'll take your congratulations," said Hugh affably.

"Then you're engaged to Clare!" said Nance, whose sharp ears had caught her name. And she joined in teasing and laughing at him in her usual bright way, declaring it was altogether the best joke she had ever heard.

Presently the dressing-gong sounded, and Phyllis left the room. Directly she was gone Nance's bright manner fell from her, and standing straight up on the hearth-rug she asked Hugh gravely—

"What is the matter, Hugh? There is something wrong, and no one will tell me."

"I believe you know," said Hugh, looking at the fire.

"Then it is true," she said—"and Charlie is engaged to Gertrude Fairfax."

"Yes," said Hugh.

"I hope they will be happy," said Nance, in a hard, set voice.

Hugh made no reply. He did not hope anything of the sort.

"You are very unjust!" said Nance, looking at him with her clear grey eyes. "You think he was engaged to me. He was not! He never was! He hasn't behaved badly, and I won't hear a word against him!" and she fled precipitately.

Hugh could not have done a kinder or more considerate thing than in offering to carry Clare off so suddenly. He got his way, of course; Hugh always did when he had made up his mind to it. Mr. Helmsley was not clear at first that he approved of anything so sudden. But when Hugh quietly intimated that they were both of age, and that he was perfectly able to support a wife, and needed no one's advice or permission, the uncle gave in. He rather admired the young man's independence, and so he gave his consent to everything proposed, promised to give Clare her trousseau, and to settle £5,000 upon her on her wedding-day.

In his absurd way Hugh showed the truest delicacy and consideration for the feelings of others. He persuaded Mrs. Stuart that Clare would get her "things," as he called them, far better by going up to town to stay at once, and that a quiet wedding in London would be most suitable under the circumstances.

It settled a great many difficulties, for, fond as they all were of Clare, there was a little awkwardness about her intercourse with the Manor just now. She was so ashamed of Charlie, and Phyllis was so angry with him, that the two girls for the first time in their lives were hardly at ease together in Charlie's old familiar haunts.

But by removing to town, and sending Maurice on an opportune visit to a schoolfellow, a great deal of pain was spared to all concerned; and in the hurry and bustle of getting ready for a wedding at such short notice, there was no time for awkwardness.

It was a very quiet wedding. Clare wore a bridal white gown and veil, at Hugh's special request, but there were no bridesmaids, and no guests but the family at the luncheon which preceded their run down to Hastings for two or three days' peace before leaving England.

Charlie had announced his intention of being present. If he was a little ashamed of meeting a Danesford he had no intention of showing it.

"I suppose you won't be my best man, old fellow?" said Hugh mournfully to Oliver, on hearing for certain that both Clare's brothers would be present at the wedding.

"No, thanks, I think not. I'm sorry," said Oliver, and the subject dropped.

When the time came, Mr. Danesford was sufficiently unwell to serve as an excuse for Phyllis's remaining at home also. She was glad the matter was decided for her, for though the possibility of Clare's being married without her presence seemed like a strange dream after their long friendship, she could not make up her mind to meet Charlie. It did not seem to her as if she could ever bear to meet him again. How did people live and meet as if nothing had happened, after such earthquakes in their social world? she wondered. Everything seemed broken up at once, and the whole foundations of society destroyed.

She cried all to herself on Clare's wedding-day, thinking how they had looked forward and talked of it

as young girls do, settling what they should wear, and what should be done, where triumphal arches should be erected in the village, and how the school children should be feasted. This quiet affair in London, that she was not even to see, was an anticlimax to all their dreams.

If Nance shed any tears she shed them in secret. Her spirits never flagged; she was full of interest in Clare's wedding, urged Phyllis to go and see it, and would even have talked of Charlie if his name had not been tabooed at the Manor.

She teased Hugh unmercifully, and ransacked her Indian stores to give him and Clare pretty presents. They had plenty, but one Hugh quietly asked for. He demanded of Charlie, Nance's unfinished portrait, and brought it down to the Manor with him. He hid it away in many folds of paper, and gave it to Phyllis.

"When Oliver is engaged, give him that as my wedding present," he said. "I won't give it the trouble of going to Canada and back."

Phyllis promised, unsuspecting. She did not see any signs of Oliver's engagement, but she had much faith in Hugh.

It was Nance who kept up their spirits to the last. Hugh's last evening would have been a trying one but for her. Maud was depressed, and winking away tears behind her book. Phyllis and Oliver were in the unnaturally quiet state that with them indicated unusual feeling. Hugh himself wandered about the room, touching and taking up various ornaments and trifles that he had known all his life. He was longing to thank his uncle and aunt for all the tender love and care that had never let him know what orphanhood meant, and yet afraid of exciting Mr. Danesford, who had been unwell all day.

Then Nance sat down to the piano and played. And, as her music floated through the room, grave brows lightened, and sad faces were calmed, and restless Hugh subsided on to the arm of the chair of his Lord Protector whom he had so faithfully followed for so many years. Last of all Nance played them gently the hymn for those at sea.

"Next Sunday we will have that, Phyllis," she said softly, in the silence that ensued.

"Good night, Nance dear, and thank you so much," said Hugh, in a low voice, coming up to the piano as she rose amid a general stir.

He hesitated a moment, and then said, "Clare will never regret turning Puritan, I hope. It is a good thing to change sides sometimes."

The colour rushed into Nance's face. She held out her hand, but said nothing.

"Poor little Nance!" said Hugh, as if to himself, when he was left alone with Oliver.

Oliver turned away impatiently to put out a lamp.

"But it is only her pride that is wounded; he never touched her heart," went on Hugh reflectively.

"How do you know?" said Oliver fiercely.

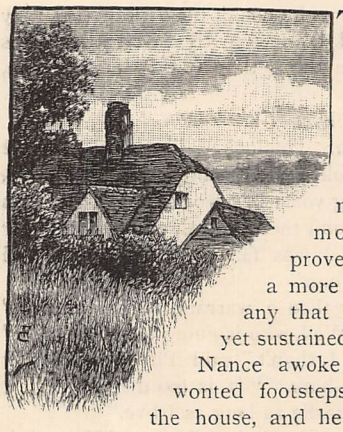
"You'll see. She'll get over it. Good night, old fellow!" and he wrung his cousin's hand.

Next day he was gone, and a week later he had sailed, and there was a blank in the circle at the Manor.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

DREARY DAYS.

"But while my fretted heart,
Shut out, shut down, and full of pain,
Sobbed to itself apart,
Ached to itself in vain,
Came one who loveth me
As I love thee.
He came, and sighed,
Because he knew the sorrow."



THERE was not much time for thinking about Clare and Charlie after Hugh was fairly gone. The symptoms that had made Oliver and his mother so uneasy, proved the precursors of a more severe attack than any that Mr. Danesford had yet sustained.

Nance awoke one night to unwonted footsteps and voices about the house, and heard the tramp of a horse's feet ringing down the drive. Uneasily she crept to Phyllis's room, to find her wakeful and anxious.

"Papa is ill; they have sent for the doctor," she said. "We can't do anything."

And there was nothing for them to do but to wait till morning, and then to hear that Mr. Danesford was in the greatest danger. The acute anxiety passed in a few hours, but he continued extremely ill, and it became evident that, in spite of all their care, he had in some manner taken a chill which brought on another attack of his old enemy, rheumatic fever. For some days the fever ran high, and the house was hushed and still, and every one went about with anxious faces, and all their thoughts concentrated on that sick-room above.

No one was admitted there but the wife and son, and the nurse who had been in the family since Oliver's birth. Oliver seemed to take no rest, night or day. He always knew what his father wanted, by instinct; his strength and gentleness were invaluable, and the more ill he was, the more Mr. Danesford seemed to like to see that quiet, broad-shouldered figure, whose very look was a promise of help and strength.

"Oliver will wear himself out," said Phyllis dejectedly, as she presided over breakfast, on the first morning when her father was announced to have taken a turn for the better. "Mother lies down and sleeps sometimes, but Oliver gets no rest. I am sure he will wear himself out."

"Here he comes," said Nance quickly, as a hand was laid on the door-handle.

Oliver was neat and trim as usual, but he looked very fagged and worn in the fresh morning light, and he sat down in his place with an utterly wearied air.

"Will you have some fish, Oliver?" asked Maud, as he turned over a pile of letters and circulars that had been accumulating for two or three days.

"No, thank you. I should like some tea, Phyllis."

His voice sounded apathetic and dreary, as if he were hardly awake. Phyllis longed to comfort him, but she could not think of a word to say. Trouble always made her tongue-tied.

Nance got up softly and took the tea round to Oliver's side. She brought him a dainty share of his favourite dish, and fetched him toast and all needful etceteras with quiet, attentive care.

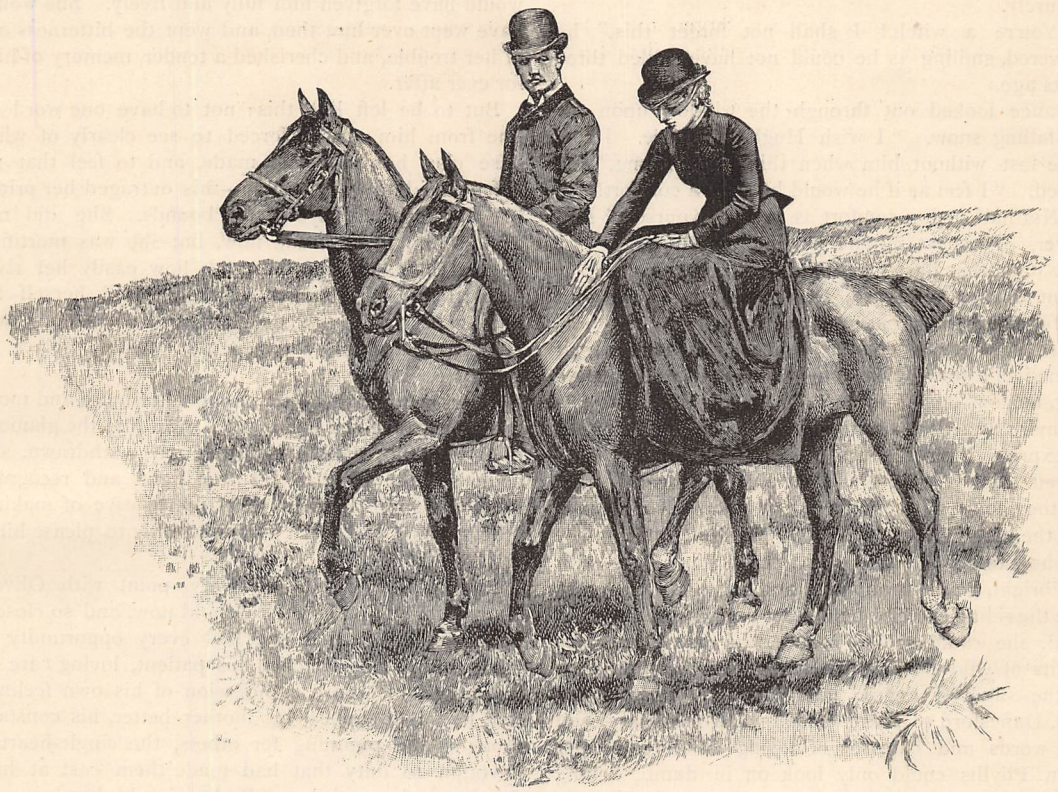
He did not seem to take much notice, but she would not let him be.

"Now, you are not to look at one of those stupid letters till you have had some breakfast," she said.

Oliver couldn't help a smile. "I am sure I must look most aggravatingly well and strong, that's why I feel such a brute," he said.

"Oh, no! It does one no end of good to see any one who is well and flourishing. I hate sickly people about me when I'm ill," Nance assured him. "Eat some breakfast while it is hot, or you will look so bad that I shan't let you go upstairs again."

He yielded to her air of command, and certainly looked the better for his food, as well as for the bright words of sympathy and comfort that she continued to administer.



"NANCE PERSUADED OLIVER TO TAKE THE RIDING EXERCISE HE NEEDED" (*p.* 42).

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said Oliver, now suddenly waking up. "I believe I am actually letting you wait on me."

"Quite time too. It is your turn to be looked after. He is really better, isn't he?" said Nance, standing near him with her sweetest smile.

"Oh, yes, he's better! his temperature is going down," said Oliver, sighing, and he leant back in his chair. "I could bear it better if he did not suffer so," he said at last. "There's so little one can do to help."

"I am sure you help him very much," said Nance, her grey eyes, grown so serious of late, fixed gravely upon his. "It must be good for him just to look at you. Why, it always does me good if I've only got a headache!"

He followed the girls into the library afterwards, and sat down in a large armchair with the paper. "I shan't go up till the doctor comes now," he said. "He was asleep, and I might wake him."

What volumes it speaks when a house is in that state when "he" can apply to no one but the absorbing object of interest!

"Would it disturb him if I played a little?" asked artful Nance.

"Not at all. You couldn't possibly be heard at the other side of the house."

Nance sat down, and began to play all the most soothing things she knew. Gradually the paper slipped from Oliver's fingers, his head nestled back into the chair, and when Phyllis returned from her housekeeping he was fast asleep. Phyllis looked delighted. So

did the doctor, when she slipped out to ask if he need be awakened.

"Certainly not. Let him sleep all the morning if he will," answered the doctor. "He has been trying to knock himself up, and we'll disappoint him this time. Mr. Danesford is going on very well, and will be glad to hear that he is resting."

Oliver slept for the greater part of the morning, and felt proportionately better for it. His first idea on waking, however, was to go straight to his father's room, with a morbid fear lest he should have been wanted meanwhile. On the staircase he met Nance.

"I hope you enjoyed your morning," she said demurely.

"You're a witch! I shall not forget this," he answered, smiling as he could not have smiled three hours ago.

Nance looked out through the window upon the fast-falling snow. "I wish Hugh was here. I feel quite lost without him when things go wrong," she sighed. "I feel as if he would be such a comfort."

"Not half such a comfort as you are yourself," said Oliver. The next minute he had turned away. "I hope my father hasn't wanted me," he said.

But Nance remained, a lonely little figure with tearful eyes, gazing out upon the snow.

But she was a comfort indeed; without her it seemed as if they never could have got through those long, anxious days.

Phyllis and Oliver were alike in being quite unable to express their feelings when they were strongly moved. They could bear their anxiety bravely alone, but they could not comfort one another. Now Nance had the happy knack of always knowing what to say and how to say it. She could cheer them both with her bright, gentle sympathy, and persuade Oliver to take the riding exercise he needed; while, on the other hand, she could soothe Maud, who was given over to fits of wild despair whenever the bulletins were in the slightest degree unfavourable. She coaxed Mrs. Danesford to spare herself when necessary, and had words and caresses of loving comfort for her when Phyllis could only look on in dumb, aching misery while her mother wept.

For Mr. Danesford seemed to have no strength to rally from this attack, and it was days before they could discern any real improvement in his condition. It left him far more feeble and more of an invalid than before, and when Oliver at last carried him down in his strong arms and laid him on the library sofa again, the joy of seeing him in his old place once more was so mingled with grief at his altered looks, that his daughters scarcely knew how to restrain their feelings, or what to say.

It was Nance who came to the rescue with her music again.

"Play to me, Nance dear," said Mr. Danesford.

And she played to him softly and soothingly till the embarrassing moment was past, and he could thank her with a voice and look more like his old self.

"What should we do without you, Nance?" he said, as he held her hand in his.

And the tears filled Nance's eyes, because a little love and appreciation went so far with her just then.

There was a strong vein of self-reliance and self-control in Nance's character. She would have died sooner than let any one know what she suffered, but if it had not been for the absorbing interest of Mr. Danesford's illness she would have fretted herself ill instead. She was suffering greatly. She had really been fascinated wholly and entirely by Charlie, and it was a terrible blow to her to be cast off and left in this cruel, heartless way. If he had written her a single line, owning his bad behaviour, pleading the force of circumstances, asking for her forgiveness, she would have forgiven him fully and freely. She would have wept over him then, and wept the bitterness out of her trouble, and cherished a tender memory of him for ever after.

But to be left like this; not to have one word or line from him; to be forced to see clearly of what base clay her idol was made, and to feel that no defence of him was possible—this outraged her pride, her self-respect, beyond all bounds. She did not grudge him to Gertrude now, but she was mortified beyond all expression to think how easily her rival had triumphed over her. She despised herself for having been so easily deceived, and when one's own self-respect is lost there is no possible solace in trouble.

Every day it was borne in upon her more and more what a mistake she had made. Now that the glamour of his presence and of his smile was withdrawn, she could see the King in his true light, and recognise more and more how his royal prerogative of making others happy had been exercised only to please himself by so doing.

She contrasted him at every point with Oliver. They were such a little household now, and so closely bound together, that she had every opportunity to study him. She watched his patient, loving care of his father, his brave suppression of his own feelings that he might support his mother better, his constant thought and planning for others, the single-hearted devotion to duty that had made them cast at him the name of a strait-laced Puritan in old days.

She saw herself as she must appear to him, frivolous, foolish, only caring to please. She allowed herself no virtues or redeeming qualities of any kind; she stigmatised herself as utterly vain and selfish. It was very good of him to say, as he did sometimes, what a comfort she was to his mother and sisters, but for himself she was sure that he must look on her with tolerant contempt.

The snow fell heavily and lay long that year. There seemed no prospect of winter ever being over. It was difficult to get out at all along the slippery lanes, where the snow had drifted feet high. Oliver set all the men who were out of work to keep the road to the village cleared that his sisters might get to and fro, but there was little to be done besides, and the days seemed long and interminable with so little variety.

Nance chafed under their enforced seclusion terribly.

She was in the mood when she would have gladly walked or ridden many miles daily, with a wild attempt to get away from the misery that oppressed her. One black day, when a night of heavy rain and wind had washed away some of the snow, she set forth in the afternoon in her waterproof boots and thick ulster, determined to see if she could not take a really long walk. She did not ask Phyllis to accompany her ; she preferred to be alone.

It was not very far that she could get after all. The lanes were running with liquid mud, and after a struggling progress of a mile or so she determined to return home by a longer round over the fields, thinking the untrodden snow the less of the two evils. Even then she got along very slowly, and it was growing dusk when she reached the churchyard through which her path led her. As she passed through the little gate the sound of music fell upon her ear, borne through the still air. There was a light in a north window of the church near the organ, which shed inviting beams upon the cold white world without. Weary Nance thought she would go in and rest awhile, and listen to the organist.

She opened the chancel door and stood surprised. There at the organ, with his back to her, was no less a person than Oliver. She knew he could play, in fact she had heard him take a service before now when the organist was absent, but she never knew him play thus, for his own pleasure, before. The sound of the latch was drowned in the organ-peals. She closed the door, and stole softly down the dark church to a distant seat near the tower. The church was being warmed for a service that night, and the atmosphere was very soothing after the icy chill without. Nance sat down in the corner of a pew, and leaned her head against a pillar, listening.

Far up by the chancel, in a little oasis of light, sat Oliver, playing as she had never supposed that the quiet, self-contained man could play. A wild storm of music rolled about the little church, dashing itself against the pillars, and breaking into echoes of sound and fury, like a soul dashing itself against fate with impotent rage and despair. It seemed to express all her feelings for her—her anger, her mortification, her disdain—and she sat spell-bound, with a sense of relief that at last she was telling out her secret to the world, and yet without fear of discovery.

And then suddenly it died away, and only the deep throbbing of a great diapason broke the dead stillness, more still by contrast, that ensued. And then upon the hushed air stole a strain of angelic sweetness, a wordless song of peace and love, that soared and floated overhead like a message of rest to the worn, and weary, and tempest-tossed. And Nance, stirred and moved to the very depths of her being, laid her head upon her folded arms and cried like a child.

She did not know how long he played, or if he changed the strain. She only knew that Oliver, there in the midst of the light and music, seemed to be using all his strength and power to pour help and comfort into her wounded soul, as she sat in the darkness far away.

At last the low notes gently ceased, and she heard the sound of the closing keyboard, and she roused herself a little. She could have stayed there willingly for ever while he played, but it would not do to be locked in. She waited till the boy who had been blowing for him had clattered away with his hob-nailed boots, and then she rose and stole softly up the aisle, and laid her hand on Oliver's arm as he opened the chancel door in the darkness.

"Don't lock me in, please!" she said, trying to assume a natural tone.

"Nance!" He started. The moon was up, and had scattered the heavy clouds, and as they stood in the open doorway he could plainly see her sad, tear-stained face.

"I heard you playing, so I came in," she said hurriedly, and then passed him and flitted down the path.

It was freezing hard again, and the trodden snow was slippery under her feet.

"Take care—you will fall!" said Oliver, overtaking her at the gate. And then gently—

"Will you take my arm, Nance?"

She took it gratefully. She was cold and weary and the support was very welcome to her.

She could not tell what a tempest was raging in Oliver's heart, as he walked beside her, guiding her footsteps with watchful care.

"Nance," he said at last in a quiet, repressed voice, as he fancied he caught a low sob beside him, "I wanted to say one thing to you if you will let me."

"Yes?" said Nance listlessly.

"Do you think you can ever forgive me?"

"For what?" asked Nance, surprised.

"For persuading you to send him away to town. I have tried to keep it to myself. I did not mean ever to name the subject to you. But it lies upon me day and night that it was I who made you send him away—that this is all my doing ; and if I thought you did not absolutely hate me——"

The low, steady voice could get no further.

"Oliver! How can you say such things? If I had kept him here it would not have altered his character!" cried Nance. "That is the only comfort I have, that I did my best to make him the King he ought to have been. It does not lie with me that I made him waste his talents, and tempted him to prefer riches to honest work."

There was dead silence for a moment. Then Oliver said in a more natural voice—

"I never thought you would look at it like that. Thank God!"

"How else could I look at it?" asked Nance. "Do you suppose for one moment that I could think that you"—the proud confidence of that "you" fell upon Oliver's heart like balm—"that you would ever have persuaded me to do what was not best for myself as well as him? Please don't talk like that, Oliver! I think you are the only person I can trust now. That is the hardest part of it all, to have lost my trust," she ended, half to herself.

"It is hard enough to have lost trust in him," said

Oliver. "A man who had been my intimate friend for fifteen years, and on whose truth and honour I would have staked my own. But when it came to deceiving you—you, when I would have died to keep the least breath of misfortune from touching one hair of your head—it was almost more than man could bear!"

He spoke almost to himself, as if the words were forced from him against his will. They sent a thrill through Nance, that seemed in some way to communicate itself to him.

The next moment he was his sober, self-restrained self again.

"I beg your pardon, Nance," he said quite quietly. "I ought not to have said that; it can do no good, and might only distress you. I will not be so weak again, I promise you. As long as you are with us you are only my little second cousin still."

But Nance answered him never a word.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

MY LORD PROTECTOR.

"In life's delight, in death's dismay,
In storm and sunshine, night and day,
In health, in sickness, in decay,
Here, and hereafter, I am thine!"

NANCE caught a bad cold by her long walk and lingering in the church, and was shut up in her room for two or three days. She did not seem to mind it much; she liked being nursed and petted and made much of, and it was very pleasant to lie on her sofa by the bright fire, while the storm-winds howled and clashed the leafless branches of the trees together without. She was very glad, too, to have a little time to rest and collect her thoughts before she met Oliver again. She went over his words again and again in her own mind, wondering at them more and more. It was impossible to disbelieve them, or to explain them away, and they shed a new light upon the past winter, at which Nance marvelled. He loved her. He, her great, strong cousin, her hero, as she knew now he had been for long unconsciously, he could care for a foolish, frivolous little person like herself. If any one but himself had said so, she would have declared it impossible.

Maud, her great worshipper, used to spend all her evenings in Nance's room. First she had her work to prepare with Nance's help, and then they talked. When she looked back on their conversations in after-days, Maud discovered that they had always been about Oliver. In spite of her constant gibes at the Puritans, Maud was at heart very fond and proud of her brother, and she would talk about him willingly to an appreciative listener. She was less reserved than Phyllis by nature, and she discussed him openly in a way that no other member of the family would ever have done.

"Do you think he minded giving up the army much?" Nance asked her one evening.

Maud nodded. "Awfully! His whole heart was set on it; he always meant to be a soldier. But when papa was so ill there was no one to see to anything, and I don't know what would have happened if he hadn't come home. But he is a regular soldier by nature, you know. When the first accounts of those Egyptian battles came, and every one else was saying how dreadful they were, all Noll said was, 'I wish I had been there.' He was just pining to be in the army then."

"It seems rather hard," said Nance.

"Yes, I think it was," said Maud, huddled up on the rug and gazing into the fire. "But then Noll always takes the hard part of everything; it's a little way he's got. I should like something awfully nice to happen to him some day," went on Maud reflectively. "Something that he really wanted to happen. But then you never do know what Noll wants, that's the worst of him."

Yes, that was true enough. It had never occurred to Nance what he wanted all this time; and now she knew, the knowledge half pleased, half frightened her. But somehow from that time forth she quite ceased to think about Charlie as having any special connection with herself.

She was a little shy of going downstairs again, half afraid of meeting Oliver again. But she made her first appearance when they were all gathered in the library together, and his manner was just the same as usual—kind and cousinly—and put her completely at her ease. She had been very much missed during her temporary seclusion, and there was quite a fuss made over her when she appeared in public again. Nance enjoyed it thoroughly; she took kindly to any amount of petting; and to find that Mr. Danesford had missed her music dreadfully, gave her a delightful sensation of being of use.

"What should we do without you?" said Phyllis twenty times a day as the long cold spring crept on.

It was strange not to be always running up to the Court and having Clare in and out of the Manor. The Court was virtually closed to them just now, for they never saw much of Mr. Helmsley at any time, and Mrs. Stuart was gone to Brighton to stay with her son. Charlie and Gertrude had settled on a house in town, and were very busy over furniture and trousseau. Charlie's facile pencil was called into requisition as often to design artistic gowns as to illustrate some idea of decorating a room.

But Nance filled Clare's place to the best of her ability, and the very dissimilarity of their dispositions made her and Phyllis firmer friends. She had quite recovered her spirits again, and as Mr. Danesford improved day by day, she kept them all alive with her fun and nonsense. She had no more fear of Oliver now; she teased and joked him with the rest, and he responded more than he used to do. Sometimes she

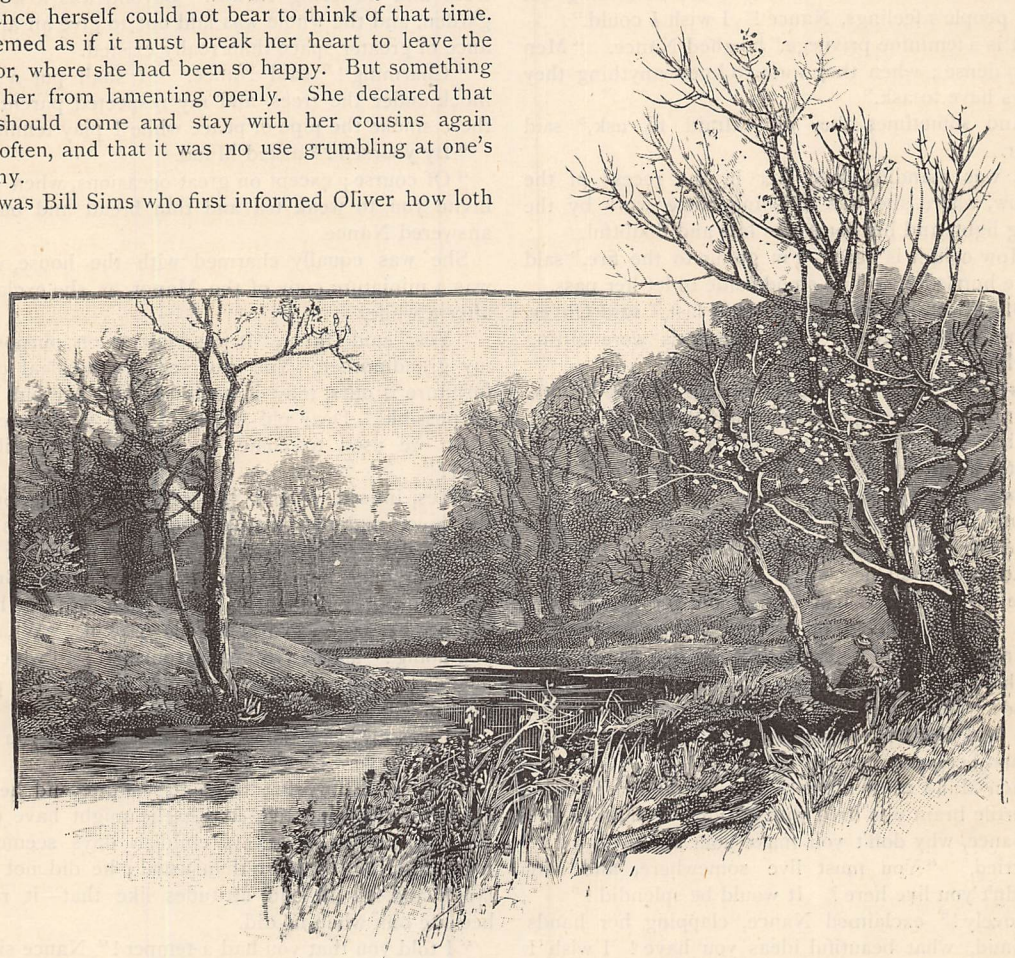
wondered to herself whether he had quite forgotten his words on that snowy walk; and then at others she knew he had not, and wondered at him for his self-control.

By-and-by arose another question: "What shall we do when you are gone?" which was the constant cry after Nance had received a letter from her father saying he should be home by the end of April.

Nance herself could not bear to think of that time. It seemed as if it must break her heart to leave the Manor, where she had been so happy. But something kept her from lamenting openly. She declared that she should come and stay with her cousins again very often, and that it was no use grumbling at one's destiny.

It was Bill Sims who first informed Oliver how loth

"Yes, I know, sir," said Bill. "But I told her how sorry I should be when she went, and she says, 'Not more sorry than I shall be, Bill,' she says. And I says, 'Perhaps you'll miss the country, miss, though it isn't much to look at, at this time of year.' And she says, quite sharp-like, 'Stoke Danesford is the loveliest place in the world at any time of year,' and I



"SLOPED DOWN TO THE LITTLE RIVER AT ITS FOOT" (*p.* 47).

Nance was to go, when he gave him with pride his completed pair of socks at last.

"My good fellow, you never made these yourself!" said Oliver, in surprise.

"Most of them," nodded Bill. "But Miss Prescott taught me how, and," he added, with a noble effort after honesty, "I dare say there's as much of her work in them as mine.

"She is a nice young lady. I shall be sorry when she goes," went on Bill, as Oliver surveyed the socks with a gratification most pleasing to the donor's mind. "So will she, I reckon."

"I don't suppose she will be very sorry; she is going to make a home for her father now, you know," said Oliver.

thought for a minute she was going to cry; but there, she was laughing at me for holding the pins wrong, in a flash-like. I do like to hear her laugh."

Oliver nodded, and got up to go. "Well, good-bye, Bill," he said. "I shall keep these socks in lavender, they are too good to wear."

"Keep them for your wedding-day, sir," suggested Bill, by way of a joke.

"Perhaps I will, if I ever have one," answered Oliver.

Not long ago he would have said that he never meant to marry.

He thanked Nance afterwards for her share of the work, and accused her of stealing Bill's affections from him.

Nance only laughed. "Now you must give him half a dozen pairs to make," she said. "He is so delighted at the prospect of earning a little money. He has so felt being dependent on his mother all this time, poor fellow."

"Has he?" said Oliver. "I never thought of that. I only thought about giving him something to do to pass the time. How clever you are at finding out other people's feelings, Nance! I wish I could."

"It is a feminine privilege," laughed Nance. "Men are so dense; when they want to know anything they always have to ask."

"And sometimes they are afraid to ask," said Oliver.

He was standing near her in the recess of the window, where she was finishing some work by the fading light, and his voice was low and doubtful.

"How cold it is here! I'm going to the fire," said Nance hurriedly, and he stood aside to let her pass.

"Old Miss Mackinnon is dead at last," said Oliver, coming into the room where the girls were sitting next day.

"Is she? Then the Dower House will be empty. Shall you let it again, Oliver?" said Phyllis.

"That depends upon whether we get a desirable tenant," answered Oliver. "It wouldn't do to have anybody there."

Nance looked up as if about to speak, but she altered her mind, and went on trimming a hat with artistic bows in silence.

The Dower House had been built for Mr. Danesford's mother, and stood near the entrance-gate of the Manor. It had a pretty little garden of its own, and there was a door communicating with the Manor grounds, which had been locked ever since the house had been let to a very quiet old maiden lady, who had been paralysed of late years.

When Maud came home and heard the intelligence, her fertile brain was fired with an idea at once.

"Nance, why don't you make your father take it?" she cried. "You must live somewhere, and why shouldn't you live here? It would be splendid!"

"Lovely!" exclaimed Nance, clapping her hands —"Maud, what beautiful ideas you have! I wish I had your head! Do you think we should be desirable tenants?"

"Certainly you would," said Phyllis decisively— "most desirable. I shall tell Oliver that you are to have the refusal of it."

The idea gained favour on all sides: no one wanted to lose Nance, and she certainly did not want to go. Only Oliver took it so very quietly that Phyllis asked him privately if he had any objections to the plan.

"No, not I!" he said hastily. "I was only thinking, you know, that by-and-by, when they are all back at the Court, perhaps Nance mightn't like it."

Phyllis considered the point and took a furtive glance at her brother, as Oliver elaborately arranged some papers on his desk. "My private opinion is," she remarked, "that Nance won't mind that a bit."

"You mean that she won't show that she minds?"

"No, I don't. I believe that she wouldn't mind meeting Charlie to-morrow," and Phyllis promptly withdrew, after incautiously mentioning the forbidden name.

A few days afterwards they went in a body to view the Dower House. Oliver's key admitted them through the door in the wall into a pretty garden, with a lawn large enough for tennis, and shaded by trees and flowering shrubs. Beyond was a kitchen-garden, and the whole was laid out to give an appearance of greater space than really existed.

"Charming!" said Nance. "I shall put a hammock under the trees, and my respected parent shall there smoke the pipe of peace while I play tennis."

"By yourself?" asked Maud.

"Of course; except on great occasions, when I will invite you to weak tea and thin bread and butter," answered Nance.

She was equally charmed with the house, which was a miniature copy of the Manor, as she exclaimed after a while.

"Yes," said Oliver, "it was built so on purpose for my grandmother. You can see a good deal of the furniture is ours, too; it was all as like her old home as possible. Dear old Granny! Do you remember when we used to come to tea here as children, Phil?"

"Yes, indeed. Can't you see Noll sitting out on the lawn making daisy chains?" said Phyllis mischievously. There was a lovely story against him, too, that once he came to dinner here and Granny gave him a pudding he didn't like, so he began without hesitation to roll up his napkin. 'What are you doing?' asked Granny, astonished; to which the offended youth replied, 'I'm going home. I'm packing up.'"

"I was always a person of determination, you see," laughed Oliver.

They were lingering upon the stairs, and he was sitting on the balustrade as Charlie might have done. The remembrance of his childish days seemed to make him unbend more than usual; he did not often laugh and sit in odd attitudes like that—it rather became him when he did.

"I told you that you had a temper!" Nance sighed over him, standing higher up the stairs.

"When did you ever say so?"

"Twenty-four hours after I first had the pleasure of seeing you. But I little thought you would ever show it to an aged grandparent!"

"Well, you are only taking hearsay evidence now," said Oliver.

"Never mind! You'll show it to me next, and then I shall pack up and go. Come and show me the rest of the house now."

The house was considered in every way most suitable to a quiet old gentleman and his daughter, as Nance put it; and it formed the foundation of many plans. They quite settled that Colonel Prescott must like it, and they made all sorts of charming arrangements for the summer. Oliver was required to set gardeners to work at once to please Nance's taste, and he began to paper and

paint with a constant reference to her judgment and desires.

The bitter cold weather lasted right into April, and then, after a day of wind and snow, suddenly the sun came out, the white covering vanished from the ground like magic, and all the world awoke to know that it was spring.

Nance and Phyllis spent the whole afternoon in wandering in different directions, to see if wild flowers for Easter might possibly lurk in secluded corners. Nance rambled far, but with little success, and towards five o'clock she sat down to rest after her labours in a very favourite spot of hers. A wide field, scattered over with trees, sloped down to the little river at its foot, and on the further side the park-like meadows stretched away to the old red Manor deep in its sheltering woods.

"Nance! You are surely not sitting on that damp wood?"

Nance looked up laughing. She had felt idly picturesque singing to herself on her felled log. No one but Oliver would have made such a prosaic remark at such a moment.

"Thanks, I am not a lunatic yet!" she said demurely. "I have a mackintosh with me; you can share it if you like."

Oliver accepted the invitation, and sat down beside her.

Nance began openly to sing

"'Little Miss Muffet——'"

"Do you wish the great spider to go?" asked Oliver.

"No, but he must be amusing. See!" and she held out two fragile primroses and their leaves.

Nance looked very pretty and winsome in her long fur boa, and with a very becoming hat. She had a lapful of ivy-sprays, and she had stuck a bunch of palm and catkins into the front of her gown. She looked the embodiment of smiling spring, as her dark grey eyes laughed up at Oliver. But he did not laugh back again; he was leaning forward and prodding holes in the ground with his stick.

"How did you find me?" she asked.

"I came out to look for you, and I saw you over the gate, so I came into the field."

There was something wrong, Nance concluded, but it was no use hurrying Oliver, so she merely remarked—

"Where have you been?"

"Over near Abinger on business, and I stayed to lunch with some friends."

"Nice people?"

"I haven't much opinion of their intellect. They take in that idiotic paper, the *Daily Post*, which has nothing in it but reports of fashionable engagements and marriages, as far as I could see."

Nance jumped to a conclusion.

"Then I suppose that Charlie's engagement is announced, and the wedding-day fixed?" she said calmly.

"Yes," said Oliver.

Nance folded her arms upon her knees, and gazed across the shining water to the old red house in the distance. The wedding-day fixed! It seemed to make all the past very vivid, and the sudden return of nature to a state of things more resembling those early autumn days deepened the impression. She sat lost in thought. She had forgotten Oliver; no one ever troubled to talk for his entertainment. His voice roused her from her dreams at last.

"Nance!"

She turned, met his eyes, and her own dropped. She could see what he thought, that this forcing her to realise what had happened could still cause her pain.

"I am very glad it is settled," she said. "I hope they will be very happy. I think Gertrude will make him a good wife."

Oliver made no reply.

"When I look back on it now," went on Nance slowly, still gazing across the river, "it seems as if it had been more my fault than his. I drew him away from Gertrude to begin with; I only meant it for fun, but it was no fun to her. She loved him always, but I never did."

"Nance, you don't mean that!"

"Yes, I do; I thought I loved him just for a little while, but——"

Nance did not finish her sentence. "I did not know then what love meant," she would have said if she had.

"Nance dear, I promised you that while you were still with us I would only be a cousin to you. I was only waiting till your father came home to say something to you. May I say it now?"

Her silence gave consent.

"You know I love you, Nance; I always did. If you really never cared for him"—even now he could not bring himself to name Charlie—"will you tell me if there is any chance for me?"

The plain, simple question, so different from Charlie's honeyed words that might mean much or little, as he chose, went straight to Nance's heart. She turned a little and held out her hand—

"Oh, Oliver, you know!" she said, and waited, as usual, for him to help her.

He took her hand in both his, and looked at her with his true grey eyes; it had never struck her before how beautiful they were.

"Nance dear, I love you," he said simply. "Do you mean that you love me?"

And Nance answered him truly, "Yes!"

"You know there is nobody in the world like you," she said presently. "No! let me say it," as he tried to speak. "I have wanted to tell you so before. I was so foolish when I came here. I was just a silly little butterfly, thinking of nothing but fun and amusing myself, and it amused me to draw Charlie away from Gertrude, so I did it, and then I was pleased with myself. But it served me right to be punished for it, for I was only indulging my vanity all the time. I never was really satisfied, and that was your doing, for I wanted my King to prove himself kingly, and I tried to persuade myself that he would. Now I know that I was asking too much of him,

because he could never come up to the standard I had set myself, and that was—my true King!"

"Darling, I am not half good enough for you!"

"Nor I for you! So we are quits."

"You are my Queen," said Oliver; and it was the first pretty speech he had ever made.

"And you my Lord Protector!" whispered Nance.

She had loved dearly to queen it with Charlie, she had always felt his equal, sometimes his better genius; but with Oliver it was so different, she felt so young and weak beside him. What she wanted was to feel that his strength and protection were to be hers henceforth.

"But oh, Oliver, the Dower House!" she said suddenly.

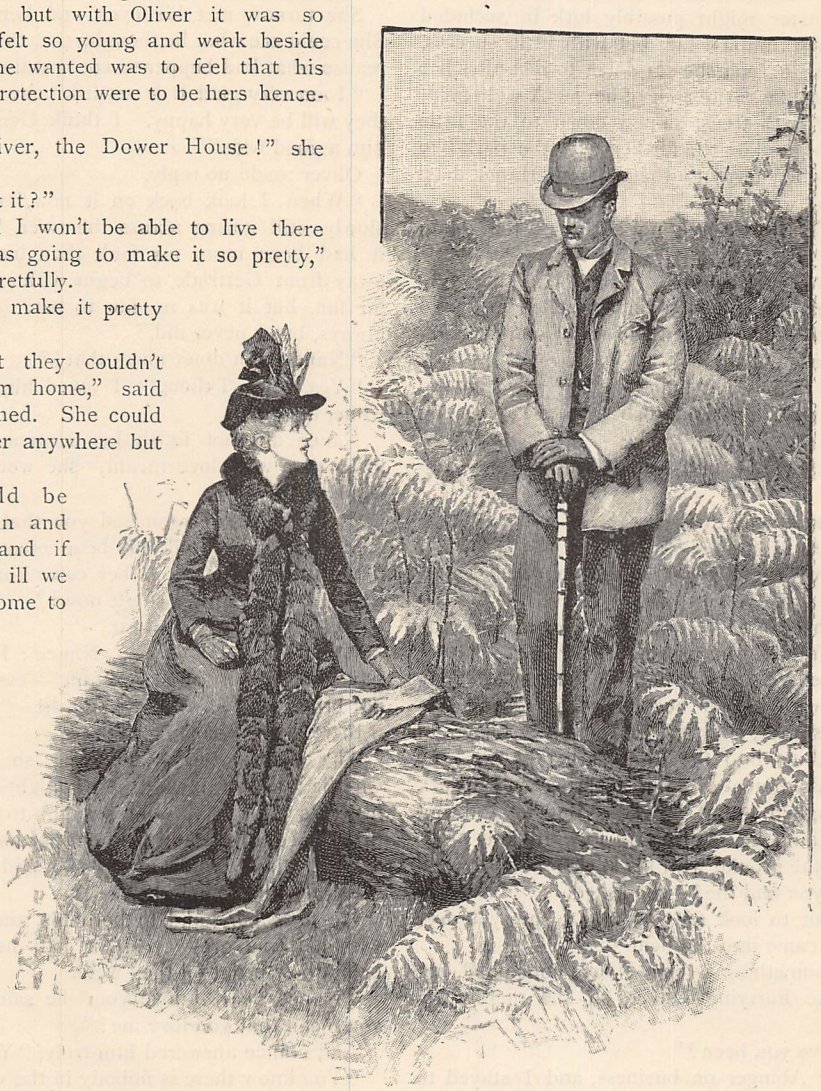
"What about it?"

"Father and I won't be able to live there now, and I was going to make it so pretty," said Nance regretfully.

"Won't you make it pretty for me?"

"You! But they couldn't spare you from home," said Nance, astonished. She could not fancy Oliver anywhere but at the Manor.

"We should be close by, and in and out all day, and if my father was ill we could go up home to



"NANCE LOOKED UP LAUGHING" (*p.* 47).

stay, but my wife is going to be mistress in her own house."

And when Oliver spoke in that tone no one ever resisted him. Nance did not now. The Dower House for herself and Oliver! It was a dream of bliss.

"Only Mr. Danesford will never forgive me for taking you away," she said.

"He will gladly let me go that little distance—with you! Haven't you found out, little Nance, that it is the desire of his heart that you should be what he calls you, his third daughter?"

Nance blushed for pride and joy. "Every one is much too kind to me," she said. "I wonder what my father will say to us?"

"He can't say what we should have said, that he will miss you. And to tell the honest truth, I never expected that he would care to settle down here in the country. He would be much happier in town among his own friends."

"Do you know," said Nance, "I think Hugh will be so glad."

"Dear old chap! I am sure he will. Nance, do you know, I think he guessed all along what we all felt really. He told me before he left that he was sure you did not really care for Charlie."

"And he advised me to turn Puritan!" laughed

Nance. "Oh, Hugh is very clever, only he will be so absurd over it."

"It's a very good thing he is," said Oliver. "I should have been as dull as an owl if I hadn't had Hugh to mock at me at intervals. You will have to do it now, Nance, or I shall get too stupid."

But Nance was thinking deeply. At last she said—

"I want you to do something for my sake, Oliver."

He looked at her grave face in surprise.

"Yes, dear?" he said.

"I want you to forgive Charlie, and make friends with him again."

Oliver's brow darkened. He could hardly refuse her, but he said nothing.

"It was all my fault that anything ever came between you, and I should like to make peace with him," went on Nance. "Of course we can't feel the same to him—we never could—but we might be ordinary friends again. You might forgive him now."

But even the tender little pleading hesitation of the last words could not soften Oliver. He shook his head.

"It is just as you said yourself, he has not altered his character. I know what he is now. He can never be my friend again."

"Then I shall pack up and go home!" said Nance, and rose suddenly. "I told you that you would show your temper to me before you had done!" she cried, pouting and laughing.

"When did you ever say I had a temper before, Nance?" asked Oliver, rising too.

"That day in the brake, driving home from the cricket match. Don't you remember? I did not say your name, but I meant you. Have you forgotten?"

"Is it likely?" he answered, and drawing out a pocket-book he produced a little strip of crimson cambric. "Did you ever see that before?"

Nance blushed for very happiness.

"Did you keep that all this time? But—but you did not care for me then?" she asked shyly.

"Did I not?" he asked. "Did I not love you from the moment I saw you?"

"Then you ought to be very happy now, and when we are very happy, Oliver, we ought to show we are grateful by forgiving others."

She laid a little hand upon his arm, and looked up at him with serious eyes.

Oliver's arm was round her in a moment. "Nance, you are an angel," he said.

"No, it is a leaf out of your own book," she answered.

"No, it is all your own; but you are right. I can forgive any one for anything while I have you, my own! Come, let us go home."

And they moved slowly away across the shining fields, "in that new world which is the old."

HOLIDAY FARE: INDOORS AND OUT.

"NO seaside trip this year, then: that is agreed; at the same time, we will enjoy ourselves, and do our best to economise in our housekeeping to counteract the extravagance of you good folks on the grand tour."

Beatrice French, the speaker, was a bright girl of eighteen, the idol of her three young brothers, who were to be entrusted to her care during the absence of their parents, who were quitting their native country for the first time, and joining some old friends in a visit to sunny France; and the two daughters of the said friends were to stay with Beatrice meanwhile, and were looking forward eagerly to the pleasant country visit, their own home being in a large manufacturing town; while the thought of meeting them, coupled with the pleasure of seeing her mother depart for her much-needed change, quite effaced any passing regret for the loss of her own annual outing from Beatrice's mind.

When the eventful day arrived which brought the guests, a right merry party they were: full of plans for walks and talks, fishing and boating excursions, to say nothing of a modest garden party and picnic. Lastly, the dinners were discussed; and as Myra, the elder of Beatrice's friends, had acquired a practical knowledge of cookery, both English and foreign, she offered to give her the benefit of her experience by catering for the first week; Frances, her sister, and Beatrice taking a turn afterwards, to which both agreed, "if only Myra would act as honorary consulting cook," and help them through any difficulties. Frances's suggestion that notes should be made of the most successful of their dishes was voted a good one, and the boys promised to act as judges, and to earn their fare by bringing home some good catches of fish.

"Do," said Beatrice: "for particularly I want Myra to show me some nice ways of cooking fish. She is *au fait* in that line, also in preparing vegetables; and she is quite delighted at the prospect of having access to an unlimited supply of fresh herbs."

"That I am," said Myra, who had just come in from a stroll round the garden; "and our dinner to-day shall prove my partiality, as I mean it to include *Summer Soup* and *Stuffed Marrow*. The soup came to me *minus* a name, and some of my friends call it 'green soup'; but everybody likes it, and that is something." The mode was very simple:—A quart of water and a good bunch of parsley, and a sprig each of thyme, marjoram, and fennel, with a few tarragon leaves, were boiled for half an hour, then the liquor strained

into another utensil, when some green peas, endive, lettuce, spinach (parboiled), and French beans, all finely shredded, were added in sufficient quantity; a morsel of sugar, salt, white pepper, and butter were also put in, and as soon as the vegetables were tender, the whole was passed through a hair sieve, then returned to the pan and re-heated, a little boiling milk and cream being stirred in at the last minute. This soup was served with a plate of fried bread cut into the tiniest possible dice. "If you are partial to a meaty flavour, leave out the milk and cream, and put in a little extract of meat or glaze," said Myra, "or simmer a bit of lean ham with the rest; but the pure vegetable flavour is what *I* think so pleasant, and you have the satisfaction of knowing that your dinner is acting as a blood-purifier."

The marrow, which had been split lengthwise and the seeds removed, had been filled with a forcemeat made of equal parts of bread-crumbs, minced bacon, and veal, there being a cold joint of the latter in the house; it was well seasoned with herbs, and "bound" with an egg beaten up with a spoonful of cream. This was then stewed with a little gravy made from the bones of the veal, and kept hot while the stock was thickened and flavoured; it was then poured round the marrow, and served at once. Cucumbers were very nice the same way, Myra told them, and if no bacon was available for the forcemeat, butter could be used, *not* suet—that should be reserved for dishes which need long cooking, suet being very indigestible *unless* well cooked.

Of the first catch of trout, some were stewed, and proved excellent eating. After being washed and dried, they were browned all over in a little hot butter, then simmered in a liquor made with a pint of water and a little vinegar or lemon-juice, a bay-leaf and a morsel of chopped onion being added to flavour; the gravy was thickened with corn-flour, seasoned, and poured round the fish. The remaining trout were wrapped in oiled papers, and baked, after first being immersed in vinegar for a few minutes, then dried. All agreed that both methods were great improvements on boiled trout.

"I've had a recipe given to me for making *Tomato Jelly*," said Myra, next day. "If you like, Beatrice, I'll make a little; it is delicious with cold meat of all kinds." All hailed the proposition with delight, and the girls carefully watched Myra's nimble fingers tearing into pieces the ripest fruit she could find, which she just covered with water, and set in a jar in the oven until it was pulpy. After draining through a clean cloth, she measured the juice and added loaf-sugar in the proportion of fourteen ounces to each pint; then boiled them together quickly in a preserving-kettle until a little poured on a plate immediately jellied. Careful skimming and a clear fire being very necessary, the girls made a special note of them.

A novel form of *Fish Pie* was then suggested by Myra, which was quite as enjoyable eaten cold as hot—that she considered a great recommendation in preparing summer dinners, as it lessened the cooking, and she knew that a tasty cold dish is often more acceptable to the palate on a sultry day than the most expensive hot one. For this, soles were chosen, though, as Myra explained, any kind of white fish was equally suitable. The bones and dark skin being first removed, the fish, about two pounds, was cut into pieces of a convenient size, and piled in a dish, each piece being sprinkled with salt, pepper, lemon-juice, chopped capers, and parsley. A teaspoonful of flour, a couple of eggs, and half a pint of milk were then beaten in a basin, and poured over the fish, a thin flaky crust laid on, and the pie baked in a quick oven.

"Why must it be white fish?" inquired one of the girls.

"Because," said Myra, "the eggs and milk form, when cold, a savoury custard, and if you used oily fish—salmon for instance—it would be too rich for most people. And speaking of oily fish reminds me of a nice way of cooking mackerel. Remove the backbones of two, spread the inner side with veal stuffing, well seasoned with herbs, press them together, and bake them about half an hour. You may either cover them with a greased paper or baste them occasionally with a little fat. If to be eaten hot, make a gravy in the tin, and flavour it with vinegar, or tomato or mushroom ketchup, or they are delicious eaten cold with lemon-juice or vinegar."

"Thanks," said Beatrice; "and will you show me how to make a good tomato sauce? Father says ours always tastes too much of the water; but he is wrong, for I know no *water* is added."

"Perhaps it is made too thin," said Myra. "No doubt your father means tomato purée. If you'll find half a dozen ripe tomatoes, you can make some in a short time, and it will be such a delicious addition to the poached eggs we decided upon for one of our dishes to-day; but if you will boil some macaroni it will be still better. It makes such a tempting-looking dish — the macaroni piled in the centre, the sauce poured round, and the eggs in a circle outside the sauce; or you can have boiled rice instead of the macaroni. But now for the *Purée*. *Break* the tomatoes up, and put them in the small enamelled pan with an ounce or so of butter, a good pinch of salt and pepper, and half a teaspoonful of white sugar; put the lid on, and let them cook very gently. They will take about twenty minutes; then you must pass them through the hair sieve."

"Is that all? that *is* easy," said Beatrice.

"Yes; but unless you could have found very ripe ones you must have added a little liquid—stock from bones, or a spoonful of gravy or vinegar. Of course, the dish with which you intend serving it must guide you in the seasoning. Sometimes bay-leaves and other herbs are added, but you will find *that* very good."

"Oh! and Frances wants to make 'a sort of pie,' as she calls it, which she saw you concoct once. She says it wants no cooking. What can it be?"

"I think she means a lobster pie," said Myra. "I suppose, from Frances asking this, that, instead of you two taking a turn each, you are more inclined to work together now my week has ended?"

"Yes; we agreed between ourselves to do so, and make the most of our time," replied Beatrice.

"Very well; then suppose *you* set to work on the pie, while Frances prepares the veal, which we shall stew for dinner to-morrow."

Beatrice was then told to cut up the contents of a tin of lobster in small pieces.

"Don't shred it, or it will eat tough," said Myra; "and season it with a little vinegar (a few drops of which should be tarragon), a pickled gherkin cut small, and a teaspoonful of essence of anchovies." The lobster was then packed tightly in a small deep pie-dish, and the top covered with mustard-and-cress, shredded lettuce, and minced cucumber, which had been dressed with oil, vinegar, and pepper in the usual way. "Now for the garnish," Myra went on. "You want two eggs boiled hard; the whites you can chop up, the yolks should be passed through the hair sieve and sprinkled all over with a little green stuff—anything you like, cress, parsley, capers, or gherkins, and, when obtainable, a few strips of beetroot are very effective in addition. For ordinary occasions you will find this pie very good, even *minus* the eggs." And so it proved.

"I am glad we thought of the veal," continued Myra. "It will be as nice this way as if braised in a braising-pan proper, which few people have, though, in England. It is a good way of cooking in hot weather, too—it takes so little fire, for the slower it cooks the better." A thick slice from a fillet of veal was then laid on the table, and spread with a forcemeat, to which some chopped mushrooms had been added. It was then rolled up and tied with tape, and laid in a stewpan with an assortment of fresh vegetables at the bottom. Some stock (made from the shank on the previous day) was poured over, the lid put on, and the whole stewed gently for three hours. While Frances dished it and placed some rolls of broiled bacon round the dish, Beatrice strained the stock into a clean pan, thickened it with a little brown roux, and then poured it round the meat.

"It looks very good," said Myra; "but any time you want a little extra garnish, place slices of lemon between the rolls of bacon, or, if you have mushrooms in the stuffing, as to-day, some button mushrooms fried or broiled would be suitable."

"Why not use the vegetables?" asked Beatrice.

"Oh, they have parted with their goodness: the meat has absorbed it. If you ever add any they must be freshly-boiled ones—carrots and turnips cut into dice are suitable—then you can add the trimmings to the stewpan first. It is an economical plan."

Dinner in a wood close by had been arranged for the following day—just a homely picnic, the party consisting of the young people and some old school-fellows. Nothing elaborate was to be provided, but "a nice plain summer dinner," as the girls called it. A collared tongue was in readiness, and Beatrice expressed regret that it could not be glazed. "But I know there is no glaze," she said.

"But," replied Myra, "I know that both gelatine and extract of meat are in the cupboard, so we are quite independent of glaze. I often make some like this," putting, as she spoke, half an ounce of gelatine in half a pint of water. "That is the first thing; let this soak for an hour or so, then stir it over the fire until dissolved, and put in a teaspoonful of extract of meat, and you can give the tongue two or three coats—using the pastry-brush—but let each one get dry before you add the next. And, if you like, you can treat the chicken in the same way. You know we did bone it before it was boiled, and the bones are simmering now, and as soon as the stock is reduced to a teacupful or thereabouts it will do."

"Any gelatine?" was the inquiry.

"Yes, just a little," said Myra, "as the weather is so warm; in cold weather it would set without. Now, you had better commence your sweets, and there will be nothing left for the morning but the salad. We can boil the vegetables to-night, for I think you said you would like a vegetable salad?"

"Yes, it will be a change," said Beatrice; and the result of their labours was a very delicious dish, consisting of *cooked* green peas, kidney beans, cauliflower divided into sprigs, and sliced potatoes; the *uncooked* portion being composed of tomatoes and cucumber sliced, lettuce and endive, cress and radishes, and a little tarragon and chervil, the dressing being taken in a wide-necked bottle to pour over just before serving.

"What a mixture this salad is!" was the remark of one of the boys.

"Yes; thanks to the garden. If we had had to buy all the ingredients we must have left some out, I dare say," was Myra's reply.

The sweets proved a success, though inexpensive; one, a *Chocolate Pyramid*, being especially enjoyed, for which a quart of milk, a little sugar, two ounces of rice flour, two ounces of good chocolate, half an ounce of gelatine, and some essence of vanilla had been used, and the whole piled rockily in a glass dish just as it was beginning to set.

A *Chartreuse of Pineapple* was made from one of the delicious tinned pines now so easily obtainable, the fruit being cut up and simmered awhile in the syrup, with just enough gelatine to set it, a little being poured on a plate by way of test. This was poured into a "border mould," and turned out when set, the hollow space in the centre being filled up with whipped cream. No other sweets were provided, save fruit compôtes with custard, and a junket.

The day was an enjoyable one; and in the evening the three girls regretfully discussed the parting which was imminent, although Beatrice was rejoicing in the prospect of paying a return visit to the home of Myra and Frances, who suggested that she should come at Christmas and assist them in preparing for one or two little festivities in which they hoped to indulge. Beatrice gladly assented, as she was quite willing to combine pleasure with profit for the second time.

The Wild Peasant

"And he's the King, and I'm the Clown – What of That?"

* * *

"He has his Armies and his Ships: great are they –
But not a Child to kiss his Lips, Well-a-day!

* * *

If happy I, and wretched he,
Perchance the King would change with me?"

(Favourite Song.)

"O, Words of Bitter, Bitter Truth!"
The Monarch said, "O, Facts that Sting!"
For he had been, from early Youth,
Almost impressionable King;
Although, in fact, his Lifetime Long,
It must be owned that he had not
Suspected, ere he heard the Song,
The Weary Sadness of his Lot.

Yet now, with scalding tears that blind,
One moment musingly he stood;
Then burst upon the singing Hind
And cried "Indeed, indeed I would!
Be thine my Crown — be mine thy Cot:
Be mine the Joy, and thine the Care!"
The Peasant hesitated not,
But closed the Bargain then and there.

The Hasty Monarch did not seem
To wholly grasp his New-Born Bliss,
But murmured, half as in a Dream,
"I was not quite prepared for this!
I felt convinced the Swain would Scout
My Throne, in his Contentment-Cult —
I craved Poetic Thrills without
This most Embarrassing Result."

And Men discussed from Zone to Zone,
With all the Praise such Deeds awaken,
The Grandly-Philosophic Tone
That marked the Step the King had taken.
While he adopted, with a Sigh,
The Widowed Peasant's Hungry Brood,
And watched their Parent riding By,
In Most Unenviable Mood.

And once he cried "O, New-Made King,
I mark thee inly pining, grieved
By novel Cares of State — (A Thing
Which other Folk had not perceived) —
I see thee smile, yet yearn to cast
A Burden borne to give Me bliss:
Come, take thy Cot as in the Past."
But Colin would not hear of this.

* * *

Yet seven Times the former King
Exclaimed "Enough, O Loyal Heart!
Thou art Released: once more I'll bring
Myself to bear the Regal Part":
Yet, spite of Argument's Resource
And kind Persuasion's best Device,
The Hind persisted in his Course
Of Resolute Self-Sacrifice.

And when the Other hinted Force
To bring his Generous Ends about
Strange Men-at-arms did not endorse,
And New-Fledged Ushers showed him out

* * *

And now that Quoted Song he sings
In studiously Ragged Dress,
To try its Force on Other Kings —
But not, as yet, with Marked Success.

J. F. S.

HOW TO ENJOY A HOLIDAY.

IT is obviously true that holidays are best enjoyed when they follow a period of work more or less hard. The very contrast from a routine of labour, whether by head or hand, is in itself an enjoyment. Liberty—that is the first delightful feeling when the desk-lid is closed down not to be opened for three weeks, or the school girl or boy turn their back upon lessons. Just the sensation that they need not be awoke from their slumbers at the usual hour the next morning, and that the ordinarily busy minutes will be at their own disposal, has a charm that for the first few days is sufficient in itself. Never mind the weather, never mind the fact that the lodgings by the seaside are not all they desired; they have nothing to do, and can please themselves.

But after a couple of days or so this delight palls, and people want something besides it to make the holiday a success. The seaside place affords them a variety of occupations, and on fine days they are independent of any suggestions of this paper. Wet days, however, will come, or a trifling illness confine you to the house; and it is for this contingency that I would offer a few hints. Always start for your holiday with some occupation to fall back upon. It is all very well to say, "Oh, we shall read nothing but novels at the sea," or in the country, for, except to a mind vitiated by the excessive reading of novels—however good—and nothing else, this line of reading will weary.

Wise as it is very often to lay aside all mental work in the way of study, it is very dreary to have nothing to read but novels if you have many hours in the house when you cannot go out.

Whatever may be your special attraction in the way of study, it is well to have some book on it in your trunk; still better is it if you, on your holiday, intend to pursue your favourite hobby, and gather fresh information with regard to it. Then, any spare hours in the house will be welcome, for you will have your dried flowers to classify and arrange, or your geological specimens to sort, or your aquarium to see after; and the time that otherwise would be on your hands will quickly fly thus filled up. Besides these, there are many things which can be done during holiday-time.

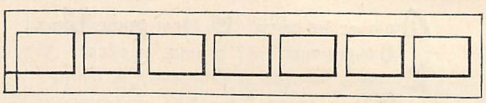
Often when Christmas is near, and demands are made for Christmas gifts for the poor, an excuse is ready, and often true enough, that there is not time to make anything. When away at a seaside or country place where you will be established for a few weeks, it will be well if you can take some materials to work up in view of Christmas. Certainly it will add to your luggage; and materfamilias, thinking despairingly of the already large array of boxes being emptied and made ready to be packed for the journey in prospect, thinks with alarm of an addition to it.

However, if she is clever, she will manage to pack other things closer, and have one box filled with materials for occupation on the inevitable rainy days. How often she will be thankful for having done this, I leave to her adoption of the plan to discover.

Fancy and plain work for the girls, and materials for making nicknacks, will be very useful; and scrap-books, always easily made, are a never-ending source of pleasure to children, who take to pasting as flies take to honey.

Cheap scrap-books can easily be had, and pretty scraps are very inexpensive. Then, you can take old magazines and Christmas cards to be cut out and used. Paste need not be boiled, and sticks just as well if made with plain flour and water. A very good way of using up old *stout* post-cards is to make scrap-books out of them.

This is easily done by cutting a length of glazed calico twice the width of a post-card, and then laying the post-cards, slightly pasted—enough to make them adhere to the calico—at intervals of a quarter of an inch each; the cards to be placed in the centre of the calico, thus—



Then cut out the corner marked, and turning over the calico, paste it down neatly, and fold the book back like a screen. When dry, the scraps can be pasted on; if the writing shows through, it can be completely hidden by a larger picture. But if dark red or dark green calico is used, the writing is rarely seen through, and never enough to be legible.

Larger-sized scrap-books can be made on precisely the same principle, by cutting out pieces of cardboard and laying them on calico. Three or four sections can be used, or more if preferred. At drapers' shops they will often gladly give you the pieces of millboard used for rolling stockings upon, and these make excellent scrap-books. All these are made, as will be seen, at very small cost, and at Christmas-time will often have a welcome for prizes and Christmas-trees.

When the holiday is taken by going abroad, and perhaps in wandering from place to place, it must be enjoyed in a different way. But all the same, to have some provision against a rainy day at an hotel, where perhaps there are no congenial people, is an immense boon. So that I should advise some books and work taken as weapons of war against dulness.

In taking a holiday abroad, it must be remembered

that some knowledge of the language of the country adds very considerably to both pleasure and profit of the time. In view of this, if some winter evenings were spent in learning the language of the country which you propose visiting in the summer or autumn, you would find the benefit to be very great indeed.

As far as my memory is right, it was Lord Bacon who said that he who goes to travel without some knowledge of the language, goes to school, and not to travel. How much pleasure is lost by English people abroad who cannot understand or make themselves understood! So much is shut off from them. Seated next a foreigner at a *table d'hôte* or in a train, if they can speak his language, how much they may learn from him, and how pleasant their intercourse may be! for friction with those of other countries always does the insular mind a great deal of good.

However little you may know of a language, it is best to speak it, and not at once look out for an interpreter or an English-speaking waiter. Put self-consciousness in your pocket, and if you desire to learn, be prepared to make mistakes, and do not be conceitedly surprised if you do. Little as you understand and can speak the foreign language, you will acquire more by airing what you know in the country than many books and lessons can teach you.

The enjoyment of a holiday will be very greatly added to if you can read up beforehand the history of the places you are going to visit. There are so many handbooks now of art and architecture that no one need plead ignorance; and all you have read will make your travelling doubly interesting to yourself and others. If you have not time to do this before your holiday, then take a few books with you; they are quite worth the weight, and will also provide you with a resource on those days when you are weather-bound.

Of course there are the two extremes. There are the people who make a toil of a pleasure, and in travelling are never seen without a book in their hands. You will notice them in the train as you are speeding through magnificent scenery, busy reading up the history of the town to which they are bound, instead of sensibly looking out of the window and filling their minds with lovely pictures of nature that would be as a mental gallery to them when back again at work. But, no. They rarely look up, and on the Rhine they miss all the beautiful scenery, for they are too much occupied reading about each castle they pass. As there are a good many, their time is pretty well filled up.

On the Righi, too, where from the height on which you stand you have one of the most glorious views earth has to offer, it is pitiful to see these people carefully identifying the names of the mountains by consulting the map, to which their eyes are wandering, from mountain to map, quite regardless of the wonderful scene Nature is asking them to look at.

The other extreme are the people who travel in utter ignorance of anything of the places they come to. They pick out a little from their guide-book, and vainly rummage in the back regions of their brains to unearth any half-forgotten learning they acquired in their schooldays. They wander through the finest galleries of Europe, conscious that there is a great deal that must be interesting, but their uncultivated minds and untrained eyes fail to indicate the where. Whereas the simplest text-books on art, history, architecture, &c., however elementary they may be, do open the windows and let in light sufficient to make the reader feel that he has something to guide him, and his interest grows as well as his knowledge deepens.

A holiday spent thus is real recreation, and does mind and body alike good. New ideas have been gained, fresh knowledge acquired, and varied impressions absorbed.

And as a parting suggestion: as a souvenir of your holiday, if you purchase photographs and views, do not shut them up in a book. Have them framed, however inexpensively—and a few large pictures are worth a great many small ones—and be reminded in your every-day life of the beauty and magnificent scenery you so enjoyed in your holiday. A holiday when over is not done with, and is one of those things that sometimes we often enjoy most by retrospection.

But even if you do not act upon the suggestions in this paper, there is one thing you must try and find room for in your luggage—that is, good temper. Without this, it would need a miracle for you to be able to enjoy your holiday.

THE TALE OF A TRIAL TRIP.

A PEEP AT THE NORFOLK BROADS.

WE were seated at breakfast, my wife and I, one morning late in the summer—I beg to state that the summer was late, not we ourselves; we were in good time—when a note was put down by the servant close to my coffee-cup.

"What's this, Anne?" I asked, pausing.

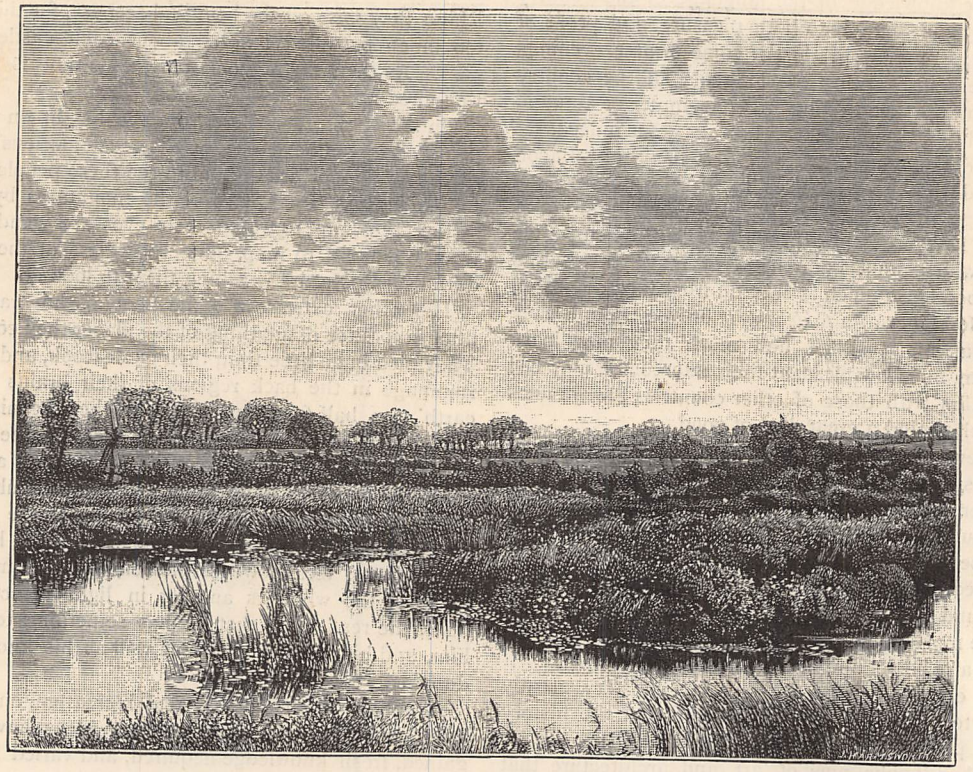
"Mrs. Madden's servant brought it, sir. She didn't wait for an answer."

[Why will some people speak of the servants, the carriages, and even the houses of married couples as Mrs. So-and-So's? Has not the husband and bread-winner a title to them?]

"What is it about, dear?" asked my wife.

"Oh! Madden wants to know if we would like to join him and his wife and daughter in a little trip."

"Where to?" asked my better-half. "We can't go abroad: at least, *I* can't leave the children. You will



WROXHAM BROAD.

(*From a photograph by Mr. Payne Jennings.*)

be an even number without me. I'll stay at home, Alfred."

"Oh, it's only into Norfolk, to the Broads," I said. "Ten days or so won't matter."

"But suppose something was to happen, I should never forgive myself! I'll write to Dr. Jennings and tell him to look in while we are away, if I go; but I really don't think I have a dress to go in!"

These maternal and feminine objections were overcome, other preliminaries were settled, and the day was fixed. We met the Maddens at Liverpool Street and started, a party of six, for Yarmouth.

Six of us—three ladies, three gentlemen—the Maddens, husband and wife; the Evertons (that is, my wife and myself); Miss Sophie Madden, and Mr. Habbleton. I objected to Habbleton at once, or rather to his name, which sounds like *Hamilton* with a cold in the head. But Sophie Madden had no objection to it at all. Personally, indeed, Mr. Catarrh-Hamilton, as I named him, was a good fellow, with some humour; a bit of a sailor, and much smitten by or with Miss Sophie, who was very learned, very fond of nature, and had serious thoughts of taking a bachelor's degree, or a bachelor, I was not quite sure which. But her mathematical mind has solved the problem.*

* She has taken the bachelor, and is, with his assistance, now furnishing "by degrees."

When we reached Yarmouth we found a very pleasant master-mariner awaiting us. Madden had written to him, and he had a "first-class wherry" at our disposal. My idea of a wherry was a rowing-boat—and how six people were to live and occasionally sleep on board a rowing-boat, puzzled me at first. But our wherry was a fine "ship," containing a ladies' cabin as well as a main cabin, both roomy, and capable of accommodating eight people. It was a relatively large craft, carrying a big sail, and a mast which could be raised and lowered, as is sometimes necessary—when passing under bridges, for instance. She drew some inch or two over two feet of water.

When we had dined—and a merry dinner it was—we interviewed our mariner, who told us that we couldn't do better for scenery than run up the North River as far as Wroxham Broad.

We had time to inspect our "ship," and to order a supply of provisions; and this foresight is very necessary, for the local supplies even of bread may run short. You must not imagine, however, that solitude is always procurable amongst the Broads. Local people are very fond of fishing, numerous wherries navigate the waters, and trippers in small yachts such as the *Rover* and *Cynthia* are met with, and boats and punts innumerable. Yet you can anchor by the reeds in a quiet bay, and be as much out of the world as in a prairie.

Stores laid in and all arrangements made, we started as soon as Mrs. Everton had received the expected letter from her nurse. The children were quite well, and sent love to father and mother, and "Tofie" (Miss Madden). So this being highly satisfactory after such a protracted absence (twenty-four hours), we embarked on board the *Constance*, as I shall call her here, and made tracks for the Bure, which is known as the North River, and debouches to the Yare.

There is a "Hollandish" flavour about the first portion of the journey, and I may as well confess that I experienced some little disappointment, having expected something more interesting and varied.

After passing Acle Bridge, twelve miles from Yarmouth, however, matters improved; but we hadn't sailed on any Broads yet, and Miss Madden was becoming sceptical concerning the rush-bordered lakes, the grassy dykes, the beautiful flowers, the kingfishers, and the lovely-wooded scenery, and picturesque "fleets," or narrow water-ways. To the north lie Filby and Ormesby Broads, accessible by rail and road from Yarmouth, and upon which, with some Yarmouth friends, we have passed some delightful days. But we couldn't reach them in our wherry, for the cutting called "Muck Fleet" was, and I suppose is, too shallow for any but canoes, or *very* light-draught boats.

Space would be denied me to detail the flow of conversation which enlivened our trip. We had a man and a biggish boy on board, who navigated the wherry with consummate ease and skill. Even Mrs. Everton, who is nervous on the water, was quite pleased; and, though a little alarmed when the mast came down suddenly the first time, enjoyed the trip immensely.

"What do they want with so many windmills?" inquired Mr. Madden. "They are enough to make one giddy. And what a number of churches, too!"

Mr. Habbleton had studied the question, and explained that these mills are pumps for forcing the drainage water into the river. Sometimes we espied a sail, apparently approaching, sometimes flying from us, and disputes arose as to its direction, the verdict being often quite wrong when we *did* agree. The marshes extend for an immense distance, but the general character of the scenery will be best judged from our photographs.

The scenery improved considerably as we proceeded. We felt tempted to run up the Thurne, but decided to wait till our return, and in very lazy fashion we passed the Ant, another river which gives access to Barton and Stalham Broads. We had progressed several miles since leaving Acle, and I must say the pervading sensation was utter unmitigated laziness. Our wherry had managed to get along *almost*, not *quite*, against the wind, sometimes; but now we had to "quant."

DRAINAGE MILL ON THE BURE.

(*From a photograph by Mr. Payne Jennings.*)

"I wish there was some pulling to be done!' I exclaimed, as we turned aside, and got taken aback Down came the sail, and the lazy feeling increased on me.

"Tak' yonder pole, master, and quant her a few rods if ye like."

Quant her! What *did* he mean?

"Yes, Alfred," put in my wife; "you said just now, you know, that you wanted something to do."

"But what does he want? Quant?"

"The pole," said the boy. "See here."

With great dexterity he unshipped and plunged into the water a long stick, like a young fir-tree denuded of branches, which has a spike at one end, with a "shoulder," as it is called, so as to prevent the point going too far into the mud, which lies deep and thick in the rivers and broads. And sticky mud it is, as experience tells me from a sudden tumble into the shallows of Ormesby Broad, one summer day, while engaged in plucking some fine bulrushes for the ladies in our boat.

The mode of using the punting-pole or "quant" is familiar to most people. The "quanter" fixes the pole against his shoulder, and walks along the side of the wherry until he nears the end of it, and then——! But perhaps I had better relate my own experiences.

Mrs. Everton was anxious that I should try, so I tried. The pole being placed for me by the boy, I braced myself against it, and pushed. The wherry, to my astonishment, *did* move a little, and I pushed harder. Then came the tug. I tried to extricate the pole, but it wouldn't come out; the wherry glided on. I held to the pole, which had found a resting-place in the mud. There was no help for it. I must let go, or go overboard!

"Drop it!" cried Madden. "Let it go!"

But I wouldn't! Zeal prevailed over discretion, and I fell souse into the water-way—accompanied by a piercing shriek from Mrs. Everton, and a shout of laughter from all the others.

"Try it again, Mr. Everton," cried Habbleton.

"No, thank you—*quantum suff.*," was the reply, under cover of which I escaped to the little cabin, where a change was quickly made, and when I returned on deck the scenery had improved. We tacked up, but had not much spare space.

There are several opportunities for side excursions, but we held on as we wanted to get to Wroxham. In due time, amid many exclamations of pleasure, we reached Horning, a pretty little place with a windmill perched high in air—quite a landmark. There is a ferry close by here, and sometimes boats have to wait until the floating structure—in reality a raft, not a boat—has passed over.

ONE OF THE NATIVES.

(*From a photograph by Mr. Payne Jennings.*)

There is an inn here (at the ferry, I mean), and we made sundry inquiries concerning bread and bacon, because we had not much. A native lady who looked rather annoyed, probably because she could not help us, responded that there was "only stale bread," and we'd better ask at Wroxham, and even there we might not obtain it fresh, as baking was not an every-day employment. She added that in some places baking was only engaged in once a week.

But the young lady, after regarding us critically, eventually became very kind and friendly, and was recompensed by having her likeness taken, a compliment she did not seem to appreciate at its true and proper value. But we got our provisions.

However, we sailed away, and soon got a fair wind for a while, as the river bends into the form of a broad-based U, and a little north and east in the wind will give the tourist a merry run. On the right is a small Broad, which we did not attempt to explore, and I understood it was scarcely worth while. It is known as the Little Hoveton Broad, the Great Broad being located in the lap of the big U afore-mentioned. A turn almost due south ends in a west curve. The big Broad is apparently private property, and fears are already expressed that landowners will, by degrees, lay

claim to some of these sheets of water—a claim the public should resist with all possible determination. This report has only just reached me.

On the left is Salhouse Broad, and there is a station some few miles away on the line from Norwich. But we abjured railways. Still, if any one wishes to visit Wroxham Broad and the Bure, he can do so by taking a train from Norwich to Wroxham Station.

By this time we had nearly reached the end of our progression—our *ultima thule*—Wroxham Broad. Times are changed since then ; but though there are certain restrictions now, at least so I was informed in 1887, the splendid Broad is well worth a visit. Then Wroxham itself is picturesque, and in fact the whole neighbourhood we found delightful.

We hung about the river and the lakes for five days. Doing what? you ask. Sailing, quanting, dipping, fishing, exploring, botanising, and generally enjoying ourselves. What matter if meat *were* scarce, we could always "manage" with eggs, and Miss Madden practised housekeeping. We found plenty of recreation in the true sense of the term, and for people who can enjoy quiet, rather tame, but really pretty scenery, we say, try Wroxham and the vicinity. The sail may be prolonged up the river, which is navigable for a considerable distance beyond Wroxham Bridge—a "low" specimen of architecture, as masted boats will find.

We sailed about and in and out in generally fine weather. We had a storm on the Sunday, and tremendous rain. The drops came like leaden pellets into the water, which was, till then, unruffled by the wind. Then a thunder-squall aroused us, but passed away to Norwich.

Our return down the Bure to Breydon Water and Yarmouth again was extremely pleasant all the way, and picturesque to St. Benet's Abbey. And so pleased were we that after a night's rest we took train and went to Fritton Decoy, where we had a hastily arranged picnic, as we rowed about that charming little Broad. Needless to say that Miss Madden and the faithful Habbleton occupied a boat by themselves, and had an immense deal to say to each other in low tones, which were raised, and the most commonplace remarks hazarded, when our boats approached theirs!

The evening was lovely, and we remained roving and strolling about, with an interval for tea in a tent near the entrance gates, until the moon rose behind the trees which fringe the Broad. This little excursion brought our trip to a termination. Were I writing a guide-book I could indicate many delightful excursions, and nooks and corners "for whispering lovers made," and then by no means exhaust the attractions of the Broads. But here I will only just mention the principal groups of Broads, and so bring this paper to a close.

The tourist has a choice of three chief rivers—the Bure, the Yare, and the Waveney, at Great Yarmouth. The Bure is navigable as far as Aylsham, and from it a number of the Broads can be explored, and much pretty scenery, on the Thurne also.

The Waveney carries us to Lowestoft, and Oulton Broad can be explored. A favourite excursion, when the wind is favourable, is to sail in the day's limit from Yarmouth to Lowestoft, a round trip going or returning along the coast, and through the Waveney and Breydon Water.

The Yare leads to Norwich, and is not so picturesque as the Bure, from which latter the Ant and Thurne and all their Broads can be visited. There are plenty of fish, birds, and insects to catch and study; flowers in plenty, good-natured people, fair inns, and camping out is not bad. *Dixi*—yet not quite finished. We had a run up the Bure again last Whitsuntide, and enjoyed it as much as any of our former trips. To our readers we say, try it. Rowing-boats cost eighteenpence *a day!* yachts, £4 to £5 the week; wherries of large size run up to £10 and £14 the week.

BLOSSOMS.

HAST ever stood in some old orchard close,
And noted all the wealth of blossom there,
In every shade from white to pink and rose,
And then hast ever thought, Who is there knows
What harvest cometh from this promise rare?

Will sharp, cruel winds nip off each blossom sweet?
Will summer suns shine down with such fierce rays
That all the fruit will wither in the heat?
Or after shower and sunshine shall we gr
A golden harvesting in autumn days?

Hast ever watched a young life blossom out
With promise fair of mind, and health, and strength,
And power for good, when there has come the doubt—
What will Life's changing seasons bring about?
What will the autumn harvest be at length?

Will biting winds of stern adversity
Kill energy and hope? Or will the sun
Of Fortune shine too long continuously?
Or will whatever haps but prove to be
Meet for a harvest of good work well done?

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MUNIMENT ROOM.

(THE CHRONICLES OF CARDEWE MANOR.)

BY LUCY FARMER.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

"LITTLE EUSTACE."

AFTER the trouble we had had about that high fallutin' colonel and his young lady, which Mrs. Henry thought she would put down,* we—that is, Charley and me—had no worries. We remained in our own cottage looking after our cabbages and olive-branches, happy as the days were long—which isn't saying much in March. But we were happy; and somehow I didn't want to go up to the Manor. There was a something hanging over me. Charley says it was because I was jealous! Is it likely? Because I didn't tell of Colonel Stormer!

March passed, and April came in, warm and showery, soft and "greeny," when, as we were considering summer things, who should ride up but Mr. and Mrs. Cardewe themselves? Now, I had not seen Mrs. Cardewe on horseback since—well, not for years; and it seemed like old times, when she was Miss Dundas, and as fresh and lively as a house-lamb.

"Good afternoon, Lucy. Why have you not been up to see us lately?" said she; while Mr. Cardewe nodded pleasantly, as he can nod.

"Well, ma'am, I have been very busy lately, and that's the truth: what with the children, and the house, and our bit of garden, you see time flies."

"Are you busy just now?" she asked; "because if not I want you to stay with Mrs. Jones for a week or so. We are going to change servants, and intend to remain abroad till the end of May. If you could come up, and bring the children——"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, I could of course, if you wished it. Charley, he won't mind."

"But he can live at the Manor if he likes also," put in Mr. Cardewe. "So settle it at once."

So it was settled, and, to make a long story short, the children and I went up to the Manor on the fifteenth of April, and kept company with Mrs. Jones, who was frightened being alone.

Charley came in every evening, and two nights after we had arrived he said suddenly, "What was it you were saying, Mrs. Jones, about the soldier who was found here?"

"It's a legend," she said. "A trooper found a child—a Cardewe he was—on the battle-field, where he had wandered off to seek his father. The little fellow could not find him, and evening came on. He lost his way amongst the dead and dying soldiers, and horses, and things. Poor little Eustace! Then luckily Francis Trower—a retainer they called him—found the lad, and carried him home here on his saddle. He was put to bed in the room upstairs—the Muniment Room we call it—off the gallery, and there he afterwards died on the nineteenth of April, in the year of grace 1649 A.D."

"The nineteenth of April!" I exclaimed. "Why, this is the sixteenth, isn't it? And what more, Mrs. Jones?"

"Only this more, that at times you can hear him crying for his father and calling for help in the middle of the night as plain as plain!"

"Nonsense, Mrs. Jones!" said Charley. "As if a dead and buried child would call out for his dead and buried father! You'll say the Manor is haunted next! Lucy here is as nervous as a tom-cat already, so don't you be putting any spirits on the carpet, please."

"Well, I'm sure, Mr. Farmer! I think I know my place better than to put spirituous drinks on the carpet—things I never touch and never wish to. No, sir. Lucy, if you're afraid, you're silly!"

"I am not afraid, but very much interested," said I. "Poor little Eustace! I had heard about the child before, but I did not know he called out like as you say. I only hope we shall not hear him."

Charley laughed. But I had a kind of feeling that we should hear more about that child. "It is a bold thing to say, but whenever I have a presentiment something happens, Charley, and you know it! Wait till the nineteenth of April!"

"It's a pity the *first* is past," said he. "Really, Lucy, you're too old for such nonsense. Go to bed."

Nothing more was said after that, and two or three days passed away quite quickly, for a number of people came to see the pictures. Mrs. Deane and her little girl, Charley's niece, came, with others—the Turners, and a lot more; and on the Wednesday, two days after our arrival, there was a crowd. It was quite late before they separated.

The next day—the nineteenth it was, and I remember it well—the gallery was not open to the public. It was our cleaning day. The weather was gloomy and affected our spirits; we were depressed-down like, and Mrs. Jones declared she always felt the same every year.

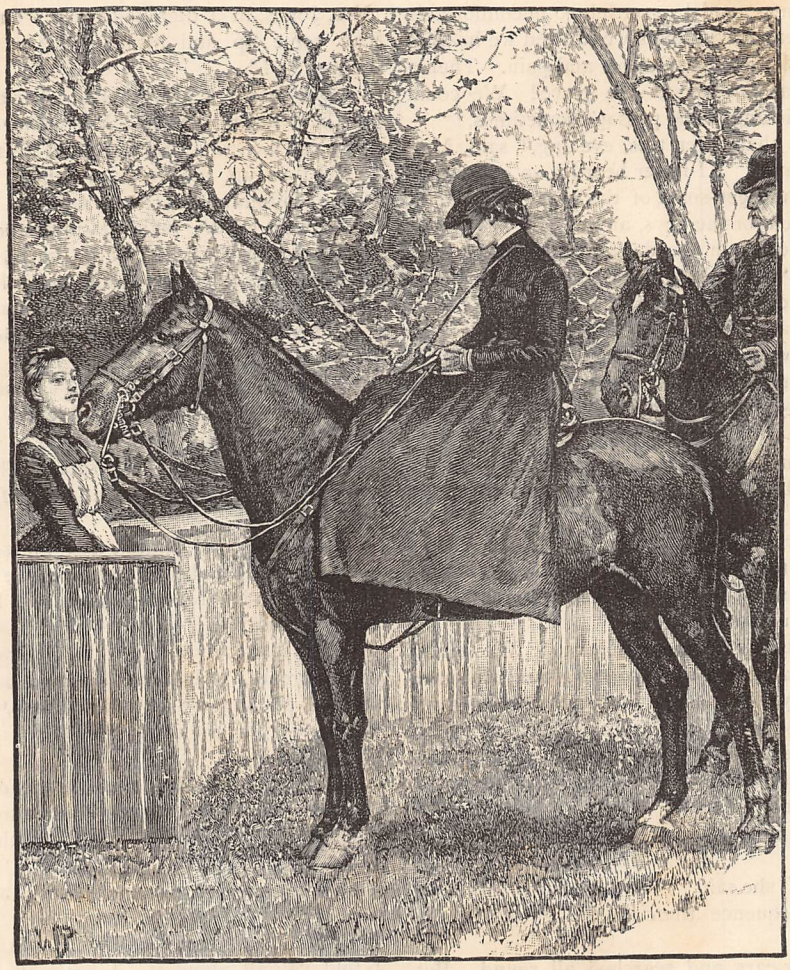
* NOTE.—She need not have made such personal remarks, either. But if she won't let me *say* what I think, I will *write* it.

"It's the day I told you of," she whispered. "The child will cry, mark my words, Lucy Farmer!"

That I did, and I wouldn't, no, not in broad daylight, go into the gallery alone, and Mrs. Jones didn't go, being otherwise engaged. But as evening was closing in she remembered that she had not put a cover on the damask ottomans upstairs after cleaning.

"It's not seven yet," said Mrs. Jones, "and there is no one here but ourselves, unless—Hush! Oh, my gracious, Lucy, listen!"

I felt a cold chill run through me—a trickling of ice water in bubbles through my body and limbs. My knees knocked like a postman! I listened; I did not dare to move; and I declare in the gloaming of



"'ARE YOU BUSY JUST NOW?' SHE ASKED" (*p.* 60).

"Come with me, Lucy, and we will shut the windows too. We can find our way."

There was plenty of light, so we covered the "ottomen," as she called them, though it sounds curious in plurals, and then we went through the picture-gallery, shutting the tall shutters one at a time, both of us together. The gallery got darker and darker, and the men in the pictures frowned at us more gloomily, and one bold fellow seemed to turn round to watch us! I became shaky—I couldn't help it.

"We ought to have begun at the other end," I whispered. "It's dreadful gloomy here, and Charley out too!"

that evening we heard the cry of a child behind the panels!

To this hour I cannot tell how I got out of the gallery, and I never got any clear notion from Mrs. Jones, who wasn't so much frightened, she said. But we heard the crying and sobbing as plainly as possible. There was no mistake about it, and when Mrs. Jones could not find her keys, cart-horses and new ropes wouldn't have dragged me up that back staircase and into the gallery—no, nor wild tigers shouldn't have induced me to go up! She had dropped her keys somewhere, and wouldn't go alone to find them, though not afraid!

"They won't run away, Mrs. Jones," I said, "and we'd hear them jingle if they did, so rest you here till Charley comes. Listen! I believe the child is crying again! Isn't it terrible?"

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE GHOST IN THE PANEL.

WE sat in Mrs. Jones's room on "pins and needles" for an hour or more, and I never felt so uncomfortable in my life. Every few minutes we fancied we heard a screech: a child's scream of terror and pain. Then a cry; then all was as silent as the grave! We could hear the clock ticking in the passage sometimes.

"It is worse than ever this evening," said Mrs. Jones, after a pause. "I never heard it so continued. Suppose we go and get some of the men to come in and have a search for the keys, any way?"

"I wouldn't go out in the dark for all I could see," was my reply. "Why, Mrs. Jones, the walk is along the outside of the gallery!"

"The child can do us no harm," said she at last. "Lucy Farmer, we ought not to mind a shade, it can't hurt us; and when the ghost is only its voice, surely there's no danger! We can't stay here without the keys."

"It's true what you say, Mrs. Jones. It is only a voice we hear; but there must be a body to it! Suppose we saw it?"

"And are you afraid of a little boy, Lucy? Why, you've slapped many a one in the village for impudence, and boxed them, too. Come with the candles, and let us find the keys."

Well, the lights *did* make a difference! We turned up the lamps and lighted them on the grand staircase and in the gallery. The place looked quite different, but it was very silent. The Muniment Room, where the noise had been, was at the end of the gallery; but we had not got so far in our search when we heard the crying and the sobbing again.

I would have run away, only Mrs. Jones held me tight.

"Never mind," she said. "It can't hurt. My keys is of more consequence than all the ghosts in the Manor."

So we shut our ears, and searched all round. But the crying went on, only much fainter. "That's the way of it," said Mrs. Jones: "it dies out in the evening."

By this time we had, in a way, got quite accustomed to the sound; and I declared most solemnly to Mrs. Jones that anything so human as that child's dead cry I had never heard. She thought it very odd. But as no one had been in all day, we knew it was the little Eustace. Then we made up our minds, and did not fear it any more; but all the same we did not find the keys.

Charley was home late, but we waited supper until he came in, and then told him what we had heard. Of course he derided us both.

"A pair of foolish women!" he said. "Give me my supper, Lucy. You're all of a tremble, I suppose?"

"No, Charley, I am not. I *was* frightened, but we heard so much of the noise, and as it didn't hurt us we don't so much mind. It is silent by this time."

"Silent!" laughed Charley; "why, it never was anything else. You have a fine imagination! Who ever heard of a child two hundred years old crying in an almost empty room? Why, by this time he would be an old man's ghost!"

"You may laugh, if you like, Mr. Farmer," said Mrs. Jones, in a dignified way; "but if you like you can come up and listen. If you hear it you will believe us!"

"*If* I hear it, I will," replied Charley. "But I shall not hear it, I'm certain. You *fancy* you have heard it! You *believe* it's all right, but it's nonsense!"

He rose up, and took a candle. "Oh! all the house is illuminated, I see," said he. "Well! well!"

We went up the main stairs to the wing in which the gallery is situated; and Charley, standing in the middle of the floor, the candle in his hand, waited very quietly for some minutes. Not a sound was heard.

"There, I told you so!" he said. "The ghost has gone to bed, no doubt. There is no child, and no cry; no—Eh! what's that? Listen!"

Mrs. Jones and I exchanged looks. "Ah!" we said, "who is right now? Yes, listen!"

"Quiet, can't you?" whispered Charley, in a pet. No doubt he was annoyed at being frightened, as he certainly was.

The crying was fainter, and the sobs were not so deep. You never heard anything like it. It was pain and fear, and a regular upset cry. I never want to hear another like it.

"This is mighty queer!" said Charley, as he drew a long breath. "Is there any one in the room, and are you playing me a trick? Come, open the door! We'll soon find the cat inside. *Is* 'Tim' there, Lucy? No nonsense!"

"I declare, Charley, there is no one there. The door was locked last night. And as to a cat, why, you ought to be ashamed not to know the difference between a child and a cat! You, a father yourself! That's no cat; it's a child's cry, and a big child, too!"

"That it is," remarked Mrs. Jones. "It's a ghost! I told you all about it. I have heard it before, or something like it, anyhow."

"If we had the key I would soon find out what it was; but it's all over now," said Charley. "Let us go to bed. We will have a hunt for the keys in the morning. Mrs. Jones, I'm sorry I laughed at you and Lucy here. You have certainly heard something, and I'm half inclined to think that you are playing a trick on me to punish me for laughing at your little story. Never mind; I'll put up with it."

"Indeed, Mr. Farmer, we are *not* playing any trick. The keys are missing. I had them this morning, but laid them aside somewhere. We will find them in the daylight. Dear me! it's after ten. I will bid you good night."

We bade her good night, and she went to her room upstairs. Charley, the children, and I slept on the

ground floor in the butler's apartments, and Charley had loaded revolving pistols in case of a burglary or a robbery.

"Now, Lucy," said my husband, "we must examine into this question. What is the joke?"

"No joke, Charley! I was terribly frightened, but am better now. Who did you see in the town?"

"Oh, many a one. I met Polly Deane and her husband. She was bringing him to fetch little Jane, who, it seems, went home with the Turners' party, from here. Polly inquired after you and the children."

"*I* wouldn't have left Jane with those Turners had I been Polly; why, it isn't long since Clara had the measles, and Jane so delicate! 'Pon my word, Charley, your sister should have more sense."

"Yes; but I can't help it. Jane's all right, I dare say. Well, you'd better be off, Lucy. I'll have a pipe, and turn in presently."

When he was lighting his pipe we heard the scream again, once. Then all was silent.

"I believe the place is bewitched," cried Charley. "To-morrow we will have that west wing opened; though, all the same, I do not believe we shall find anything but an old tom-cat! Good night, Lucy."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE SECRET OF THE ROOM.

WE heard no more of the little Eustace during the night, and in the morning I felt as if the events of the night had not been *real*. But Mrs. Jones soon put that idea out of my head, for she came down and said she did not sleep much, for she heard moanings and groans, and cries, until she believed that all the cats (or children) in the village had got in.

"A nice confusion things will be in after them animals," she said. "I never heard the noises like those before. No ghosts would ever groan and moan like *that*."

"That's just what I said," replied Charley. "The cat is the ghost. Have you found your keys, Mrs. Jones?"

"Not yet. But see, here's Mrs. Deane. She *is* early this morning. What can she want, I wonder?"

We looked out, and saw Polly Deane hurrying up at a great pace. There was evidently something required. Perhaps she wanted Charley. She often did want him, for Deane was rather a poor creature.

This time, however, she was in a greater hurry than usual; and leaving our breakfast, we went to the door to meet her. She seemed almost exhausted and worn out. I could see that she had been crying; and when a married woman cries it means either an ill-tempered and cruel husband or a sick child: any way something wrong with child or husband, as a rule.

"Oh, Charley! oh, Lucy Farmer, help me! I'm going out of my senses. I'm lost!"

"What's up, Polly?" said Charley. "Cheer up. Tell us what's the matter. Sit down; there, now."

"Is it anything about Deane, Polly?" said I.

"Are the children down with the measles?" asked Charley.

"No, no; it's Jane! Jane, my little darling. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what *shall* I do?"

"There, Charley, I said so—measles. Why ever did you let her go home with those Turners, Polly? Have you sent for Dr. Joliffe?"

"Oh, it isn't that. She's gone, gone!"

"Dead!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones. "Oh, poor dear!"

"No, no! Can't you understand? Janey's lost—spirited away—strayed, somehow! We thought she was with the Turners, and didn't so much mind that; but when we went there last night and found that she hadn't been, then we got frightened. We've been to the police and to all our neighbours, and can't find her. Oh, dear! oh, dear! Charley, Lucy Farmer, *do* help us! My darling, my darling!"

"Come, come, Polly! don't go on like this. We'll find her." Polly shook her head, and buried her face in her hands. "Yes, we will. Tell us where last you saw her. Quiet now—gently—speak up."

"On the day afore yesterday evening, she came up here, as you know yourself. She was full of fun after her tea, playing about with the Turners, hide and seek, and all that. My man had to go home, and I went, leaving her in the Turners' company. She never came home, so we went to fetch her, and she wasn't there."

"Not been there?" asked Mrs. Jones.

"No, ma'am, not a bit. The young Turners said she was not with them after seven, and hadn't seen her. So I came up here at once first thing. Oh, it *has* been a night!"

Poor Polly was quite upset, and no wonder. I knew what *I* should feel if little Charley were lost. Then my husband said—

"She is not *here*. We should have seen her. No, Polly, my dear; she isn't here—her cries——"

"Ah! Oh! my heart," squealed Mrs. Jones. "Oh, Lucy—Farmer! Oh!"

She dropped into a chair, holding her hand to her chest, and we thought she was taken ill all of a minute.

"Whatever is the matter?" I cried. "Mrs. Jones, ma'am, are you demented?"

"No, no. The cries! the room! Maybe Janey is in the Muniment Room. Quick!"

In a second I knew what she meant. So did Charley.

"My gracious!" he shouted; "you don't mean to say that the child is locked up in the room?"

Mrs. Jones nodded. She could not speak.

"Mercy me!" says I, "where's the keys? Oh, Charley! maybe the child is——"

"Hush, hush! Hold your tongue. Let us find the keys. When did you have them last, Mrs. Jones?"

Mrs. Jones could not tell. But when we had explained the loss to poor Mrs. Deane, she got up in a flurry, and came with us. You never saw such a hunt as we had. We tried every place, while Charley went for a ladder to try to get in at the window of the room, which was high up. We searched up and down, until at last Mrs. Jones yelled out, "The ottomen!"

The ottomans! Yes. She had put on the covers.

We hurried across the room, and there, sure enough, underneath one cover, lay the bunch of keys.

"Come quick, now; open the door of the Muniment Room. Wait a minute, Polly."

I was terribly afraid that we should not find the child, or if we did, that she would be dead. As we passed along the gallery, I looked out, and saw Charley running with another man, carrying a ladder between them. So I opened the window and shouted, "Keys found; come up, quick!"

They dropped the ladder in the lawn, and came running in. Then I hurried on to the end of the gallery after Mrs. Jones and Polly Deane. They had reached the door, but Mrs. Jones' hand shook so that she could not put the key into the lock. I helped her, and in a moment Polly rushed into the room.

"Oh my! There, on the floor, pale as any ghost, lay poor little Jane Deane, hardly sensible, and looking like death. Her distracted mother clutched her up in her arms, and kissed her madly; but the child never stirred. I came and felt her little heart, in spite of her mother's opposition; it was beating. At that minute Charley came in, and there was a chance of something being done.

"She's alive," I said. "Bring her down to the fire, and get some warm milk, Mrs. Jones."

You may depend we were not long in getting all ready. There was a fine fire in the kitchen, and in a minute Janey was undressed and ready for a warm bath. This revived her. Then she cheered up when she saw her mother, and by noon-time she had almost brightened up again.

After that she ate some dinner—not much—and in the evening we put in the pony, and I drove her home, for Charley had posted off long before to the Deanes and Turners to tell them that Janey had been recovered. So our story of little Eustace came to an end. But I always will say it was almost providential that Mrs. Jones should have told us the story of the family tradition at the very time that Jane Deane was lost. If it hadn't been for the "ghost," the living child might have died. So I never will say that a ghost in a family is no use, after my own experience of the Muniment Room at Cardewe Manor.

We soon found out that Janey had been playing, and had gone to sleep in the room. She had been locked in; she had tried to make us hear, and had not the keys been mislaid she would have been rescued earlier. But she never came to any harm from it, and Mrs. Jones has never heard "little Eustace" since. That is very curious, *I* think, but Charley laughs as usual.

"MAGAZINE" NOTES.

IN the June number of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE was commenced a new serial story by L. T. Meade, entitled "Engaged to be Married." The illustrations are by Mr. Arthur Hopkins, R.W.S. Side by side with this story runs Miss Arabella M. Hopkinson's "A Woman's Strength," which was commenced in April. To all who know the Magazine we need only say that this story is by the author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers." The opening chapters of a third serial, which has been arranged for, will appear in an early number of the Magazine. This will be a story of adventure, quite out of the well-trodden paths of fiction.

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Ireland is frequently suggested as a holiday resort, but many tourists are deterred from going there for want of reliable information as to districts that are really picturesque. The Editor has therefore arranged for a paper on "An Unbeaten Track in Donegal," which has been specially written to meet this want. Towns which are springing up, industries that are destined to grow but are still in their infancy, as well as the history of epoch-making inventions, are described and illustrated for the readers of the Magazine by writers of special knowledge and experience.

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"The Missing Dean" is the title of a complete story which will appear in an early number of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE. Every number of the Magazine contains one or more stories, complete in themselves. "The Chronicles of Cardewe Manor" will be continued from time to time, but it will be found that each of these "Chronicles" stands alone, and may be read, with pleasure we hope, by those who have not formerly made Mrs. Farmer's acquaintance.

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New branches of art-work are regularly explained in CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, so that its readers may always be in a position to make their homes bright and pretty with the newest and best in art. Nor is music forgotten. The July number of the Magazine contains a paper on "Chamber Music," which is one of a series on kindred topics. And every number contains a new musical composition, either a song, or duet, or instrumental piece.

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Every month, too, London and Paris correspondents advise ladies as to "What to Wear;" writers of authority give them hints on cookery and household subjects; a practical gardener tells us what to do with our gardens, large or small; and a Family Doctor gives seasonable advice, that the young may live to be old, and the old retain the vigour of the young; and, finally, each number contains, in "The Gatherer," notes of all that is new in science, letters, or discovery.